

August Mission of the Month:



Gyanankur English School

is an independent Indian school for Preschool to Year 10 in Kesnand, a village near Pune in India, 4 hours' drive southeast of Mumbai.

The school has a Christian board to oversee it and many Christian teachers. Anne Weeks' friend Melinda Parker, who now lives in Sydney, is the Honorary Director & Anne helps out with administration.

Gyanankur's core values are:

1. Joy: School should be fun!
2. Service: not to be served, but to serve.
3. Transparency: lives and relationships marked by openness and honesty.
4. Dignity: everyone is treated with respect.

These are 4 counter-cultural values for India, where discrimination (based on one's colour or status), bribery & corruption are normal.

Since the Covid pandemic struck, the school has been closed but lessons and assemblies happen online. Despite all the challenges, all 42 Year 10 students passed their exams and graduated.

Please pray for the staff on reduced salaries and especially for the headmistress, whose husband recently died from Covid.



Please keep giving!

We may not be meeting physically for worship, but we still have bills to pay and ministries to support. You are encouraged to make use of the electronic funds transfer option from your bank account to the Uniting Financial Services Congregation account using the following information:

BUC Property Committee BSB 634-634 Acc 10000-1487

Thank you for your generous support for the work of the Gospel.

WHAT'S ON @ BUC?

Look out for emails with information about virtual (Zoom) Prayer meetings and "Get-togethers".

All meetings at the Church are post-poned until the covid lockdown order is lifted.



Belrose Uniting Church
in the Assembly of Confessing Congregations
of the Uniting Church in Australia
Corner Forest Way and Morgan Road, Belrose

We aim TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world since 1916.

GOOD NEWS WEEKLY

Sunday 22nd August 2021
9th Sunday of
Covid Lockdown 4.0

Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 124:8

As the numbers of covid cases, hospitalizations and deaths, remains high, we could understandably feel overwhelmed, anxious and fearful. As the lockdown conditions continue, and become stricter, our frustrations and feelings of isolation and disconnectedness also grow. Perhaps we feel swamped and swallowed up, drowning in these raw and painful emotions as our hope for some sort of "normality" wanes with each passing day.

However, in the midst of all of this, I take some comfort from Psalm 124:
If the Lord had not been on our side the flood would have engulfed us, the torrent would have swept over us, the raging waters would have swept us away. (Ps 124:1, 4, 5)

What comfort: God is on our side! The consistent message of the Bible is that God has not abandoned us. Despite all human sinfulness and brokenness in our world – human and natural – God has not forgotten about us, or His covenant promise to forgive, save and reconcile. And so we are encouraged to keep on trusting, praying and persevering, knowing our help is the Lord, whose name is synonymous with faithfulness and love. May God bless you and keep your head above the "waters". *Ian Weeks*

Pastor: Rev Ian Weeks
(Ph) 9451 3916 (Mob) 0408 308 196
Wednesday – Monday (Tuesday off)
mail@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au
Prayer Requests:
Prayer.team@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au



August Sermon Series: Judges - *Light in a dark world*

Throughout August we will be exploring the theme: ***Light in a dark world*** from the **OT book of Judges**. As you read through this book, I hope you will see the hand of God at work bringing light to a world darkened by calamity and human wickedness.

Pray: *"Your word, O Lord, is eternal, it stands firm in the heavens."* (Ps 119:89) God, continue to teach me from Your word that I might stand firm in your light, in Jesus name. Amen.

Read: Judges 10:6 – 11:11

Reflect: *Who will save us from ourselves?* Judges 10 & 11

In the book of Judges we see the best (people repenting and trusting God), and worst (the downward spiritual spiral accelerates) of human behaviour.

1. A Great Fall

Ch 10:6 - 9

How low can they go?

Once again we see a short lived time of peace. After the rule of Gideon (chs 6 – 8) there is a litany of Judges with serious character flaws, each progressively wayward (Abimelech), and some not even rating a full story (Tola & Jair). In Ch 10:6, we witness the viscous cycle in action again:

- * Forsaking God, worshiping pagan "gods"
- * Disobedience and ensuing judgement – the rise of the Ammonites

2. A Great Desperation

Ch 10:10 - 18

Suffering God's judgement at the hands of the Ammonites, the people desperately cry out to God for help. (v 10) But it is a half-hearted cry; with confession, but no repentance.

God's heartbreaking response - 6 most dreadful words in the Bible: *"I will no longer save you."* (v 13) How could God say such a thing!? A signal of the how God feels about sin – it is serious!!

The people seem to get the message & this time their confession is accompanied by repentance – they got rid of the foreign "gods" and served the Lord (v 16)

God's gracious response: compassion (v 16) God could bear their misery no longer and sets up to provide a rescuer.

Desperate for a leader, a rash promise is made (v 18) It seems they can't wait for God and they take matters into their own hands, seeking out anybody who will step up – regardless of their character.

3. A Great Miracle

Ch 11

One of the great miracles of Judges is that God persists with His wayward people, and we are introduced to Jephthah. How shall he be known?:

Jephthah the son of a prostitute and an outcast	vv 1 – 13
Jephthah the bold, ready to take up the challenge	vv 4 - 28
Jephthah the rash, bargaining with God for victory	vv 29 - 31
Jephthah the victorious, winning by God's hand	vv 32,33
Jephthah the regretful, rueing his rash vow	vv 34 – 40

Despite all of these flaws, Jephthah is known as an example of faith!

The great miracles of Judges 10 & 11:

- * That God should forgive such wickedness and deliver His people from His just judgement
- * That God should use such a flawed leader, count him as a "saint" and commend him for his faith (see Heb 11:32 - 40).

Throughout the book of judges, and indeed throughout the history of the Church, there is flawed leadership – yet God continues to be gracious to His people:

***Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
His love endures forever! (Psalm 136:1)***

Who will save us from ourselves?

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (1 John 4:10)

Pray: Gracious God, thank you for your faithful love. Thank you that You took the initiative to love me, even before I loved You. By Your Holy Spirit, enable me to demonstrate true repentance by forsaking all that is displeasing to You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

The physical weekly Prayer Meetings are in recess until covid lockdown restrictions are lifted, but all are welcome to join in the Zoom prayer gatherings.

If you would like to participate but are not getting the email notifications, please email me as I may not have your correct email address: mail@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- * Gordon Allan
- * Jen Dinning
- * Marcia Schnabel
- * Joan Sena
- * Gordon Richardson
- * John Bishop
- * Matt Phillips
- * Sierk Dykman

* Those in our Church family and wider community who are in isolation as a result of the recent local covid outbreak; & pray for revival in our nation!

* World: global covid crisis; refugees & the persecuted Church; our international mission partners (Bruce & Kathy, Edwardes Family)
Have a prayer request? * Email: prayer.team@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au

