

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:

BCU Property Committee BSB 634-634 Acc 10000-1487

Mission of the Month giving can be done electronically as well: write "Mission" in the description.

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 29th August 2021
10th Sunday of
Covid Lockdown 4.0

*Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be shaken but endures for ever.*

As the mountains surround Jerusalem,

so the LORD surrounds his people both now and for evermore.
Psalm 125:1, 2

A Time for Perseverance

In this time of covid lock down, we are constantly being asked by those in authority to endure, to hang on, to be patient, and keep on observing the necessary restrictions. We want to comply, but many are finding this exhausting – it is frustrating, inconvenient, boring, and emotionally and spiritually draining. Endurance is plain hard work!

In Psalm 125 we find some comfort in the knowledge that we have help. God is propping us up as we run this marathon of endurance. The Psalmist looks at the mountains that God has established: solid, immovable, able to stand firm against the battering of weather or the onslaught of disaster.

In the care of God, we can be like that. We can endure. God is beside us, ahead of us, behind us, to carry us through. We can be like the marathon runner who is sustained by the road crew and urged on by the crowd. May God's grace sustain you as you persevere. *Ian Weeks*

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us ...
Hebrews 12:1

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* *In Whose Strength Samson? Judges 13 – 16*

The book of Judges recounts a dark period in Israel's history. The downward cycle of spiritual depravity continues. Despite God's patience and gracious deliverance of them from their enemies, once again another chapter begins with: "*Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord*", and again they are subject to God's judgement, this time by the Philistines (Judges 13:1).

Pray: *Heavenly Father, in a world of chaos, thank you that you are constant, faithful and sovereign. Continue to show me from Your Word how trustworthy you are, in Jesus name. Amen.*

Read: Judges Chs 13 – 16

Reflect:

1. A Shimmering Light

Judges 13

These may be dark times BUT, there is a light in the darkness – we are introduced to a couple who receive a promise from God: the blessing of a "miraculous" child (v3).

The birth of Samson reads almost like a Christmas narrative: the promise of a baby in unlikely circumstances, who would be set apart for God as a gift to save the people (vv 3 - 23).

The Nazirite conditions (Numbers 6:1- 8) to be set apart for God by:

- i) staying away from fermented drink
- ii) no haircuts
- iii) staying away from the dead

The Spirit of God at work – blessing & stirring (vv 24, 25)

2. Samson: Hope? Hippy? Hero?

Judges 14 - 16

The Plans of God at work – a perplexing marriage (14:1 – 4)

The Spirit of God at Work – Samson's strength (14:5 – 7, 19)

Samson – an unlikely Spirit-filled servant

- * Breaking the Nazirite vow #3 – the deal lion (14:8,9)
- * Breaking the Nazirite vow # 1 – a pagan wedding feast (14:10)
- * Driven by anger, vengeance & violence (14:19, 20; 15:1 – 9)

But God still uses him & blesses him

- * Caught by Philistines, but a Spirit-empowered escape (15:9-17)
- * God provides & sustains (15:18 – 20)

Samson's loss of focus: lust (a prostitute) & love (Delilah) Ch 16:1 - 19

- * Breaking the Nazirite ethos – set apart for God
- * Breaking the Nazirite vow # 2 – a haircut

Samson – a tragedy of lost potential, of squandering God-given gifts

- * "The Lord had left him" (16:20)
- * Delivered to the Philistines, imprisoned, humiliated (16:21 – 25)

Yet the Spirit of God continued to use Samson!

- * God's victory over the pagan god Dagon (16:23, 28 – 30)

4. A Shimmering Light Pointing to a Bright Light

Samson – full of promise and disappointment: a candle in the wind? Samson was born as one would who would "*begin the deliverance of Israel ..*" (Ch 13:5), a job that many years later King David would accomplish. But even then the "salvation" was temporary.

In the birth of Jesus we find the birth of a baby full of promise & does not disappoint; a Saviour who would save his people from their sins (Matt 1:21)

In Samson we see a flickering candle, blown out by the wind of lust, anger, vengeance and selfishness. In Jesus we see a bright and steady light that could not be extinguished; the light of God's grace shining in the darkness.

Pray: *O Lord, forgive me when I take my eyes off you & follow my own path. Fill me with your Holy Spirit that I may burn brightly in Your strength and for Your glory. In Jesus' name. 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
- * Kin Allen – recovering from 2 hip replacement surgeries

* 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; Christians in Afghanistan; our international mission partners (Bruce & Kathy in Nigeria, Edwardes Family in Ireland)

Have a prayer request? * Email: prayer.team@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au

