



The ANGLICAN PARISH of
Leongatha

March 7th 2021 – Third Sunday in Lent



PARISH VISION

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

A YEAR OF FULFILLING PONTENTIAL

On Vision Sunday the Rector designated 2021 to be a Year of fulfilling your Holy Spirit shape and potential.

Sentence

God spoke these words and said, 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.' Exodus 20.1

Prayer of the Week

Lord God, our Redeemer, who heard the cry of your people and sent your servant Moses to lead them out of slavery; free us from the tyranny of sin and death and, by the leading of your Spirit, bring us to our promised land; 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

Associate Priest- Belinda Seabrook
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Weekly Services of Holy Communion – St Peter’s Leongatha

Sunday

Holy Communion - 8am, 10:30am

Wednesday

Holy Communion - 11am followed by a Community Lunch

Service of Holy Communion- St David’s Meeniyan

Friday 7:30pm – 1st and 3rd Friday of the Month

Service of Holy Communion -St Andrew’s Tarwin lower

2nd and 4th Sunday of the Month 10:30am

There is now **no need to pre-register or “book in”** for a service. It is still a government requirement however that we keep, for a temporary period of time, the name and a contact number of every person that attends a service. This can be provided at the door on the day you attend.

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’.

Readings

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalm 19

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

Hymns

433 Christ is our cornerstone

665 Jesus Christ is waiting

349 In the cross of Christ I glory

8 [507] God’s law is perfect

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS- MINISTRY UPDATE

9th March- Bible Society- Thank You Fellowship Gathering

An opportunity to hear about the work of the Bible Society- Light refreshments provided. Tuesday 9th March 1:45pm for a 2pm start. Leongatha Uniting Church, 16 Peart St, Leongatha. RSVP Rhiannon on 0417 467 076 or email thankyou@biblesociety.org.au

- Praise Him for this land in which we live, our government both Federal and State. Praise and thank Him for our freedom to worship and live our lives without fear.
- Pray for those people for whom this is not the case, where to have a difference of opinion will mean imprisonment. Pray particularly for the people of Myanmar.
- Pray for the continuing distribution of vaccine and the vaccinations of the elderly and vulnerable.
- Pray for those who have recently come to faith and are asking for Baptism.
- Pray for the Tween Bible study Group, both those who lead and the young people who attend.
- Pray for Small groups, Bible Studies, Mothers Union, Gems and other groups as they begin to meet again after a years break.
- Pray for those who who are sick, alone or struggling with each day.



GRAHAM GEMS

March 7th 2021

I wonder if you've ever had something that you've really looked forward to but proved to be a total let down? How do you respond when you are disappointed? We have some friends who went on the cruise of a lifetime. For months they spoke about nothing else. They hated it. It was a total let down. I've seen other people retiring to the place of their dreams and suddenly realising that their dream was great for a holiday but not the place to live every day. I've seen other people get the job of their dreams and it falls in ashes around

them. For others things don't work out or go as smoothly as they hoped or prayed and they make their own worse decisions out of the disappointment. Disappointment has been a feature of all of our lives during the past year. Everybody has seen their plans disrupted. People have been unable to gather with relatives in other countries. Holidays of a lifetime have been cancelled. Many people have been unable to go to funerals of loved ones or visit them during their last days. Disappointment is very, very challenging. Facing disappointment is unavoidable in a broken and fallen world. From the moment we are born the experience of disappointment affects every person. Many people experience the pain of their having not really being wanted by their parents or of parents who did not make good choices for them. For many children struggle becomes a part of their life when it should

be about play with dolls or football. Of course, such disappointment spans the generations. Parents themselves are often aware only of struggle and of trying to do their best in impossible situations.

During the last few weeks, I have been thinking a lot about 'identity.' Three times in the wilderness temptations Jesus was challenged about his core identity – 'If you really are the Son of God....do this or that' was the taunt of the devil in three key areas. Even though those temptations and taunts were very real, I think Jesus was operating from a different foundation. He initially heard the affirmation of being God's beloved, highly desired child before those taunts and temptations occurred. We are often trying to face the taunts after a lifetime of disappointment and struggle. The voice of the Holy Spirit telling us that we are deeply loved has probably not been heard by another significant person, such as John the Baptist, or the crowd around. And even if others testify clearly to God's words of love for us, we have difficulty in hearing them because the disappointments of the past so frame our identity now.

Facing and coping with disappointment requires courage and all except a strong and resilient few choose to keep running away. Life becomes for those who run a series of disappointments which get closer and closer together until the disappointment becomes a framework.

What can we do practically with this scourge that affects us all when it feels as if we've fallen off a cliff?

The crucial thing is to look around and see who else is sitting with us on our level, simply loving and accepting us. This relational network will be very small for most people and will generally not be our nuclear family. Nuclear families are often at the heart or origin of disappointments and they also have an obligation to be with us. Their support will be good but generally will only be a small part of what carries us through. No, that small circle of friends who will be there, sitting with you in the dust and ashes of your broken dreams, are the ones to stick with. They will carry you through. Distancing them into a network does not work. Social networks will not carry us through – the few friends will. Like many reading this I'm finding that some of that small group who have been with for me for decades have died. We must never take for granted those friends. Having brought us this far they are the ones who will lead us through.

Disappointment sometimes results in guilt and shame. We blame ourselves, often unfairly, for things that have gone wrong. It's easy to think that disappointment comes because of us. We think we are losers. We think the disappointment is our fault. We think if we had done things differently all would now be well. True friends will tell us when we have made significant mistakes. Yet we need to stop agreeing and co-operating with the satanic attack on our identity. The truth is that we are a deeply loved person, a child of God for whom Jesus died yet we will never be able to believe that if we

continue to agree with lies.

Disappointment means that we develop self-protective strategies intended to prevent us being disappointed in the future in the same ways. Yet these strategies mean that our pain is unaddressed and that Jesus is unable to heal. To receive healing, we need to be prepared to relinquish our self-protective strategies and be vulnerable. This is the hardest thing to do. The best thing to do with chains is to allow them to be broken.

As Jesus entered the temple area for the Jewish Passover he faced deep disappointment. Jesus had a key priority – to worship God and to bring a crowd with him who had the same attitude. Instead he found noisy bedlam and exploitation of people by those who would profit from others. Being secure in his identity he was not defined by his disappointment. No shrinking away. He faced the context and the circumstances head on and courageously. He effected change for good during a very disappointing time. As we become more secure in our identity in Christ we too will become creative shapers rather than reactively shaped.

Sermon Notes: