



Assembly of
Confessing
Congregations

BELROSE UNITING CHURCH

Good News Quarterly

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Incorporating GOOD NEWSWEEK 10th May 2020 CV-19 /7

*Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
leave to your God to order and provide;
in every change he faithful will remain.*

*Be still, my soul: your best, your heavenly Friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.*

*Be still, my soul: your God will undertake
to guide the future as he has the past.*

*Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.*

*Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
his voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.*

*Be still, my soul: when dearest friends depart,
and all is darkened in the vale of tears,
then shall you better know his love, his heart,
who comes to soothe your sorrow and your fears.*

*Be still, my soul: your Jesus can repay
from his own fullness all he takes away.*

*Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on
when we shall be forever with the Lord,
when disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.*

*Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.*

TiS 123 Kathrina von Schlegel (1697 - ?);
Translator: Jane Borthwick (1813 - 97)

Dear Friends,

It is week 7 of our Covid-19 lockdown, but I draw comfort in the knowledge that it also brings us closer to the end of these unsettling times. I pray that you are enduring this time of social distancing and isolation with patience and hope. As restrictions start to be relaxed, I look forward to the day when we can meet together again physically in worship and fellowship, whenever that will be.

In these challenging times we draw on our faith to sustain us, faith that is grounded in the knowledge of God's faithfulness, and the hope we have in the death, resurrection, and imminent return of our Lord & Saviour Jesus. The season of Easter, and as we approach the Day of Pentecost, reminds us that we don't face this time alone. The Living Lord Jesus is with us, and the Day of Pentecost assures us that the Holy Spirit is with us; to strengthen, guide and comfort.

We grieve with those who have been devastated by the pandemic virus: those who have lost loved ones, those who have lost jobs or businesses, those who feel vulnerable and insecure, those who feel acutely the loss of personal contact with family and friends.

In these troubling times I have been reminded of a great hymn: *Be still my soul*. A hymn that beautifully assures us of God's sovereignty and faithfulness.

"In every change. He faithful will remain ..."

Over these next few Sundays, as we draw near to Pentecost Sunday (31st May), I will be reflecting on the hope and confidence we have because of Christ's resurrection (see the "Preaching Plan" at the end of this newsletter). I hope you will find strength, faith, hope and peace in the grace and mercy of God given to us in the risen Lord Jesus.

In the mean time, I hope that you will also keep connected by phone, email, and web meetings. Please do not hesitate to contact me to chat and let me know how you are going. I continue to uphold you in prayer and ask God's continued blessing for you and your family.

In Christ, *Ian Weeks*

Want to "worship at home"? Look out for live services on the internet such as:
FF Baptist Church Sunday 9.30 am www.ffbc.org.au

St Faiths Anglican Narrabeen Sunday 9 am & 6 pm <https://stfaiths.church>

Pittwater UC 9.30 am & 6 pm Sunday: <https://pittwater.online.church>

Wesley Mission 10.00 am Sunday: www.wesleymission.org.au/christian-life/congregations-online

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To Know Christ and Make Him Known!

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Because of Jesus' Resurrection, We Have #2 A New Confidence!

The Book of Acts provides us with wonderful insights into the power of the Gospel as the early Church proclaimed the good news that Jesus is alive and that He is Lord over all. They did so with great boldness and much joy, even in the midst of great hardship, persecution and suffering.

"Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah." (Acts 5:42)

It is sometimes difficult to imagine that, before the day of Jesus' resurrection, the disciples of Jesus were fearful, nervous, hiding and cowering in fear of the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authorities. What changed these meek mannered disciples into courageous proclaimers of the Word of God?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1 – 19

A Prayer: *Almighty God, you have given us Your word to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Grant us grace to receive Your truth in faith and love, that we may be obedient to Your will and live always for Your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

1. From Cowering to Courageous: Transformed Disciples

Undoubtedly, the Day of Pentecost, whereby the followers of Jesus were empowered by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), was a significant factor in the boldness of the early Church. But their boldness was also bolstered by the certainty of their message: Jesus is alive!!

"Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you."
1 Cor 15:1, 2

They had confidence in the reality of Jesus' resurrection, and therefore confidence in the message that Jesus is Lord. The resurrection of Jesus was crucial to their faith, and is crucial to ours.

2. The Resurrection: Cornerstone of the Gospel 1 Corinthians 15:3 - 19

The resurrection is crucial to the Gospel: a dead Saviour cannot save.

We can have confidence in the Gospel because Jesus is alive!

The reality of the physical resurrection of Jesus is attested to by:

i) Transformed lives: the disciples in Acts and the Corinthian Christians – sinners saved by the power of a living Saviour: *"And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."* (1 Cor 6:11)

ii) God's Plans: *"according to the Scriptures"*

It was part of God's plan all along – to provide a perfect sacrifice for our sins, but also to conquer sin and death by raising Jesus to new life. This is what the whole Old Testament foretold and was looking forward to. (See also Luke 24:27)

iii) Eye Witnesses: some are still alive – ask them yourself!

The resurrection of Jesus wasn't some made up story or mass hallucination.

Many people saw Jesus alive after his death, and Paul basically says: *"If you don't believe me, ask those who saw him"* (in the flesh, as it were). It is true! Jesus is alive! And this has great implications for us all – He is Lord and we are accountable to Him. (See Acts 2:36).

iv) The Logic of Preaching: without the resurrection, our preaching is in vain

Paul reminds us that if Jesus is not alive, then all of our faith and hope is for nothing, and our message is meaningless.

If Jesus is not alive, then God is not powerful to save us and to change us; the Gospel is empty, and our words and work for the Gospel will be fruitless. We would have no message to offer and no hope and comfort to give.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile." (Romans 1:16)

3. The Resurrection: The Source of Our New Confidence

Because Jesus is alive:

* Our fears, doubts & anxieties about the present and the future are turned on their heads. We have hope!

* We can stand firm with confidence – Jesus is alive! He is with us by the Holy Spirit.

* We can serve and labour for the Gospel knowing our witness and our work is not in vain.

"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Cor 15:58

Reflection: What difference does it make to our faith and life knowing that Jesus is alive?
What might cause us to hesitate to tell others that Jesus is alive?
In the light of the reality of Jesus' resurrection, what message can we bring to our community?

A Prayer: *Gracious God our Heavenly Father, You loved the world so much that you sent Your only Son to bring us life eternal. Dying, He destroyed our death, alleluia. Rising, He restored our life, alleluia. And so we praise you and thank you, and ask that Your Holy Spirit will continue to empower us to boldly proclaim: The Lord is risen! Amen.*

Celebrating God's Gift of Marriage – Congratulations Sam & Hazel!!



Saturday 3rd May 2020 saw a very different wedding at Belrose Uniting Church: no excited and jubilant crowd packing out the worship space, no parade of flower girls, page boys, bridesmaids or groomsmen.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions it was just a very happy couple, a delighted Minister, and immediate family as witnesses, as Sam Whybrow and Hazel Dulin pledged themselves to each other, and to God, in the covenant of marriage. What a joyous occasion!

It was a simple ceremony, but with immense meaning, as this lovely Christian couple expressed their desire to have their life-long marriage relationship be a demonstration of the Gospel.

They chose two Bible readings:
1 Corinthians 13:4 – 13 (Paul's classic exposition on the nature of love) and Colossians 3:12 - 15

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. (Col 3:12 – 15)



Certainly it was disappointing that all their family and friends could not be present to witness this occasion, to pray for them, and celebrate with them.

However, Sam & Hazel are planning to provide such an occasion later in the year.



They hope you will be able to join them for this celebration.

We pray God's riches blessing on Sam & Hazel for their future together as husband and wife.

Staying at home doesn't mean we can't keep connected. Take opportunities to phone around your church family to say hi; and please keep praying.

***"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* Philipians 4:6, 7**

PLEASE PRAY FOR:-

Healing, Strength & Comfort for:

Bill & Marcia Schnabel
Len Broadbent – home from hospital
Joan Colmer

Jenny Dinning
David Keiller
Gordon & Jan Allan

Julia Murphy
Jeanette Mortley

Robert Cradock passed away peacefully in hospital early Tuesday morning; now free from cancer and the struggles of this world; in glory with his Lord! – please uphold Leila and the family in prayer.

- Pray for**
- * those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, and those who are vulnerable to infection.
 - * local businesses & their staff
 - * those who have lost their jobs
 - * our health care service personnel
 - * our Governments & those in leadership and authority

Belrose Uniting Church Preaching Plan May - July 2020

Sunday #	Date	Theme	Mission of the Month:
	May	Series: <i>Because of Jesus' Resurrection, We Have</i>	CMS: Wayne & Mandy at Nungalinya College
1	3 rd	Ian Weeks <i>A New Life</i> Romans 6:1 – 11	Nungalinya College, Darwin; <i>Empowering Indigenous Christians</i>
2	10 th	Ian Weeks <i>A New Confidence</i> 1 Corinthians 15:1 – 19	Nungalinya is a Combined Churches (Uniting, Anglican & Catholic) Training College for Ministry
3	17 th	Ian Weeks <i>A New Hope</i> 1 Corinthians 15:20 - 34	
4	24 th	Ian Weeks <i>A New Body</i> 1 Corinthians 15:50 - 58	At Nungalinya College, Indigenous and non-Indigenous Christians work together, growing the gifts and calling of Indigenous people for ministry.
5	31 st <i>Pentecost Sunday</i>	Ian Weeks <i>A New Mission</i> Acts 1:1 - 11	Wayne is the Dean of Students for the Anglican community; and Mandy teaches various Bible and literacy subjects at the College.
	June	Series: <i>Because of Pentecost, We Have</i>	The Bush Church Aid Society
1	7 th	Ian Weeks <i>A New Helper</i> John 14:15 - 26	
2	14 th	Ian Weeks <i>A New Message</i> Acts 2:22 - 36	The Bush Church Aid Society of Australia has a heart for people living in remote and regional Australia. We are committed to going the distance to reach Australia for Christ.
3	21 st	Ian Weeks <i>A New Community</i> Acts 2:36 – 47	Since 1919, BCA has been reaching outback Australians with the good news of Jesus.
4	28 th	Ian Weeks <i>A New Boldness</i> Acts 4:1 – 12	Under God, we do this by * proclaiming Christ so that people may respond to Him; * nurturing Christians in their faith and ministry; * strengthening local Christian communities in their mission.
	July	Series: <i>Hear the Word of the Lord!</i>	The Bible Society
1	5 th	Ian Weeks <i>A Word that has Authority</i> 2 Timothy 3:1 - 16	
2	12 th	Ian Weeks <i>A Word that has Power</i> Romans 1:8 - 16	The Bible Society is Australia's longest-living organisation, over 200 years old! The Bible Society is creating new ways to advocate for the Bible, to promote it, and offer people new ways to engage with it;
3	19 th	Ian Weeks <i>A Word that Confronts</i> Acts 17:1 - 15	Our vision is to see all people engaged with the Bible in a language they can understand, in a format they can use, and at a price they can afford.
4	26 th	Ian Weeks <i>A Word that Comforts</i> Psalm 119:25 - 40	The Bible Society is also the publisher of the monthly <i>Eternity</i> newspaper.