



The ANGLICAN PARISH of  
*Leongatha*

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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## PARISH VISION

Preparing the way for the love of Jesus Christ to reach all people.

## A YEAR OF MISSION

On Vision Sunday the Rector designated 2020 to be a Year of Mission.

## Sentence

This is our God for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.  
Isaiah 25:9

## Readings

Exodus 32:1-14  
Psalm 106:1-6, 20-24  
Philippians 4  
Matthew 22:1-14

## Prayer of the Week

Almighty God, in your wisdom you have so ordered our earthly life that we must walk by faith and not by sight: give us such trust in your fatherly care that in the face of all perplexities we may give proof of our faith by the courage of our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Pastoral Care

For pastoral care needs please contact Rector of Leongatha- Graham Knott  
0490 045 581 [rectorleongatha@gmail.com](mailto:rectorleongatha@gmail.com)

Assistant Curate and Response Coordinator- Belinda Seabrook  
0438 622 721 [ministryleongatha@gmail.com](mailto:ministryleongatha@gmail.com)



## **Financial Stewardship**

Leongatha Anglican Church

Electronic banking details **BSB Number** 083 735 **Account Number** 515883623.

Cheques may be posted to PO Box 271, Leongatha, Vic 3953. Payable to 'Leongatha Anglican Church Parish Council Parish Account'.

## **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS- MINISTRY UPDATE**

### **A Note from the Rector**

One of the unexpected things about this year is that I can now drive straight to the homes of everyone on our contact lists without needing GPS or streets and house numbers. I have driven to many homes for the second or third time during this past week picking up shoeboxes. I can tell you who has the steepest driveway, who has filled in some of their potholes and who has cut their lawns recently. Much more importantly I can talk about the wonderful, generous caring heart of our congregational members and of so many eager to consider the needs of others rather than their own. Where I meet with people there is always eager desire to share in brief prayer together and a heartfelt thankfulness for the many ways that we as Christians are keeping contact with each other. The many kilometres driven are more than worthwhile and become a blessing. Belinda and I are thankful for you all and for the privilege of being called to serve you. Thank you for the tremendous enthusiasm and energy given to filling so many shoeboxes. These are now on the next stage of the journey fueled by your love and prayers. A bumper year for shoeboxes but more importantly a bumper year as more children overseas get to learn of the love of Jesus Christ for them.

### **The Gippsland Anglican September and October**

Both editions are available now in hardcopy and online

[https://www.gippsanglican.org.au/assets/00TGA/2020/TGA\\_Sep\\_20FINAL.pdf](https://www.gippsanglican.org.au/assets/00TGA/2020/TGA_Sep_20FINAL.pdf)

[https://www.gippsanglican.org.au/assets/00TGA/2020/TGA\\_October\\_20FINAL.pdf](https://www.gippsanglican.org.au/assets/00TGA/2020/TGA_October_20FINAL.pdf)

### **Men's Ministry**

The Tuesday online men's ministry is beginning The Prayer Course this coming Tuesday. Men who are interested in joining this supportive and encouraging group are invited to contact Graham Knott or Andrew Aldous. We would love the ministry to grow and be a blessing to many more. We have great plans and possibilities for further developments once we are able to meet face to face. Members of the group also support one another daily in prayer through a WhatsApp prayer group. Deep relationships and connections have been formed. For the fifteen men involved this ministry has become very important.

## **Samaritan's Purse Shoeboxes**

A huge thank you to all who packed shoeboxes. Amazing effort! All boxes have now been blessed and delivered to the drop off point for processing.



## **New Website!**

We are excited to announce the launch of our new Parish Website [www.leongathaanglican.org](http://www.leongathaanglican.org)

We hope that in time this website will encourage more of the community to explore faith and engage in the mission and ministry of the Church. Thank you to Doug Kelly for developing this important ministry.

## **Op Shop News**

The St Peter's Op-Shop has re-opened Wednesday- Friday. If you are able and would like to volunteer to help with this important ministry please contact Kaye 0409 686 233 or Coral 0409 165 227

## **Care Packages**

Deliveries continue throughout the Parish, thanks for your patience and encouragement. Unfortunately we are still waiting for the elements of Holy Communion to come in the post.

## **Year of Discernment**

The Diocese provides a year of discernment during which people can explore whether God is calling them to ordained or enhanced lay ministry. A group meets formally four times a year at different venues and with others from across Gippsland. There is also informal contact between sessions. Leongatha parish members are aiming to meet more regularly via Zoom. This is a genuine opportunity to discern what the purpose of Holy Spirit is for the next seasons of our lives. Contact Graham or Belinda if you would like further information. We view this as highest priority.

## Resources for staying active at home

This is a recent resource for exercises & physical activity for older people that can be done at home. We thought this may be helpful for some.

<https://www.safeexerciseathome.org.au/>

<b>2020 Annual General Meeting Timeline</b>	
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> September	Close books and prepare financial returns
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> October	Books and financial papers to parish office (Graham Knott) by 1pm for audit
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> October	All reports posted to PO Box 271 Leongatha or emailed to <a href="mailto:ministryleongatha@gmail.com">ministryleongatha@gmail.com</a> by 1pm (for collation)
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> October	Nominations open 9am
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> November	AGM meeting booklet available
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> November	Nominations close 9pm
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November	<b>Parish Annual General Meeting 4pm</b>
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November	St Peter's Leongatha AGM (directly after Parish AGM)
Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> December	St Andrew's Tarwin Lower and St David's Meeniyan AGM (time to be advised)
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> December	St Andrew's Tarwin Lower AGM 11:30am (After 10:30am Service)

## Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer is a structured half hour service that includes Old and New testament Bible readings, a time for reflection and discussion of the Scriptures and a time to pray together. Morning Prayer is offered Monday to Friday at 9am via Zoom. It is easy to join and a special way to meet and worship together in the current lock down.

If you are interested please contact Belinda or Maryann Ashton – [maryannashton423@gmail.com](mailto:maryannashton423@gmail.com)

## HELP WITH TECHNOLOGY

St Peter's Church is currently connecting via, home phone, mobile phone, email, website, Facebook, YouTube and Zoom. If you need some help with technology please be in touch, we would be happy to help you.

## Readings for next week 18<sup>th</sup> October

Exodus 33:12-23

Psalms 99

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Matthew 22:15-33

## LET US PRAY

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13 NIV

- Praise the Lord for his Love.
- Praise Him for His faithfulness through every season of life
- Praise Him for His heart for healing and restoration
- Praise Him for a reduction of Covid-19 cases in Victoria
- Pray for all those in positions of leadership within our government, pray for wisdom and strength
- Pray for continual growth in our Parish
- Pray for those who are suffering with depression
- Pray for local businesses as they navigate the future
- Pray for comfort for those family and friend of the recent local road fatality

### **Prayer Chain**

For prayer chain requests please contact Maryann Ashton on 0438 644 315



## GRAHAM'S GEMS

11<sup>th</sup> October 2020

'Who should come?' For some weeks the number able to attend funerals has been limited to ten – weddings even smaller at five. I haven't been asked to conduct any marriages this year but have some funerals. The number in the chapel is usually around seven. Not the maximum allowed but the number who can be invited without someone in the family feeling excluded and offended. Imagine that you were arranging a funeral or wedding within these constraints. Who would be on the guest

list? It's a great year for those who want a small wedding! Naturally in most cases those invited are the closest in the biological family. However that is not how most people have lived. Most people live with a number of really good friends who have stuck by them through many twists and turns of life. Yet in a pandemic they are excluded because we can rely on them being understanding of the situation. Most cannot apparently expect such understanding from their biological family! However there will be some families breathing a sigh of relief because Great Uncle Frank who sits in the corner in his singlet and shorts at the wedding, belching and making other offensive sounds from time to time can reasonably be left off the guest list. Jesus said, "*The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.*" (Matthew 22:1) This is intended to be a joyful feast – a time of celebration and festivity. In human terms and in those days the wedding would have lasted up to a week. This was serious feasting, dancing and fun. Jesus worked the first of his miracles at a wedding feast where the wine ran out and he created hundreds of litres of the stuff from water described as the best wine. How ever did the church come so often to resemble funeral refreshments rather than a party? Joyless Christianity is sinful. It is not God's intention. It makes God unattractive. Kingdom life is about holiness and true holiness is infectious fun because it is grace filled and grace fuelled. Jesus was the holiest person who ever lived yet holiness for him meant celebrating fully not the avoidance of sins, the keeping of petty rules and regulations, keeping to others' standards and the battling to win the approval of others.

In this case those who God invited refused to come and were declared unworthy as a result. They knocked back a royal command with the result that God declared them unworthy. They weren't unworthy because of guilt or shame or lack of holiness. They were unworthy because they didn't

respond positively to the king's invitation. Nobody can attend a wedding banquet without the host's invitation. Most people are reluctant to turn down an invitation to a wedding reception. We feel that we should do everything possible to attend if we have been invited. Sadly many turn down God's invitation because they lack an understanding of grace. We allow all sorts of things to get in the way of Jesus inviting us to the feast. Unworthiness, the opinions of others, the heavy burdens that others put in our way, the thinking that we have to keep all the rules and be good enough for God, the difficulty we have trusting anything or anybody.

The invitation is to share joyfully in the grace of Jesus Christ. It is all about grace. We see that in the parable as the king commands that "*good and bad*" (22:10) people be invited. It doesn't matter who you are - most people fit the category of good or bad. In fact without grace we are all bad for "*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" (Romans 3:23)

What troubles me about this parable is the way the king responds to the one present at the feast evidently not wearing a wedding garment. The person is cast away in judgment. My question is, "What are the wedding clothes the person omitted to wear?" Our answer needs to take account of grace. None of the guests are present because they are worthy to be there. In those days wedding clothes were generally decent, clean white clothes available to anyone but even this isn't helpful because people are described as good or bad.

My view (so feel free to discuss and reject it) is that the person the king questioned was wearing the best humanly available wedding clothes and noticeable for that, standing out from the rest. Why otherwise would the person be speechless (22:12) when questioned about the manner of their dress? The person expected to be complimented and to be noticed for good in their dazzling white. This section of Matthew is controversy between the chief priest, Pharisees, scribes, and Jesus. These are the people who have the outward appearance of holiness, the apparent fulfilment of religious aspiration, smiling in greeting and apparently very accepting yet those who, as Jesus said, are not ready to humble themselves to enter the kingdom of heaven and slam the door in others' faces. They are the abusive holders of power who set their own standards of who is in and who is out. They want everybody to see their dazzling white robes of the apparent service they offer to God which will be bigger than yours, their hands raised in worship which will be higher than yours, their holy actions which are better than yours, yet there is only one who sees deeper, deeper, deeper. The marriage feast of the bride of the Lamb (which we think about next week) will reveal the reality. The supposed riff-raff, the motley collection of other guests will be sitting there in amazement saying, 'Did you see that? We never thought that person would be the one deemed unacceptable by God!' It's all about grace.