



The ANGLICAN PARISH of
Leongatha

Sunday 25th October 2020

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

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.
Matthew 22:37

Prayer of the Week

Almighty and everlasting God, give to us the increase of faith, hope and love; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us to love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Readings

Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17
1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 Matthew 22:34-46

Pastoral Care

For pastoral care needs please contact Rector of Leongatha- Graham Knott
0490 045 581 rectorleongatha@gmail.com

Assistant Curate and Response Coordinator- Belinda Seabrook
0438 622 721 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

Parish Council. When the Parish Council met on Thursday evening they received the draft accounts for the year 2019-20 and approved a draft budget for 2020-21 for presentation to the AGM. The Council also decided unanimously that when we are able to return to COVID normal Sunday morning Services the times will be 8.00 and 10.30am. This will facilitate an easier changeover between the Services, allow more time for worshippers and refreshments following the 8.00am Service and allow a more meaningful start to Sunday for families who have attended at 10.00am in the past. The Bishop has recently authorised **Joanne Stuchbery** as a Lay Reader. Congratulations Joanne. We look forward to presenting your Licence as soon as we are back together and assure you of our prayers and support. **Synod 2020** is taking place in an abbreviated format by electronic connection during November. Diocesan legislation requires the Bishop to hold a Synod every eighteen months. The November Synod is deferred from May 2020. Amended legislation will be brought to the next session of Synod in May 2021.

Andrew Aldous

We welcome Andrew as our preacher today. Although we haven't been able to be physically together many men in the congregation have been blessed through their developing relationship with him. Now all of us are able to hear and see Andrew as he opens God's word with us. Andrew is part of our widening ministry team and evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work in our parish during a very challenging time. We look forward to sharing the journey with Andrew soon as we pray for God's blessings on him and his family.

Nominations for upcoming AGM

Please refer to the attached letter from Graham in relation to nominations for the 2020 AGM

Mainly Music

Dear St Peter's Families mainly music is our ministry program reaching out to families in the community with pre-school children. In pre-covid times, we had a very popular program, with 25 families enrolled, and attendance of around 30 children and 20 parents/carers each week. We are hoping to be able to hold a Christmas celebration and picnic before the end of the year, to re-connect with our families and celebrate the "graduation" of those going off to kinder or school next year. We will be giving each family a Christmas book, and each graduating child a children's Bible. If you would like to contribute, to tell our families they are loved and prayed for, we would love to receive your donations. The Christmas books cost \$4 each and the children's Bibles \$18.

If you would like to include a Christmas message to a family, write it in an email to Heather Scott at scottheather1953@gmail.com and we will write it onto a card to go with the book.

To donate the cost of a book for a **mainly music** family this Christmas, make an EFT deposit to 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'.

National Anglican Family Violence Project

The Anglican Church is committed to supporting safe and loving homes and safe churches. Intimate partner violence is defined by the World Health Organization as *behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours.*

If you are connected to the Anglican Church, have experienced intimate partner violence and feel comfortable sharing your experience in a confidential online survey, please type the following into your web browser surveys.ncls.org.au/NAFVP/experience

By bravely being open about your experiences you can be a part of creating safer homes and Churches for others.

The Gippsland Anglican October

https://www.gippsanglican.org.au/assets/00TGA/2020/TGA_October_20FINAL.pdf

2020 Annual General Meeting Timeline

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

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 1st November

Joshua 3:7-17

Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37

1 Thessalonians 3:5-13

Matthew 23:1-12, 37-39

LET US PRAY

I will praise you O Lord, with my whole heart: I will tell of all your marvellous works. Psalm 9:1

- Praise God for His goodness to us.
- Praise God for His willingness to send Jesus to die for us.
- Praise God for a good government, both State and Federal. A government who was prepared to take the hard economic decision to shut us down.
- Pray for the rest of the World who are now suffering unequalled levels of Covid.
- Pray for those parts of the World where there is civil unrest.

The following comes from The Celtic Daily Prayer book.

We hold before God: those for whom life is difficult, those who have difficult decisions to make, and who honestly do not know what is the right thing to do.

We hold before God: those who have difficult tasks to do and to face, and who fear they may fail in them.

We hold before God: those who know that they can be their own worst enemy.

We hold before God: those who have difficult people to work with: those who have to suffer unjust treatment, unfair criticism, unappreciated work.

We hold before God: those who are sad because someone they loved has died.

We hold before God: those who are living with disappointment in something for which they hoped very much.

Prayer Chain

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



GRAHAM'S GEMS

25th October 2020

Matthew's Jesus would never have passed a maths exam. For example two plus three equals one; two plus one equals four; and five plus two equals 10,000 plus twelve. (The temptations of Jesus, church discipline and feeding of the five thousand). You can doubtless think of many other places in Matthew. In Matthew's gospel things just don't humanly add up. There is something which takes us beyond our dimension into another way of looking at things where the laws of mathematics no longer fit.

God is seen as the one who consistently makes things bigger or smaller than rational actuality.

So to this morning's reading. Jesus is aggressively asked plainly and simply, '*which is the greatest commandment?*' It's a clear question. It's a question the Pharisees were used to debating into the early hours of the morning! You have to wonder why such a debate was worthwhile or has any meaning. The Book of Romans makes plain that '*all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*' There is only one interpretation of the word, '*all.*' Yet Pharisees then and now will continue the debate for it helps them to identify and build bigger walls of false piety – such that they can say 'my commandment keeping is better than your commandment keeping' or 'my commandment breaking is not as bad as your commandment breaking.' The Pharisees are clutching at straws by this part in the narrative as they try to trap Jesus. Once he agrees to a works rather than grace centred approach to faith the Pharisees have got him. Get Jesus to focus on the rules and they have won. With a stroke of genius Jesus replies, 'Which is greatest? This one and that one. Two are the greatest commandment.' Huh? When did one become two? When anyone tries to trap Jesus.

Yet Jesus leaves us with a genuine dilemma simply because these two commandments are superficially so different. The first is to love God with every fibre of a person's being, the second is to love others with every fibre of a person's being. We would understand the trajectories of the two commandments to be different – one is directed towards God and the other towards people. Surely if Jesus wanted two commandments which were similar – he would have developed the first with an injunction against idolatry and the superlative nature of God. Or he could have developed neighbour

love with an injunction not to murder, steal or covet. So what does Jesus mean when he says, 'the second is *like* the first?'

Perhaps Jesus means that the person who passionately keeps God at the centres of their lives will inevitably pour out their lives in sacrificial service loving those in their path. Such is the way Jesus himself lived. He may genuinely have had difficulty with the question because his life could be described as fully integrated. The love he had with God inevitably flowed out to others and the love he had for others inevitably flowed back to God. Such is depicted in the cross where deep sacrificial passionately love for God pours out it's lifeblood in deep sacrificial love for others. Jesus knew that he was pouring out his life for us all on the cross but such was not his motivation. His motivation was love for his heavenly Father who loved the world to the uttermost that he gave Jesus. Jesus was facing God on the cross which is why his cry of 'My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?' has such depth of meaning. The one who loves God inevitably loves others in the same way as others – not by making a contribution but a sacrifice.

However, Jesus may also mean that if you placed these two commandments on a ladder they would both sit on the same rung. In this case we would say that loving others and loving God are equally important. Such a view would make every act of human kindness of infinite worth regardless of the motivation. The problem is that the world is full of people who do random acts of kindness, often to a far greater extent than Christians, yet they do not acknowledge God. Is it sufficient simply to love people? The answer of Jesus is plainly negative because this is a works based orientation for justification. To be loving in our own or by society's standards is not enough. Grace is more and grace changes the meaning of love. It is plainly not enough to begin with neighbour love and build a Godward understanding from that.

Yet the bible boldly and confidently asserts, 'God is love.' And Jesus said of his disciples, 'By this shall all people know that you are my disciples if you have love one for another.' In my mind the first interpretation is the one that makes sense. As I pay close attention to developing and growing a passionate love relationship with Jesus I will inevitably become a more loving person in the world. My heart and spirit will be fuelled by the love of God such that I intuitively know what is needed for the person in my path to develop their potential under God. The challenge with many human acts of love is that they are moved by pity rather than potential. God's love always sees potential. The neighbour who I am called to love can become amazingly more than they imagine when they encounter the true love of God.