

## September Mission of the Month: *Open Doors & The Persecuted Church*

Open Doors was established in 1955 when Brother Andrew, a newly committed Christian, began smuggling Bibles into Eastern Europe. (*Read the story from the book God's Smuggler – available in the Church Library*)

Since then Open Doors has expanded to work in over 70 countries, providing Bibles, training and practical support to the persecuted church. Open Doors seeks to strengthen and prepare Christians living in persecution, and to mobilise the Australian church to identify with the global body of Christ.

Open Doors works through local partners and build long-term relationships in countries all around the world, with people who know and understand what is needed to see the church strengthened and the gospel proclaimed. The mission is to help the local church transform their nation for Jesus.



**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**

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

**Keep on praying - We may be locked down,  
BUT we are never lock out from God!!**

**The physical weekly Prayer Meetings are in recess, but all are welcome to join in the Zoom prayer gatherings. Click on the zoom link:**  
<https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/98976481554?pwd=WndnL1V5T0plYkJacFF3UGFHdUplQT09>

### PLEASE PRAY FOR:

\* Jan & Gordon Allan \* Jen Dinning \* Marcia Schnabel \* Kim Allen  
\* Gordon Richardson \* John Bishop \* Matt Phillips \* Sierk Dykman

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



**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 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Covid Lockdown 4.0



**Waiting, waiting, waiting ...**  
I have spent a lot of time waiting over these last few months. Waiting in queues at shops with restricted numbers and at covid testing sites; and above all, waiting for lock down to end so that we can meet together on Sundays again!!

Waiting can be a great test of patience, especially if that which you are waiting for is eagerly anticipated and excitedly looked forward to.

In Psalm 130, the Psalmist cries out to God, waiting for the response to his confession, waiting for that assurance of forgiveness, waiting to experience the grace of God. His waiting does not cause him frustration or despair, because he waits with confidence and hope. He knows it is in God's nature to hear his cry and respond with unfailing redeeming love (vv 4 & 7).

As we wait for lock down restrictions to ease allowing us to worship together again, I pray we will wait with confidence and excited anticipation, and with patience. The God of unfailing love in Psalm 130 is the same God who is with us as we wait, the God in whom we can put our hope. God bless you as you wait.

*Ian Weeks*

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## October Sermon Series: *The Church Under Fire!* #1 *Suffering to be expected?* Matthew 5:1 – 16

In conjunction with our Mission of the Month theme for October (*The Persecuted Church*), throughout this month I will be reflecting on what it means to be God's people in an antagonistic world – to be the “*Church under fire*”. The words of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel and the Book of Revelation give us insights into what we can expect to experience if we are truly living out the Gospel.

I am also hoping that we will have the opportunity to hear from a guest speaker from **Open Doors** who will share with us the reality of daily experiences of the persecuted Church in 2021. (*Subject to the lock down restrictions being eased hopefully soon this month*).

**Pray:** *Heavenly Father, thank you for freedoms we enjoy in this country to worship you and read Your Word. I pray that I may never take these for granted. Teach me what it means to live out the values of Your Kingdom in this place, for Jesus' sake. Amen.*

**Read:** Matthew 5:1 - 16

### Reflect:

#### 1. A Clash Of Kingdoms

Being the Church in the world will always place us in the midst of a clash of kingdoms. If we are serious about living out the values of the Kingdom of God, we will encounter antagonism and opposition when those values clash with the ungodly values of the world around us.

The Sermon on the Mount can be considered as Jesus' picture of what the Kingdom of God is like, and what the people of the Kingdom are to be like. That picture kicks off with the Beatitudes in Matthew Ch 5.

#### 2. The Kingdom Counter-Culture Matt 5:1 – 9

The Kingdom of God is very counter-cultural, turning the values of the world up-side down:

Spiritual poverty vs spiritual pride & independence	v 3
Regret and repentance vs self-righteousness	v 4
Humility vs arrogant bullying & abusive power	v 5
Righteousness & justice vs greed & oppression	v 6
Mercy & forgiveness vs blaming & vengeance	v 7
Purity in heart & mind vs evil and wickedness	v 8
Peace & reconciliation vs win at all costs	v 9

#### 3. So, What can we expect? Matt 5:10 – 16

When we live out these Kingdom values, Jesus tells that we will experience God's blessing, presence and eternal treasure.

But it also seems clear that these values won't always be welcome in a sinful and broken world.

So Jesus warns us that we can expect

Insult, persecution and slander v v 10 & 11  
(But again, this will end in blessing)

The metaphors of salt and light are often seen as positive things (flavouring, preserving, illuminating, guiding)

But they can also be confronting:

Salt on a wound stings as it cleanses  
A bright light shows up dirt & things that would rather be hidden

#### 4. The Church Under Fire

We should not be surprised when we encounter opposition and derision as we stand firm in the Gospel. The Bible warns us in many places that this will be normal. The test will be how we respond. Pray that we mirror the values of Jesus – humility, peace, forgiveness, righteousness – that our good deeds may cause people to glorify our Father in heaven.

Let us also pray earnestly for the persecuted church around the world.

**Pray:** *Heavenly Father, strengthen Your Church around the world so that all people will experience the enhancing salt and guiding light of Christian witness. Enable the persecuted Church to persevere in faith as they suffer for the name of Jesus. Amen.*



**WHAT'S ON @ BUC?**  
**All meetings at the Church are post-poned until the covid lockdown order is lifted.**

**But we are able to meet virtually for "Morning Tea" every Sunday at 10.30 am via Zoom – join us as you are**

able: click on the **Zoom link**

<https://ucanswact.zoom.us/j/91941752010?pwd=SkJDdDI1YWIWekkzdG41V0dmRExJdz09>

**OR you can Phone in** without video: **Phone 8015 6011**

And enter 91941752010# (Meeting Id) 805693# (Passcode)