

## 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**

**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 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Sunday of**  
**Covid Lockdown 4.0**

### *Count your blessings*

I was going through my files and realized that we are in lockdown number 4, not 3 as stated in previous Good News Weeklies – I had forgotten about the suspended Sundays over Christmas & January this year. I blame this brain snap on my long hair! 😊

In the course of this lock down I have become more aware of the simple things that I often take for granted – like having a haircut, mixing with others, going for a long motorbike ride. I think I will be more thankful for these "small mercies". We are certainly blessed despite the circumstances of the current time. I am reminded of that old song I'm sure you are familiar with:

*Count your blessings, name them one by one  
Count your blessings see what God has done  
Count your blessings, name them one by one  
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.*

I pray the Lord will help me to be more thankful every day.  
And I pray that each day you will experience the blessing of God.  
Grace & peace, *Ian Weeks*

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## 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:** *Heavenly Father, thank You that You sent Your Son to be the light of the world, a light that no darkness could overcome (John 1:5). As I reflect on the book of Judges, and the dark times of this world, may the light of Christ shine to show me the way. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

**Read:** Judges 6:1 – 24 & 36 - 40

**Reflect:** *Where's the mighty warrior?* Judges 6 & 7

### 1. We Need a Hero!

**Ch 6:1 - 10**

In desperate times, the world looks for heroes. We see this played out in the numerous "hero" movies – Batman, The Avengers, etc Unfortunately, these heroes are flawed characters, as we also see in the Book of Judges.

The peace after Deborah's influence (Judges 4 & 5) has faded. The cycle continues: the people rebel against God (Ch 6:1 & 7 – 10); and God exercises His Judgement upon them with the Midianites (Ch 6:1 – 6). The people of Israel needed a hero – they cried out to the Lord (v 6)

### 2. Step Up Mighty Warrior

**Ch 6:11 - 16**

God hears their cry and sends a (unnamed) prophet who pronounces God's judgement upon them (vv 7 – 10). But in His grace, He also visits an unsuspecting, and somewhat reluctant Gideon, who is given the task of delivering God's people from the oppressive Midianites (vv 11 – 14).

Gideon is a very unlikely hero – plagued by fear and doubt, he questions God's choice and throughout this chapter, his weakness - displayed in fear – becomes very evident, despite God's persistent reminder that He is with Gideon (vv 15 – 24).

### 3. We were expecting someone taller! Ch 6:17 – 40

Gideon's weakness is fear – fear of God's calling, fear of his family & community, and fear of the Midianites. He doubts himself and he doubts God. If we were looking for a hero, we might expect someone bigger, stronger, braver!

Gideon's first test is to demolish the family & community idols to the false god Baal, This he does at night out of fear of being caught (vv 25 – 27) To his credit, Gideon's father defends Gideon, and even issues Baal a challenge: if Baal is really a "god", then let Baal deal with Gideon himself!

In Judges 6 we find the famous episode of Gideon's fleeces – testing God's call and God's Word (vv 36 – 40). This is NOT a recommended model for seeking God's guidance! Gideon again does it out of fear and doubt – how many times does God need to say "*I am with you, I will win the battle!!*"??

## 5. The Battle Belongs to the Lord! Ch 7

Finally Gideon prepares for battle & summons the army However, God knows the hearts of Gideon & the people, and Gideon is ordered to cull the army numbers so that it will be very clear that it is God who has delivered them, lest they boast (Ch 7:2)

In Ch 7, the battle is fought, but who did the fighting? In a twist of irony, we find that the Midianites bring themselves undone as they are thrown into confusion by a dream, and their imagination of a conquering army descending upon them (7:13 – 22), Gideon and his army finish them off, but it is very clear that it was God who rescued them.

## 6. Where's the Mighty Warrior?

In Gideon, like all human heroes, we see a very flawed character. But again, God in His wisdom, grace and mercy uses the weak & fearful to accomplish His purposes. He is mightier than anything that may cause us to fear. In the darkness of our sin, and the sin of others, we need a mighty warrior to rescue us. As Paul reminds us: "*Who will rescue me from this body of death?*" (Rom 7:24, 25)

Praise God that he has sent us a "mighty warrior" in His Son the Lord Jesus. Again, as Paul wrote: '*Death has been swallowed up in victory.*' '*Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?*' '*The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*' (1 Cor 15:54 – 57)

**Pray:** *Heavenly Father, thank You that in Jesus I have a rescuer who is not weak, not unwilling, and able to deliver me. Help me to trust Your Word and Your promises as I look to Him for my deliverance. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

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**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](mailto:mail@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au) PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

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

\* 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](mailto:prayer.team@belrose.unitingchurch.org.au)