WELCOME BELMONT UNITING CHURCH

10th October Weekly Newsletter 2021

2021-THE YEAR OF HOPE

Overwhelmed! Job 23.1-9

When we feel overwhelmed by troubles, where is God?

This week Job expresses his frustrations and his anger against God in very clear terms. This may make us feel uncomfortable, but in real life, we all face difficult times.

There is a long history in Scripture of people presenting their complaints to God. We see this in today's psalm as well as in Job's words. Speaking to God in this way may seem arrogant, but the reading from Hebrews reminds us that Christ sympathises with us and encourages us to approach God with boldness.



There are times in our journey in life that the saying "when it rains it pours" speaks volume of what we feel. What often happens is that we feel the weight of the world on our shoulders, and life is not fair. We may be tempted to turn away from God and from friends in times of trouble, but these should be the times when we acknowledge our need and seek help and comfort.

The final verse of Job's complaint sounds very much like 'hiding your head under a pillow'. When things go wrong, we can be tempted to lock ourselves away. We live in a society where self-reliance is often promoted above community. But this is not God's intention for his Church. Perhaps sometimes, when we feel God is not listening to our complaint the answer is already to be found in those around us if we have the humility to accept it. Equally, we must be willing to respond with great generosity to others in need. This is Jesus' message to the rich man in the Gospel reading. Christ is challenging not so much his wealth but his self-reliance.

As we read the story, Job permits us to ask questions about God. So often, we are tempted to think that the relationship with God that we have is so unequal that we are in no position to question, complain, or indeed get angry with the way life is taking shape for us, or indeed for wider humanity. God can cope with our questions. In fact, we might teach, based on what we read and hear in Job, that God does more than 'cope' with our questions. He actively wants to engage with us in deep conversation. There would be nothing worse for God than a one-sided relationship with his people where God does all the giving, and the people just stay quiet and accept what is given. God desires a relationship with us—a true organic relationship!

Where is God in our time of trouble? The poem "The Footprints' always reminds me of how close God is in our toughest times. Yet, despite his apparent absence, we need only to look back and see how faithful and ever-present God is in our times of trial.

UPDATE STANDARD

Latest on our Sunday Worship Services - more details on page 3

Worship At Home

Acknowledgement of Country

Today, as we gather in our homes, we acknowledge the Wauthaurong Peoples, the first inhabitants of this place from time beyond remembering. We acknowledge that through this land, God nurtured and sustained the First Peoples of this country, the Aboriginal and Islander peoples.

Prayer of Approach

We approach your throne of grace, O God – with the confidence given us because of Jesus, our great high priest. We are amazed at such a privilege – help us not to take it for granted, but to come to you in joy, and willingness to hear from you. May we loosen our grip on the things of our lives that hinder us and commit ourselves afresh to you today. Amen.

A prayer of thanksgiving

Wonderful God! You are beyond anything we can think or imagine. You are in all places and at all times. You know the hearts of stars light-years away, and the hearts of human beings standing next to us. Thank you for revealing yourself to us, in as much as we can understand, that in ages to come we know you more and more.

Amen.

Notes on the Bible readings Amos 5.6-7,10-15, Hebrews 4.12-16, Mark 10.17-31

The prophet Amos is speaking at a time when all seems well – Israel is flourishing and people are worshipping God – but beneath the surface, there is great injustice and exploitation of the poor. God requires more than 'things going well'; he demands justice.

God's Word is 'sharper than a two-edged sword' (Hebrews 4.12). It cuts right to the core of our being and judges what it finds in our hearts; nothing is hidden from the Creator. Amos delivers cutting words from God to the Israelites, and in Mark's Gospel, Jesus delivers cutting and demanding words to the rich man he encounters.

All appears fine with the man who questions Jesus: he is financially well off and he keeps God's commands. What more could be required? But as he asks for more, so Jesus demands more: sell everything, give the money to the poor and follow me. This is too much for the man and he walks away, yet Jesus does not condemn him. Jewish culture regarded riches as a sign of God's favour. Jesus explains that eternal life is available to the wealthy, but only on the condition that they turn their wealth into blessings for the poor. The disciples want to know what their reward for following Jesus will be. He spells out spiritual rather than material blessings: a 100-fold return, plus suffering, plus eternal life. We may reflect on what more God is asking of us today, and if we are up to the challenge.

A personal prayer

Challenge me, God, where I have made too much of the 'things' in my life; where I have hankered for that which does not satisfy, and hoarded that which is not important. Give me a new perspective – help me to let go of that which has had too much of a hold on me, and instead, focus my heart on you.In Jesus' name. Amen.

Live your faith

Look for opportunities to be generous with your resources, whether money, possessions or skills. If you see a charity box, put something in. If you're able to help someone, lend a hand.

Questions for reflection

- ► Are you a hoarder?
- What is cluttering up your life?
- How can less be more, in terms of possessions?



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Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	<u>Organist</u>		
Oct 10	10.00am l	Rev. Ikani	A. Merritt	R. Pearson	R. & R. Buckwell	L. McCann	D. Zucarro	L. Rankin		
Oct 10	10 Communion		Flowers		Morning Tea					
	N/A		B. Coomber		N. & P. Woods					
					B. Pink					
Date	Time Lo	eader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	<u>Organist</u>		
Oct 17	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	G. Coomber	E. Richards	s L. Moss	L. McCann	G. Schneider	L. Rankin		
					T. Yates					
Oct 17	7 Communion		Flowers	Morning Tea						
	N/A		B. Couper	R. & J. Jeffers						
			•		R. Pearson					
Date '	Time Le	ader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	<u>Organist</u>		
Oct 24	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	R. Pearson	B. Couper	R. Ferguson	L. McCann	R. Bunting	L. Rankin		
					D. Stephens					
Oct 24	Commu	ınion	Flowers		Morning Tea					
	N/A	Α	B. Couper	H. McCann						
	·	·	•	·	J. & G. Schneider	<u>-</u>				
					·	-		-		

<u>Thank you to these willing people for keeping our Church services going. If you need to swap please endeavour to do so or if finding it difficult phone Julie 0418996592</u>

Prayer Points For the Week

Dear Heavenly Father, we praise You that You created us in Your image and have made us Your children. Help us to make the right choices and guide us day by day in our journey of faith.

Dear Lord, we pray for doctors, nurses, health authorities and all people who are working at the coal face dealing with problems coping with COVID - 19. Bless them as they interact with people, in particular those who are faced with isolation for a considerable length of time.

Loving God, You are our strength and protector. In times of doubt and adversity may we trust and obey Your Word. Whatever our circumstances, may we turn to You for guidance knowing that Your love is infinite and help us to trust Your plan for our lives.

Peter Woods

Lectionary Readings

Oct 10 - Pentecost 20	Oct 17 - Pentecost 21	Oct 24 - Pentecost 22	Oct 31 - Pentecost 23
Jb 23: 1 - 9, 16 - 17	Jb 38: 1 - 7, (34 - 41)	Jb 42: 1 - 6, 10 - 17	Ru 1: 1 - 18
Psalm 22: 1 - 15	Psalm 104: 1 - 9, 24 - 35	Psalm 34: 1 - 8, (19 - 22)	Psalm 146
Heb 4: 12- 16	Heb 5: 1- 10	Heb 7: 23- 28	Heb 9: 11- 14
Mark 10: 17 - 31	Mark 10: 35 - 45	Mark 10: 46 - 52	Mark 12: 28 - 34



There will be an online worship service for this Sunday October 10th. You are welcome to join together at the same time of 10.00 am and afterwards for a chat if you wish using this zoom link:

https://zoom.us/j/99984774012?pwd=Ky85NGtwbnZqblh2YzFGNDdDZEM1QT09 Meeting ID: 999 8477 4012 - Passcode: 1234

Online worship services will be available to be viewed via our website by 10.00am each Sunday. https://buc.unitingchurch.org.au

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Marlene Wilson

This week we continue to pray for Marlene and family after the passing of her husband John and also now as she faces ill-health herself.

Doreen Stephens

We continue to pray for Doreen and family after the passing of her husband John and especially as she undergoes a serious procedure in Melbourne next week.

<u>Isla Tiglias</u>

We also pray for little Isla Tiglias who is unwell in Perth and her parents Ian and Cheri Tiglias and her grandparents Jenny and John Tiglias.

Our prayers are also with Jenny's sister Andrea and her family.

A huge thank you to everyone for your wonderful flowers, food, cards and prayerful support of our families on the passing of John. Thank you to you all it is very much appreciated.

Doreen Stephens

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Risk It:

THE LEITCH CHRONICLES

Are you a creature of habit? Leaving your comfort zone is risky but enlivening. Try something you've wanted to do but have been too nervous to do so, or something you just read about in the newspaper or heard about through a friend. Stop in at a new breakfast place, travel somewhere alone, or eat foie gras on a Tuesday. Take a different route to work or on your daily walk, wear bright colours if you're usually dressed more sombrely, or share something about yourself that nobody knows. Shake it up! Even if your experience doesn't turn out the way you thought it would, you can still enjoy how it has expanded your life. Breaking just one habit a day will make room for some new ones. Give it a go!

September 2021 Lorraine Leitch Page 4

"WATCH THIS SPACE – FUNDRAISER FOR BUSHIKORI"







SUGA



THANK YOU FOR STILL WATCHING THIS SPACE! FURTHER NEWS ON OUR FORTHCOMING DRIVE-THRU.

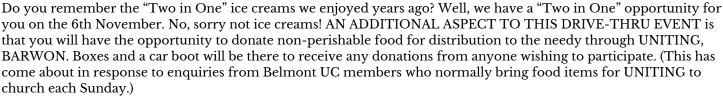
As indicated in last week's newsletter, a special DRIVE-THRU EVENT will be held at BELMONT UNITING CHURCH on SATURDAY, 6th NOVEMBER FROM 10 am – 11am. This is a major fund-raiser for BUSHIKORI CHRISTIAN CENTRE, replacing the usual film and trivia nights which can't be held this year because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Members of St John's Anglican Church are joining with Belmont Uniting Church in this combined effort. The driveway at the front of the Belmont Uniting Church, Thomson Street, (opposite Coles carpark) is ideal for a drive-

thru event, enabling us to maintain social distancing and minimum contact. Everyone attending is required to wear a suitable mask, please. Red buckets will be there to receive your donations, so there is no need to get out of your car! A warm smile will welcome you, even though it will be hidden behind a mask!

The Bushikori Christian Centre, located in a rural village near Mbale, Uganda, East Africa, celebrated its 25 years of mission achievements in 2019. The late ANNE LEAH WANDENDEYA, the then

Executive Director, wrote in her 2019 annual report: "In essence this mission started in 1980 as an orphanage and along the years it has evolved into a credible organization that has established various projects that directly respond to the needs of our community...... Our work in Bushikori Christian Centre for over 25 years is evidenced with thrilling testimonies of children, their parents, guardians and communities that have benefited especially through education, sponsorship, medical services and outreaches that we offer to people on a daily basis...... In 2019 we have 399 children on the sponsorship programme. 58 students in tertiary education, 40 in vocational schools, 140 in secondary schools and 99 pupils at primary level."



SO, PLEASE KEEP ON WATCHNG THIS SPACE FOR FURTHER NEWS NEXT WEEK! From the Mission and Outreach Committee, Sue and Bill Jennings (Friends of Bushikori Committee)

Uniting Care, Geelong suggests the following food donations -

Staple Foods - pasta sauce, tinned fruit & vegies, tuna, long life milk, cereal, baked beans, Coles vouchers for food (not for alcohol or cigarettes).

Christmas Treats - puddings & cakes, tinned ham, sweets & chocolate, juices & soft drinks. Any of these food donations will be gratefully received at the Drive Through on 6th November or at Sunday worship in November IF AND WHEN we are permitted to worship in person in November. THANK YOU, from the Mission & Outreach Committee.

from the Editor's desk



a Brain Teaser!!!!

Can you unjumble these blue colours?

ALBCOT

YSK

AYNV **PIPREASH**

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KAPCECO

MUARIAAQNE WOFROCLRNE

GAITENN

DAVERLEN

MENIRA RAUEZ

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A wise heart



Mark 10.17-31

When a rich man asks Jesus what will guarantee him access to eternal life, he is hoping that he will be reassured that his lifelong obedience to the law is enough. But Jesus knows the man's heart and how attached he is to his wealth. He challenges him to take the one step that will give him the assurance he seeks. Jesus points out that this is a challenge for everyone.

Now read Mark 10.17-31 see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

The man is so sure of his worthiness that he runs to Jesus. He has found it easy to please God in his comfortable life. But how will he fare if he has nothing but the offer of treasure in heaven? What is comfortable about your life? What challenge might Jesus give to you about what you need to let go of?

How good are you at following instructions? Are you helped or baffled by a recipe, or by a manual for a piece of equipment? There are laws which protect us, such as all driving on the same side of the road, and 'social rules' which enable us to interact with people without causing offence. During the Covid-19 crisis, did you keep two metres from others because the government told you to or to keep everyone safe? When the rich man in the Gospel reading suggested that following rules made him a 'good person', Jesus suggested a different way of measuring his behaviour. How do you feel about his advice?

Play a game based on an auction. Gather the family or a group of friends. Give each person a pile of golden autumn leaves (to represent 'wealth'). Show everyday household objects and ask for 'bids' (use larger and smaller items for variety). Discuss together why some things are more valuable than others. The value of some things cannot be expressed in money terms - can you think of any? Don't forget to put all the items back afterwards.

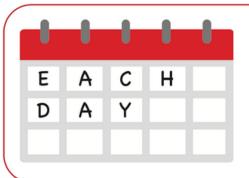
It is easy to lose an hour or two on emails, social media, games or TV. Keep a note of how much time you spend on such things in a day. The next day, exchange at least half of that time for a time of reading, praying, being quiet. How do you think God might feel that you have shared some time with him, that your focus has shifted?



Ask yourself: What do you make of this image - its title is 'With God all things are possible'?



Is it easier to give a little or a lot? Either on your own or with others, use your imagination. If you were given £1, how would you spend it? £10? £100,000? Does your way of thinking change as the number gets bigger? Would you start by spending it all on yourself first when it was a small or a large sum? What is the balance between generosity and greed? What informs your choices?



At the end of each day, think back over all you have done. Were there moments when you may have hurt God, others, or the planet? If not, then thank God for being with you and leading you in his path. If so, offer those things to God in prayer, and ask him to help you change your priorities and be aware of making choices that reflect your relationship with him.

Children's Activities

Name

ROOTS Activity sheet

10-16 October 2021



Mark 10.17-31

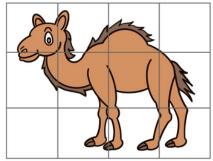
Jesus asks what is most important to us, and reminds us of what we might need to give up for God.

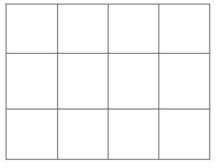


This is how difficult it is to enter God's kingdom if we don't put God first.



Use the grid to draw the camel.





Find these words from the story of the rich ruler.



Make a list of what can get in the way of a relationship with God. For the rich man, it was money. What else might become more important than God for some people?

...can become more important than loving God.

eternal laws money rich camel needle kingdom

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b	i	d	t	f	t	а	n	r	е	+	е
k	i	n	g	d	0	m	h	q	Р	j	0

important

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A wise heart Mark 10.17-31

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

ROO S at home 10-16 October 2021

s Jesus was walking along the road, a man came running up to him. He fell down on his knees and began to ask Jesus a question. 'What must I do to have

Jesus looked at the man kneeling in front of him: 'You know the answer to that! You must obey God's laws.'

'I have obeyed God's laws all of my life,' replied the man.

Jesus looked at the man kneeling in front of him with love. He explained a little more. There is one more thing you must do. Go, sell everything you have, take the money and give it all to the poor. Then come and follow me.'

This made the man very upset. You see, he was very rich. He loved his money and his possessions more than he loved God. As the man got up and walked sadly away, Jesus turned to his disciples. He said, 'It is so hard for rich people to enter the kingdom of God.'

The disciples were shocked by this, so Jesus explained. 'Money can become more important to people than

loving God. More important than loving other people. It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter God's kingdom.'



The disciples were even more confused and asked, 'How can anyone enter God's kingdom then?'

'Remember, with God, anything is possible,' Jesus replied. 'We left everything to follow you,' Peter said. 'Yes,' Jesus replied. 'And anyone who gives up things for me will be given a hundred times more. Those who appear to be important in the world are not important in God's kingdom. Those who seem unimportant in the world will be very important in God's kingdom.'

Mark 10.17-31

Did vou know?

· Eternal life means fullness of life in God's presence, both now

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All workers who are on the <u>Authorised Worker</u> list must have their first vaccine by October 15 and their second dose by November 26 to attend any workplace. This includes faith leaders, marriage celebrants and funerary services.

The following restrictions apply to all Regional Victorian Local Government Areas EXCLUDING those currently under lockdown. If you live and/or work in any LGA under lockdown, you should refer to the Metro Melbourne FAQs for guidance for the duration of the lockdown period.

- Stay at Home requirements have been lifted, but residents of Regional Victoria must not travel to metropolitan Melbourne or any regional area which is in lockdown other than for permitted reasons (eg permitted work, to visit an intimate partner, for care or compassionate reasons, to obtain goods/services provided they are from the nearest facility to your home). Travel to Metro Melb or other lockdown regions for a COVID vaccination is not permitted (even if you have a pre-existing booking). Businesses in Regional Victoria must conduct an ID check to ensure patrons are not from metro Melbourne or other lockdown regions.
- Masks must be carried at all times and must be worn at all times indoors and outdoors by Victorians aged 12 years or over unless at home, or when visiting an intimate partner's place of residence, or if an exemption applies. Face masks are recommended for primary school aged children indoors or outdoors unless at home or if an exemption applies. Face masks may only be removed to eat and to drink non-alcoholic beverages.
- **Visitors to the home** are not permitted. Intimate partner visits or single person bubble permitted.
- **Public outdoor gatherings** are limited to 10 people only. This does not include back yards or other areas of a private residence.

- Religious gatherings and ceremonies are permitted with up to 20 persons per venue, plus those workers necessary to conduct the ceremony. COVID Check-in marshals must ensure all attendees check-in.
- Funerals (indoors or outdoors) maximum of 20 people (or 5 if held at a private home) plus those required to conduct the funeral, providing all persons in attendance are from Regional Victoria. Children under 12 months are not counted in the cap. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure all attendees check-in
- Weddings (indoors or outdoors) maximum of 10 people at a venue, including the couple and two witnesses. The celebrant and one photographer are additional to the cap. Children under 12 months are not counted in the cap. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure all attendees check-in. Dancefloors not permitted.
- What face-to-face gatherings are permitted at church?

Indoor and/or outdoor religious gatherings are allowed, subject to maximum attendance caps and density limits, with COVIDSafe plans including cleaning and signage. Covid Check-in Marshals must be used to ensure check-in upon

entry using the Service Victoria app (QR code), even for visits less than 15 minutes.

WORSHIP SERVICES

Religious gatherings and ceremonies are permitted with up to 20 persons per venue, plus those workers necessary to conduct the ceremony. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure all attendees check-in using the Services Victoria app (see p4).

As of10/09/2021

Do face masks have to be worn at all times during worship?

- Yes. Masks are currently mandatory in all settings, apart from at home, unless an individual has a valid reason for not wearing one. Ministers or other faith
- leaders may remove their masks whilst leading worship, as teaching/broadcasting/public speaking are valid exceptions.

Continued P2



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