Our Common Life

Blackall Range Uniting Churches

Maleny | Montville | Palmwoods

Uniting in Christ | Acting with love | Living with hope | Witnessing in faith | Working for justice

May 24 2020+

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

We are continuing to publish our weekly Notices.
Please stay connected with us.

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Services: Service, Prayers and Readings

Catch up on our E-Services under E-Broadcasts on the BRUC Web-page: www.ourcommonlife.org.au

This Sunday 24th May
Acts 1:6-14, Psalm 68:1-10,32-35
1 Peter 4:12-14,5:6-11 John17:1-26

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Next Sunday 31st May Pentecost
Prayers and Readings
Acts 2:1-21 or Numbers 11:24-30,
Psalm 104:24-34,35b
1Corinthians 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21,
John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39

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The Week Ahead

Wednesday Meditation has been cancelled due to public safety regulations.

Wednesday May 27th – Cuppa Conversation
Join us for our Cuppa Conversation on www.ourcommonlife.org.au under Cuppa Conversations

Thursday May 28th
9am-3pm Church Office open 5429 6995

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Blackall Range Uniting Churches acknowledge the Jinibara and Kabi Kabi / Gubbi Gubbi peoples who are the traditional owners of this land.

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May they be one, *so that* the world may believe
John 17 vs 1-26

God's Presence & Glory: We live in the interim time, the time between Ascension and Christ's return, the time of Christ's physical absence. Astoundingly, God chose the church to make His presence and Glory visible in this time. Moreover, Jesus's prayer in John 17 asks God that God's love and glory be made visible through the unity of the church, *so that* the world may believe God' loves them.

Jesus' Prayer can be read in 3 parts:

Verses 1-5: Jesus prays about the relationship between Him and the Father and how they glorified one another, and Christ made God known to the world.

Verses 6-19 Jesus prays for the church. For protection (vs 11, 15) and sanctification (vs 17) of the church; and how He was glorified through the church (vs 10).

Verses 20-26 Jesus prays for the world; and prays for unity of the church, so that the world may come to believe and know God; and so that God may be glorified. In a sense the world's salvation and the manifestation of God's glory in this world is linked to the unity of the church. This is the church's purpose. It's calling.

BRUC 2020+ The issue before us is how do we as BRUC, part of the *Uniting Church of Australia,* seek and work for unity? To ask ourselves, in this unusual time that compels reflection, what can we do together - within our own unified congregation BRUC, but also further afield with other churches, along the Blackall Hinterland, the Sunshine Coast and further afield? It may be helpful to revisit out identity set out in the *Basis of Union* (1977); to reclaim our values and declarations in the *Statement to the Nation* 1977 and 1988, in the *Covenant Statement* of 1994.

Jesus passionately prayed for unity in the church. It is not an option. It is a gift from God. A given. We need to strive to become what we already are: One in Christ – so that the world may believe, and God's glory made visible on earth. This is our purpose. This is our mission.

Study on the Holy Spirit

A 7 week study on the Holy Spirit will commence on 31 May, Pentecost, based on the Nicene Creed. The program is attached. Materials for the study will become available every week. The study could be used individually or in small groups.

Heavens Above!

Acts 1:6-14

Although our view of the universe today is very different from that held by people in biblical times, we still commonly refer to heaven as being up there. We don't really think that heaven is a place above the sky, but by talking that way we imply that heaven is on another level of existence, superior to that which we ordinarily experience. When we refer to heaven as a place, we know that it is not a physical location; it is, rather, a spiritual reality. While the biblical idea of heaven is that it is God's home, God's home is not physical, but spiritual.

God's kingdom is a realm of the spirit. I find it more helpful to think of life in heaven as life on a different dimension or in a different state of consciousness rather than as a place. Psychologically, it feels distant or close depending upon our state of mind and spirit at the time. And it's not just imaginary or speculative. Whenever we feel a sense of God's peace, acceptance and forgiveness, we experience a little of the heaven experience. Whenever we know the love of God holding us, embracing us, we get a taste of heaven.

So how do we interpret the Ascension story of Acts1:6-14? Jesus is not removed from us into some far distant place, but rather he is a spiritual reality, one with God; invisible, but present; asking us to be his witnesses wherever we are whether it be at home or in some far distant place. The Spirit of God and of his Christ is with us empowering and directing us in that task. Are we responding?

- Contrast the biblical idea of heaven with the ideas popularly held by people today?
- Which most strongly influences your idea of heaven: the biblical view or popular opinion?
- What, in Acts 1:6-14, suggests that we are to be Christ's witnesses wherever we are?
- Traditionally Christmas, Easter, Ascension Day and Pentecost are the great festival days of the Christian calendar. Which is most important for you? Why?

Rev Ron Potter ***Piula Publications***

RESUMPTION OF SMALL GROUPS

Small Groups are permitted to gather from this Friday at midnight as the covid-19 restriction commence to be relaxed. Participants in activities must feel comfortable to attend and continue to practice 'social distancing'.
In public spaces (including Church building) - up to 10 people. In homes - up to 5 visitors
Some restaurants/cafes will be open but restricted to 10 at any one time.
Where our groups don't exceed 10 people, we are allowing the resumption of use of Church buildings. Where groups are meeting in homes, please ensure a limit of 5 visitors.

IT IS TIME FOR A PASTORAL CARE REVIEW.

So, do you have concerns or issues that we can help with, or need someone to talk to, or would you like extra prayer? For any of these matters, please ring Dorothy 5494 2486 so that she can initiate help in some form. God's love is surrounding you and we wish to reinforce His care. Dorothy.

Memorise our Corona-Cs, there are now 11!.
Calm – be calm.
Cautious – be cautious.
Common sense – use your common sense.
Care – take care of yourselves and others.
Commit – commit the COVID-19 pandemic to prayer.
Candle – Light the COVID-19 prayer-candle at 7pm (19:00) in your window every night as a symbol of hope.
Connect – remember to connect with one another.
Communicate – talk to someone.

Cuppa Conversations - follow our Cuppa Conversations on-line, or have one of your own.

Congregation – pray for and reach out to someone you do not know in the broader BRUC congregation

Community – pray for and reach out to someone in the community.

REFLECTION GALLERY

The Reflection Gallery at Montville Church will be opened this weekend, subject to safety and hygiene requirements. The matter was given consideration and in the light of the hope and opportunity the Reflection Gallery gives to the public, and further in light of the low probability of any possible infections transmitted by visitors to the gallery it was resolved by Council to re-open the gallery. **If anyone across the BRUC would like to join the team in helping to maintain the safety and hygiene requirements on a roster basis, please contact Ron Potter or Liena**. Otherwise simply visit the gallery to reflect on the paintings. The Reflection Gallery's Facebook remains operative (facebook.com/UCMontville). Take time to read the accompanying text and let God speak through both word and image. Ron Potter

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