



Assembly of
Confessing
Congregations

BELROSE UNITING CHURCH

Good News Quarterly

Issue # 119 February – April 2020

Hope for a despairing world

“Summertime and the livin is easy ...” These lyrics from the musical *Porgy and Bess* perhaps conjure up images for us of relaxation, cricket & tennis, sun, sand and surf, of good times. The “easy” living of life in the lucky country in the summer holidays.

It seems this summer couldn’t be more different. We have been confronted with horrific images and experiences of dry, parched land in drought, landscapes and communities devastated by bushfires, destruction and death, and fear and anxiety over a potentially fatal infectious virus. People are despairing. *Will this ever end? Will we survive? Is it the end of the world?*

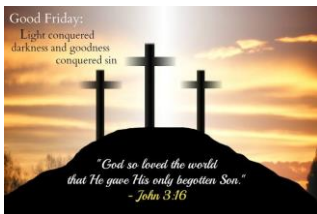
As we lead up to Easter we will be re-assured of God’s faithful and compassionate presence in the midst of disaster, death and despair. The messages of Old Testament prophet Isaiah and the Gospel writer Matthew are messages about hope and life rising up out of calamity and death.

Whether we are suffering as a result of our own bad decisions, or the wicked actions and decisions of others, or things beyond our control, Isaiah and Mathew re-assure us that God knows what is going on and aches for us in our despair. God, the Father has not left us alone to weather these storms, but has entered into our life of pain and suffering through Jesus, God the Son.

The Easter season helps us to remember that on Good Friday Jesus took upon himself the consequences of our wrongdoing, the wickedness of the world, and the pain and despair of living in a broken world. And He lives!! Easter Sunday celebrates the resurrection as God’s sign and act of life – of forgiveness, wholeness, restoration, new creation, hope!

As we work through Isaiah in the morning services with the theme “*The God who saves!*”, and through Matthew in the evening service with the theme “*Jesus brings life*”, I pray that we will be hopeful and not despairing, rejoicing and not despondent, concerned for our world but not fatalistic, as we hear God’s word. The “*livin*” may not be easy, but it still can be blessed. God is good!

Rev. Ian Weeks

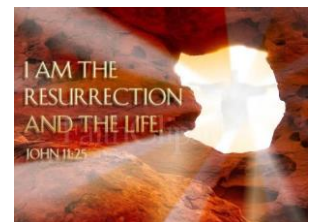


Easter at BUC 2020

Palm Sunday 5th April - the beginning of Easter Week

Thursday 9th April – Maundy Thursday Service at 7.00 pm

Friday 10th April – Good Friday Service at 9.00 am



Resurrection Sunday 12th April – Easter Sunday Celebration Services at 9.00 am, 10.30 am & 5.30 pm
“Death could not hold Him down, He is risen!”

Good News Quarterly is the newsletter of the Belrose Uniting Church:

To Know Christ and Make Him Known!

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Regular Weekly Sunday Services:

9.00 am Morning Church – drawing on the history and traditions of the Church

10.30 am Contemporary Morning Church – includes crèche and KidzChurch

5.30 pm Contemporary Evening Church – a service for the young and not so young

Quotable Quotes of R.C. Sproul (1939-2017) Part Two

“Unbelievers can tolerate Christ only as long as He is stripped of His real identity”



“Apostasy occurs when a church leaves its historic moorings, abandons its historic confessional position, and degenerates into a state where either essential Christian truths are blatantly denied or the denial of such truths is widely tolerated”

“In every age the church is threatened by heresy, and heresy is bound up in false doctrine. It is the desire of all heretics to minimise the importance of doctrine. When doctrine is minimised, heresy can exercise itself without restraint”

“The promises of God for tomorrow are the anchor for believers today”

“A loving God who has no wrath is no God. He is an idol of our own making as much as if we carved Him out of stone”

“I cannot have God in my heart if He is not in my mind. Before I can believe in, I must believe that”

“If Christ could make a complaint, it would be, *'My bride never talks to me'*”

“Change marriage and you change the world. Convince people that government, not God, lays down the rules for marriage, and they will believe more strongly that they determine right and wrong, that not even the world's rulers are subject to a higher authority”

Richard Benisch

CMS Summer School January 2020 – Katoomba (KCC Conference Centre)



Every January brings the prospect of summer holidays, time to relax and recover from Christmas, and recharge the batteries.

There are so many options for family holidays but have you considered a holiday that combines relaxation, sightseeing, bushwalking, with physical **and spiritual refreshment?**

With great Bible teaching, uplifting worship, old and new songs, old and new friends to enjoy fellowship with, and a spectacular scenic location, CMS Summer School in Katoomba is a wonderful holiday alternative.

The usual Summer School program has something for everyone. Every morning there is the worship and Bible teaching session – it is quite exhilarating to be among about 3,000 people gustily praising God in song, then listening intently as God's Word is explained by a very capable preacher. After morning tea there are various Missionary Sessions to choose from where CMS Missionaries share their experiences and wisdom of life on the mission field around the world.

During these morning sessions the Kids and Youth streams are like Kids Club or Youth Group every day for 6 days – about 1,300 kids & youth engaged in action packed, fun times of playing & learning, led by a few hundred dedicated Youth Leaders from various churches.

The afternoons are free time – giving opportunity to rest or be active, sleep, read, bushwalk, sight-see, eat, watch cricket, sleep, catch up with friends, did I mention sleep? Lazy days! The evening sessions are given over to a variety of speakers who share amazing stories of what God is doing around the world, as well as more wonderful worship and Bible teaching.

Summer School really is a worthwhile summer holiday option! Think about it for 2021!

Ian Weeks

(Ian & Anne Weeks have been going to the annual CMS Summer School in Katoomba every January since the 1992.)



“God will take us to tragedy and lead us through tragedy”

An interview with Vicki Buchanan

Keith and Vicki Buchanan are Queenslanders going around NSW in their caravan. They recently parked their van on the Manse front yard and came to worship with us for a while. Venessa Crane caught up with Vicki one Sunday.

Vicki works for an organisation called ***Karios Prison Ministry***. She is responsible for all the regions in Australia and looks after the committees that take Karios into the prisons. The program hopes to get access into some of the new prisons in NSW.

They have received really good invitations into some of the new prisons that they’re not already in, like Wellington, Cessnock, Nowra and Parklea.

The organisation is working with new committees to get the program up and running in about 16 to 17 prisons in Australia including Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Sydney. Other outlying prisons include those in Grafton, St Helliers and the Hunter. Also, the program goes into two of the Juvenile Justice Centres. Overall, there are 35 ministries around Australia.



People who do attend Karios are impacted heavily and they feel that they are understood. Karios can have a very big impact on prisoners as well as their family members. Vicki said, *“The focus of the programs is ‘if you have made a mistake “God still loves you and forgives you, and we forgive you”. There is an ethos is listen and loving.*

The volunteers don’t preach. The participants come to realise that there is a lot of love and understanding for them and they don’t feel alone.

There is a new system in newly built jails in New South Wales called a “pod system” where up to 16 inmates live together in a pre-fabricated structure and interact as a family, do their own washing etc. like a community. Vicki awaits with great interest to see the impact of this new system.

The program is for both people that go to Church but also for people who are non- Christian. Karios doesn’t discriminate. Churches want to support people in need but often don’t know what to say when they come across imprisonment. The ***Kairos Outside*** program is where they take women and men - impacted by somebody else’s imprisonment - away at weekends separately twice a year. A person can go on an Outside weekend and find that there are other people who have gone through the same sort of situation. They can end up living productive lives with God’s joy and forgiveness, and know there is light at the end of the tunnel. If a woman has a son in prison often she will not tell the people in her church because of the shame involved.

Vicki’s own father was imprisoned and things have not always been easy for her. She understood the shame and how a community could turn their back on a person in this situation. Being on the team for Kairos has helped her cope with the heartache of her father being in prison. *“God understands that we need time to work through forgiveness and move through this process to keep forgiving. God will take us to tragedy and lead us through tragedy”*

God came to Vicki many times as she went through this experience. She knew she was in the palm of God’s hands when He said that He would never leave her unless she “jumped” - and she would never do that. Vicki knows God is such a gentle God and you don’t have to be perfect and just need to get through in this life. *“He is such a gentleman. He will never force His way into our lives but has never let me know and always lets me know He is right there.”*

Vicki’s dream is to have more resources for Kairos Ministries. The teams are so busy and overstretched. Her heart hopes that prisoners realise that God loves them and wants a relationship with everyone. The hope is for more financial support and prayer and that there will be many more programs across Australia.

(You can find out more about the Kairos Outside program from Anne Weeks)

BUC Preaching Plan February – April 2020

Sunday of Month	Date	9.00 am Morning Church	10.30 am Family Church	5.30 pm Evening Church
	February Themes:	Isaiah: <i>The God Who Saves!</i>	Isaiah: <i>The God Who Saves!</i>	Matthew: <i>Jesus brings life!</i>
1	2nd	Isaiah 1:1 – 20 <i>Our urgent need</i> Ian Weeks	<i>1st Sunday 252 Family Experience Service</i>	Matthew 4:12 – 25 <i>Life with a new direction</i> Ian Weeks
2	9th	The Lord's Supper Isaiah 2:1 – 4 & 12 – 22 <i>Hope & humility; Loss & gain</i> Ian Weeks	The Lord's Supper Isaiah 2:1 – 4 & 12 – 22 <i>Hope & humility; Loss & gain</i> Ian Weeks	The Lord's Supper Matthew 5 – 7 <i>Life with new values</i> Ian Weeks
3	16th	Isaiah 5:1 – 7 <i>God's grace – Human folly</i> Ian Weeks	Isaiah 5:1 – 7 <i>God's grace – Human folly</i> Ian Weeks	Matthew 8:1 – 13 <i>Life with new faith</i> Ian Weeks
4	23rd	Isaiah 6:1 – 13 <i>A transforming vision</i> Anton Dykman	Isaiah 6:1 – 13 <i>A transforming vision</i> Anton Dykman	Matthew 9:1 – 13 <i>Life for the outcast</i>
	March Themes:	Isaiah: <i>The God Who Saves!</i>	Isaiah: <i>The God Who Saves!</i>	Matthew: <i>Jesus brings life!</i>
1	1st Lent 1	Isaiah 7:1 – 17 <i>The triumph of grace</i> Ian Weeks	<i>1st Sunday 252 Family Experience Service</i>	Matthew 9:27 – 38 <i>Life with new mercy</i> Ian Weeks
2	8th Lent 2	The Lord's Supper Isaiah 10:12 – 26 <i>Justice and promise</i> Ian Weeks	The Lord's Supper Isaiah 10:12 – 26 <i>Justice and promise</i> Ian Weeks	The Lord's Supper Matthew 10:16 – 39 <i>Life with challenges</i> Ian Weeks
3	15th Lent 3	Isaiah 13:1 – 5 & 14:1 – 5 <i>God and the nations</i> Ian Weeks	Isaiah 13:1 – 5 & 14:1 – 5 <i>God and the nations</i> Ian Weeks	Matthew 12:1 – 21 <i>Life with a new focus</i> Ian Weeks
4	22nd Lent 4	Isaiah 22:1 – 14 <i>The foolishness of self</i> Ian Weeks	Isaiah 22:1 – 14 <i>The foolishness of self</i> Ian Weeks	Matthew 16:13 – 28 <i>Life with a cost</i> Ian Weeks
5	29th Lent 5	Isaiah 24:1 – 6 & 21 – 23 <i>True Glory</i> Ian Weeks	Isaiah 24:1 – 6 & 21 – 23 <i>True Glory</i> Ian Weeks	Matthew 19:13 – 22 <i>Life with humility</i> Ian Weeks
	April Themes:	Easter: Jesus - King of Life (& Death)	Easter: Jesus - King of Life (& Death)	Easter: Jesus - King of Life (& Death)
1	5th Palm Sunday	Matthew 21:1 – 17 <i>Jesus the King</i> Ian Weeks	<i>1st Sunday 252 Family Experience Service</i>	Matthew 21:1 – 17 <i>Jesus the King</i> Ian Weeks
Easter Week	9th Maundy Thursday 7.30 pm	/	/	7.30 PM Matthew 26 <i>Jesus – The King of suffering</i> Ian Weeks
	10th Good Friday 9.00 am	9.00 AM Matthew 27 <i>Jesus - the King of death</i> Ian Weeks	/	/
2	12th Easter Sunday	The Lord's Supper Matthew 28:1 – 15 <i>Jesus – The King of life</i> Ian Weeks	The Lord's Supper Matthew 28:1 – 15 <i>Jesus – The King of life</i> Ian Weeks	The Lord's Supper Matthew 28:1 – 15 <i>Jesus – The King of life</i> Ian Weeks
3	19th	Matthew 28:16 – 20 <i>Jesus – King of the world</i> Ian Weeks	Matthew 28:16 – 20 <i>Jesus – King of the world</i> Ian Weeks	Matthew 28:16 – 20 <i>Jesus – King of the world</i>
4	26th	Romans 5:1 – 11 <i>Jesus – the ultimate ANZAC</i> Ian Weeks	Romans 5:1 – 11 <i>Jesus – the ultimate ANZAC</i> Ian Weeks	Romans 5:1 – 11 <i>Jesus – the ultimate ANZAC</i> Ian Weeks