

Readings

Proverbs 1:20-33

Psalm 19

James 3:1-12

Mark 8:27-38



Preaching

9am Rev Wendy McHugh

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 our church.

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

Many of our number who are in need of healing, comfort and strength of heart.

The youth of our city.

An end to the hostilities in Ukraine and for actions that will bring about a just and lasting peace. And an end to the Israel-Hamas conflict.

That's not a cross!

When Jesus spoke, he often used vivid images that easily took root in people's minds and lived on with them. In many cases now, most of the people who use them would have no idea who first said them (for example "turn the other cheek" and in some cases they have taken on such a life of their own, separate from their original context, that they are now used to mean something quite different from what they meant when Jesus said them. When that happens, we need to be particularly careful, because we can easily read the modern meaning back into the words of Jesus and so completely miss the point of what he was saying.

This Sunday's gospel reading contains a classic case. How often do you hear people talking about "the cross they have to bear"? In essence, the phrase has come to mean that you have to learn to live with those things that life throws at you that make things harder than they might otherwise be.

In this context Jesus was talking about what it means to be his follower, and so "take up your cross and follow" was talking quite specifically about our willingness to cop the consequences of following Jesus, of living out the implications of our baptism.

For Jesus, as he had just explained to his disciples and argued with Peter about, taking up his cross literally meant being willing to be killed for what he was committed to. When he arrived in Jerusalem, the religious and national leaders gave him a simple choice — back down or we'll have you killed. He either had to walk away from the things he had been saying and doing — to stop rocking the boat — or he had to hold his ground and pay the ultimate price for it. He has just explained that to his disciples when he says, "those who want to be my followers must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me." He is saying that if you choose to take your stand with him, you have to be willing to cop the consequences. When Jesus walks out into the open to protest about the way things are, you can either look on from a distance or you can follow him. And when Jesus says that if you want to be his follower you have to "deny yourself", he is saying that you have to hand over the keys. Denying yourself means relinquishing the right to determine which issues you'll stand with Jesus on and which issues you'll keep quiet about. Denying yourself means that every time the way of Jesus comes into conflict with the ways of the world around you, you will not make the decision on the basis of what is best for you, you will simply follow Jesus, taking up your cross and coping the consequences.

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If there was any doubt about what he was meaning, Jesus dispels it at the end of this passage. “If you’re too embarrassed to be associated with me when my ways are despised or ridiculed by those around you, don’t expect me to welcome you with open arms when it’s convenient to you.”

The consequences of following Jesus will not be the same for everyone. In some times and places it has carried the death penalty. Taking up your cross has literally meant signing your own death warrant. Christianity is not likely to become illegal here in the foreseeable future, but it is also not likely to become the way most people choose to live. If you choose to follow Jesus you will have to accept that that will mean living in ways that will not endear you to many of those you have to deal with. The further you follow Jesus, the more of those consequences you will discover and have to begin living. Each time a new one becomes apparent to you, you will only have two choices — to follow Jesus or to give up following Jesus completely. I guess there is a third option — you could play at being Christian, but it seems that what Jesus is saying here is that that option is really just a disguised version of giving up following completely.

Jesus does include the promise of resurrection in this same discussion. If you choose to follow Jesus, that’s the destination. That’s what it is all about. That is what Jesus came for and it is why we are here. And that promise of resurrection contains promise for all those other things we have blithely and wrongly referred to as crosses. For those who struggle with sickness and pain, there is the promise of a day when all will be healed and whole. For those struggling with conflict and breakdown, there is the promise of a day of reconciliation and communion. For those who are exploited or discarded, there is the promise of a day of justice when the downtrodden will be lifted up and robed in glory. They are not crosses, but Jesus takes them seriously and longs to bring us freedom. The promise is awesome, but the road between here and there is only traversed by those who are willing to cop the consequences that lie along the way — those who are willing to take up their cross and follow.

(From a sermon by Nathan Nettleton at <https://southyarrabaptist.church/sermons/thats-not-a-cross/>)

Sunday Service 15 September 2024 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.

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 bulletin bloopers

Barbara C remains in hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack’s sermons.

Jean will be leading a weight-management series Wednesday nights. She has used the program herself and has been growing like crazy



Message from the Moderator and General Secretary of Synod

Dear Church family,

Over the past week you will have likely read the media coverage involving the Uniting Church, one of our early learning centres, and Ashley Griffith, who recently pleaded guilty to more than 300 charges related to crimes against children over many years.

This matter continues to be deeply shocking and distressing for us all – our families and workers in early childcare and for you our ministry leaders and church members.

Our commitment as a church to the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable individuals remains unwavering. We share in the pain and heartbreak experienced by our community when any child is harmed.

We are deeply committed as a Church to the welfare of all children in our care and have strong child protection policies and procedures across all our network, including our childcare centres.

Last week was National Child Protection Week and the theme was focused around 'Every Conversation Matters', emphasising the power of conversations to keep children and young people safe and well. As your Moderator I have spoken out publicly and reaffirmed our commitment to creating safe places for children and adults.

I recognise that coverage of the story over the past week may be triggering for some people. If you are distressed by this news and need to discuss it with someone, please reach out to your local Minister or pastoral leader. You can also contact 24/7 confidential support services such as Lifeline on 13 11 14.

In line with our Church policies and procedures with respect to child safety, should you ever see, hear, or even suspect that the safety and wellbeing of a child or vulnerable individual in our care is at risk, you should immediately report your concerns via the following:

Safe Church - 07 3377 9823 or safechurch@ucaqld.com.au

Complaints - 1800 586 591

Protect incident reporting platform on the Hub - <https://hub.ucaqld.com.au/resources/safe-church/>

Lastly, I invite you to join me in prayer for the families and children affected by these events, for the dedicated childcare staff who work diligently to ensure children's safety, and for the exceptional law enforcement personnel involved in this challenging work.

Grace & peace to you all,

Rev Bruce Moore
Moderator

Rev Adam McIntosh
General Secretary

CHANGE OF VENUE - *For Times Such as These* Study groups

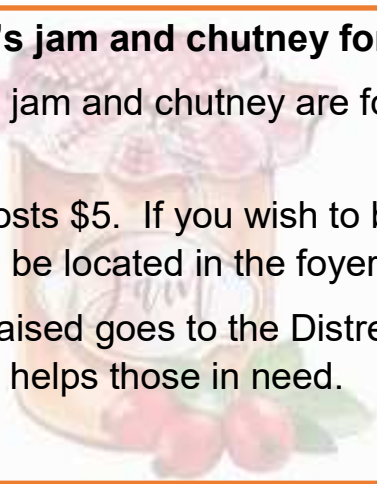
Please note that the Friday morning study group will not meet in the church. As Lesley Northey is now home from hospital, the Friday study will begin on 4th October at 9.30a.m in Lesley's home. As the group is now full, anyone who would like to do the study is welcome to attend the Tuesday evening group in the church on 1st October at 7.00pm. You may phone Kate on 0429609509 for more information

Bill and Vi's jam and chutney for sale

Bill and Vi's jam and chutney are for sale again.

A jar only costs \$5. If you wish to buy a jar, they will be located in the foyer.

All money raised goes to the Distress Fund which helps those in need.



**Offerings to date 10 September
2024**

Week \$1,209.22

Budgeted Offerings \$15,200

Offerings year to date \$ 16,848.47

Difference plus \$1,648.47



AUC Bank Details:

Bank: ANZ

BSB: 014-010

Account Number:

General Acc - 287295271

Distress Fund Acc - 287295327

Account Name: UCA Aitkenvale

Reference: Offering, Donation, (no need to include your name or any other details)



Rosters & Readings for 22 September 2024

9am Service

Preacher	Rev Richard Wallace
Reader	Vaal D
Greeters	Ruth M
Offering	Greg S & Royce D
Livestream	Carmel
Data	Joan G
Organ	Don A
Morning Tea	Peter & Lyn Phillips

Lectionary Readings

Prov 31:10-31

Psalm 1

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

Mark: 9:30-37

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.)

