

Preaching

9am Rev Wendy McHugh

Readings

Lam 1:1-6, 3:19-26

2 Tim 1:1-14,

Luke 17:5-10



WELCOME TO AUC!

Please join us for refreshments in the breezeway after the service.

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Please pray for:

Leaders at Assembly, Synod and Presbytery for wisdom and discernment in making decisions affecting the wider church.

Our elders and members of the Church Council as they make decisions affecting the life of the church.

The Joint Nominating Committee and Presbytery as they seek to discern the calling of a new ministry agent for our congregation.

For God's strength and blessing to shower on the many of our number who need an extra amount of God's peace and healing.

Uniting World, our partnering churches in the Pacific Islands.

A just resolution to the war in Ukraine

Faith you can take for granted

In today's reading from the gospel according to Luke, Jesus tackles this issue of striving to earn favour, but he comes at it from a rather unexpected angle. There doesn't seem to be anything wrong with what the disciples are asking. "Lord, increase our faith!"

When he says if you had enough faith you could move mountains, his point is that you don't and you can't. And that that is not about to change. He is taking the mickey out of the very idea. He is saying you don't need more faith; that faith is not something you can build up extra reserves of to enable you to do miraculous things. Faith is not a thing that you can have measurable amounts of, more or less. Faith is something you do. Just get on with living with integrity and loving one another and stop trying to measure your performance on some sort of faith meter.

He points to the example of a person who owns a slave and how you don't go out of your way to shower the slave with gratitude every time they do their job. So it is with us, he says. When we have done all that God requires of us, we should just say, "We are only slaves, and we have only done our job. Nothing special."

Now the connection to the question about acquiring more faith is not obvious here, but I think what Jesus is doing is not so much discussing the question as unmasking the motivation behind it. We think that the tough demands of accountability and forgiveness are the hard part of what Jesus has to say, but Jesus is turning it back and saying that the reason we find that so hard is because we are really having even more trouble with something else: the basic nature of our relationship with God.

What Jesus is exposing in me here, and perhaps in some of you too, is my false belief that I can earn God's love and grace, and that I have to.

And the double edged message of Jesus in this passage is just about the hardest thing in the whole gospel for me to hear, and yet it is at the very heart of the good news. On the one hand, Jesus is telling me that I am absolutely right. The standards required to please God and earn God's love are unattainable.

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But that is not all Jesus is saying. By unmasking the futility of our desperate striving and confronting us with this bad news, he is pointing to something else. He is preparing us for the gospel, the good news, even though he is acknowledging how much difficulty we will have accepting it. He is telling us that our efforts to earn God's love and grace are not the gospel at all.

But the gospel which Jesus embodied and to which Jesus is pointing here is nothing like that. God's love and favour are given to us as a free gift, and given to us in reckless abundance. Whether we do anything God asks of us or nothing God asks of us, God loves us and cherishes us and offers us more joy and security and freedom than we could ever imagine. There is nothing we can do that could make God love us more, and nothing we could fail to do that would make God love us less. .

And if there is any quid pro quo in it, any earning in the relationship at all, it is that God has paid such a huge price for us, has made such enormous sacrifices for us, that God has earned the right to our love and gratitude and commitment. It is not that we ever have to earn God's.

But the truth is that all my efforts to earn God's love are proving futile anyway. Clinging to control of the relationship has not meant that the relationship has been producing what I was hungering for. Quite the opposite. All it has done is turn me in on myself and shut me off from the experience of God's love and grace. And when we hold out our hands to receive the broken bread, it is not in the expectation that it will prove to be some kind of spiritual steroid to build up our faith and enable us to perform at a higher level. We do these things because God has sacrificed everything for us and poured out love and mercy and desire and grace on us in lavish abundance, more than we could ever comprehend, more than our hungering hearts could ever consume. And we do these things so that we might write the gospel story into our hearts, that we might act it out and so come to know, deep in our bones, that it is only as we release our controlling grip and stand empty-handed and vulnerable and trusting before God, that we will enter into the joyous freedom of those who know themselves beloved and drink deeply from the wellsprings of mercy and grace.

(From a sermon by Nathan Nettelton at <http://southyarrabaptist.church/sermons/faith-you-can-take-for-granted/>)

Basis Of Union Study

Following groups start this coming week:

**Thursday
6 October 2022.
9.30am.**

Led by **Kate Dix** in the church

Fridays at 10.30am.

Led by **Richard Wallace** in the home of **Ken & Lesley Northey**

Study books are available now. Get yours to do the pre-reading before the study.
(Note attached to book)

For further information you may contact **Kate Dix** on 0429 609509



Sunday Service 2-10-2022 Holy Communion

Live Streaming:

We welcome and thank **Rev Wendy McHugh** for bringing the message to us today.

Welcome to our service here and to those at home.

To participate in worship, please click on the link below and sit back and wait for the service to start. Be sure to prepare for the sacrament of communion.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCM_yuTGxZEXsdQPd3XEQbtA/live

If you miss it, or would like to share it with someone, the recordings are on our website.



Church Council meeting summary

At the Church Council meeting on 21 September various matters were discussed including the following:

- Our difficult financial situation was noted and ways of encouraging members of our congregation to offer more financially were discussed.
- Acceptance of the Auditor's Report and certificate of completion of Audit was noted and are being forwarded to both Synod and Presbytery for noting.
- It was noted that planning for Christmas and Advent services is starting
- CREST request for AUC logo to be included on their website in recognition of the strong and appreciated relationship we have with them (thank you Jayne!)
- The Outreach Stream advised that there was a short hiatus with the operation of Social Lane, but that it is back in operation – watch this space!
- Peter Phillips is planning a working bee for the church soon
- Don Adamson has been investigating a couple of matters at the manse that have been reported.
- Election of elders, council members

It was noted that there would be a need for an election of Church Council members as some members terms finish at the end of the year.

Arrangements for the election are as follows:

16 October Call for nominations for Church Council

30 October Nominations close

6 November Congregational Meeting and election of Council members and elders.

Our partners need your help to end violence in the Pacific



In Fiji, Vanuatu, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands and beyond, there are committed champions of this work in our partner churches, but they lack the resources to make the large-scale and institutional transformation necessary to grow the program and make widespread change.

When I asked Rev Noa how we in the Uniting Church can support in prayer, he said: *Please pray for me. This work is not easy. And pray for our church as we go further and deeper into discerning the will of God and what is right. Thank you all in the Uniting Church for your partnership. We need your prayers and support as we try to bring peace and stability to our nation and our world.*

Ultimately, it has the power

to transform the attitudes and norms that perpetuate violence into positive loving human relationships as God intended.

Sincerely yours,

Dr Sureka Goringe

National Director

UnitingWorld

Continue over page for
donation information.





UnitingWorld
connecting communities for life

You can help the Pacific Church end family violence through God's vision of dignity, equality and safety for all people.

Your donation will be used to resource the church to end violence. It can enable women's fellowship groups, Christian leaders and advocates like Rev Noa to travel across their islands and host workshops on gender equality and anti-violence. It can support church leaders to be trained as advocates to raise awareness in their communities. It can help our partners print Bible studies and gender equality resources in local languages. **All donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible**

UnitingWorld is the international aid and partnerships agency of the Uniting Church in Australia. We work for a world where lives are whole and hopeful, free from poverty and injustice.

For more information go to: www.unitingworld.org.au

**Offerings to date
27 September 2022**

Week \$1,624.22

Budgeted offerings
year to date. \$24,326

Offerings Year to date
\$21,449.11

Difference minus \$2,876.89

**Donations Year to-date
\$5092**

Jams & Chutneys

Homemade Jams & Chutneys

Assorted flavours

\$5 a bottle



Money goes to the
Distress Fund.

Please put money in an envelope
marked jam/chutney and place in
the collection box.

See Bill or Vi Radcliffe for any
information.

Rosters & Readings for 9th October 2022

9am Service

Preacher	David M
Reader	Lesley N
Door Stewards	Lesley N
Offering	Greg S, Ian D
Livestream	Carmel
Data	Reg D
Organ	Don A
Morning Tea	Ann & Giordano L

Lectionary Readings

*Jer 29:1, 4-7, Ps 66:1-12
2 Tim 2:8-15, Luke 17:11-19*

AUC Prayer Network.

(aucprayer@bigpond.com)

If you wish to have a prayer request circulated across the AUC Prayer Network, or would like to be included in the prayer network notices, please email your request to our direct email address:



aucprayer@bigpond.com,

or phone Kate on: 0429 609 509.

(Important: requests for prayer on behalf of others requires their personal permission. This is due to confidentiality requirements and government legislation. Please ask first.)