



A member of the
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BELROSE UNITING CHURCH

Good News Quarterly

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Where were you when?

There are those events in world history that make an indelible imprint on our memories – causing us to respond in celebration, or recoil in horror: the first landing on the moon, the 9/11 attacks on the twin towers of New York, for example. We can often remember where we were, or what we were doing, when they happened. What world changing accomplishment, or earth shattering disaster, sticks in your memory?

As I read the New Testament, I find people who were impacted by incredible events that forever changed their lives. Take the Apostle Peter. Many years after his amazing experience of seeing Jesus glorified on a mountain (see Mark 9), he wrote: “...we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, **but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty**. He received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” **We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.**” (2 Peter 1:16 – 18).



There are so many other examples in the Bible of people who were greatly impacted by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. But there is one that always intrigues me. We don't know his name. We don't know for sure what happened to him afterwards – where he went, what he did – but I often wonder how what he saw may have changed his life. He is the un-named soldier witnessing the horrible death of Jesus on a cross on a hill outside Jerusalem.

As Mark records for us: *And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”* (Mark 15:39). This soldier, who, I'm sure, had witnessed countless crucifixions before, was obviously greatly moved at what he heard and saw as Jesus died.

At Easter, we are confronted with events that have impacted world history like none other. While none of us were there at the time, the death and resurrection of Jesus continue to be life-changing events for many who stop to “listen and watch” as the Easter story is told again. I pray that **Easter 2022** might be that sort of occasion for you. *Ian Weeks*

Easter 2022: Remembering the Cost; Celebrating the Gift!

The death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

Thursday 14th April: **Maundy Thursday Reflection Service 6.30 pm**

Friday 15th April: **Good Friday Remembrance Service 9.00 am**

Sunday 17th April: **Easter Sunday Resurrection Celebration Service 9.30 am**

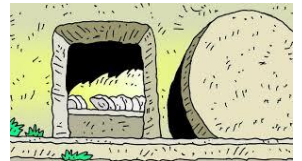


But God demonstrates his own love for us in this:

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!” (Luke 24:5,6)

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. (1 Peter 3:18)



“Death could not hold Him down, He is risen!”

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

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Belrose Uniting Church

in the Assembly of Confessing Congregations of the Uniting Church in Australia

We aim TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world since 1916.

**Every Sunday at 9.30 am Multi-generational service
and at 5.30 pm Digging into the Bible – all welcome**

Belrose Uniting Church Preaching Plan February – April 2022

	Date	9.30 am Morning Church	5.30 pm BUC Bible Study	MISSION OF THE MONTH
	February	<i>The Glory of God in the Psalms: Talking His Way</i>		Bruce Cox & Kathy Cummins
1	6 th	Ian Weeks #2 <i>Talking Boldly</i> Psalm 5	1 John Ch 2	Serving in Nigeria, Africa with Wycliffe Bible Translators
2	13 th	Ian Weeks The Lord's Supper #3 <i>Talking Honestly</i> Psalm 13	1 John Ch 3 The Lord's Supper	Please pray for their involvement with <i>The Luke Partnership</i> , translating Luke's Gospel.
3	20 th	Ian Weeks #4 <i>Talking Humbly</i> Psalm 32	1 John Ch 4	Bruce & Kathy have been battling with the covid virus. Pray for their health & physical well-being.
4	27 th	Ian Weeks #4 <i>Talking Adoringly</i> Psalm 147	1 John Ch 5	We are privileged to be able to support them financially and prayerfully as they continue the Bible translation work in the Icede language.
	March	Exodus: <i>The God who rescues!</i>		Providing Ministry Training Opportunities
1	6 th Lent 1	Ian Weeks #1 <i>A People Oppressed</i> Exodus 1:1 - 22	2 John	Providing ministry training opportunities and enabling people to attend ministry training events.
2	13 th Lent 2	Ian Weeks The Lord's Supper #2 <i>The God who hears our cry</i> Exodus 2:1 - 25	3 John The Lord's Supper	Part of our mission as a Congregation is to be training and equipping people for all sorts of ministry opportunities.
3	20 th Lent 3	Ian Weeks #3 <i>A Rescue Plan</i> Exodus 3:1 - 22		As we identify and encourage people in service and ministry, we want to make sure we can resource them for these tasks.
4	27 th Lent 4	Ian Weeks #4 <i>A Costly Rescue</i> Exodus 12:1 – 20		
	April	<i>The God who rescues!</i>		The Forest Association for Christian Education Inc (FACE)
1	3 rd Lent 5	Ian Weeks #5 <i>A Miraculous Rescue</i> Exodus 14:5 - 31		The Churches of the Forest providing SRE (Scripture) in our local High Schools
2	10 th Palm Sunday	Ian Weeks The Lord's Supper <i>Hail the Rescuer!</i> John 12:1 – 19	The Lord's Supper	What a privilege it is to be able to go into our local Schools and teach students about Jesus.
	14 th Maundy Thursday	6.30 pm Service Ian Weeks <i>The Humble Rescuer</i> John 13:1 - 17	/	We partner with other local Churches in funding Henri Simpson and his team to go every week into Davidson High and The Forest High Schools.
	15 th Good Friday	9.00 am Service Ian Weeks <i>The Sacrificed Rescuer</i> John Ch 18 & 19	/	Through FACE in our High Schools we have a wonderful mission field, but it can only happen if we give and pray!
3	17 th Easter Sunday	Ian Weeks <i>The Victorious Rescuer!</i> John 20:1 - 18		
4	24 th	Ian Weeks <i>The Living Rescuer!</i> John 20:19 – 30		

‘The Story Behind 40 Stories!’

It’s hard to forget Bryan Forbes once you’ve met him. If you’re a regular at the 1000 Steps in Melbourne, you might have seen the 75-year-old struggling up the track with his bag of water bottles, leaning on his feather decorated stick. He takes hours to complete the steep climb; others might do it in 30 minutes. But Bryan says it grows his strength and determination, adding, *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”*.

Bryan’s story brings tears to most people. His humble, powerful story reminds us that nothing is impossible with God. Filmed at the 1000 Steps, set among the Lyrebirds and Kookaburras, Bryan's story is Good News *“for such a time as this”*. (You can watch the video of Bryan on the 40 Stories web-site. See below)

But for many people, Jesus is a fairy-tale, irrelevant, even a cause of offence. Yet there are so many people like Bryan with a powerful, real story whose lives have been forever changed by knowing Jesus. What if we could freely share these stories with family and friends?

40 Stories began in 2015 when a modest team embarked on a Jesus-led adventure across Australia, finding, filming and editing stories from indigenous people about their encounters with Jesus. These became the first series of *40 Stories*, shared freely to inspire and encourage people with the Good News of Jesus. There were personal stories told through tears, stories deeply embedded in national history, culture and heritage, and stories filled with humour, joy, humility, and transparency. Stories of hope, real transformation and friendship with Jesus. Viewed millions of times, they continue to touch lives because they are such Good News!

But the first *40 Stories* was just the beginning. Now the *40 Stories* project continues. An ongoing flow of stories that Jesus is writing in people’s lives from all over the world. Not only are they great to share with friends and family who might not know Jesus. They can also be used to encourage believers in Churches, small groups, at home or in school. The story behind *40 Stories* is also one that tells of the reality and faithfulness of Jesus.

The *40 Stories* team trust God’s provision to follow his call, so they don’t engage in pushy fundraising. Any donated funds are directed 100% towards their key mission – to tell more stories. No one is paid for their time; they trust Jesus to look after those who serve Him. They are simply motivated by a desire to share Jesus by sharing His stories. You can share *40 Stories* with family and friends. Churches and schools can also freely use *40 Stories* in their gatherings.

Why not subscribe to ‘*40 Stories News*’, an email alerting people to new stories as they’re released? (www.40stories.org.au/subscribe)

You can watch *40 stories* on the website (www.40stories.org.au), on Youtube, with subtitles in multiple languages (www.youtube.com/c/40storiesproject), Facebook or Instagram (search 40storiesproject).

(Written by Warwick Vincent, for *New Life Aus News*, 13 Dec, 2021)



Each one of us have a story – the story of our encounter and walk with Jesus. They will all be different, because we are different people. What’s your story? I would love to hear it, and others would too. Please consider writing your story for a future edition of Good News Quarterly. – Ian



Ordinary People - Extraordinary God!



Greetings in the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

My name is Uttam from a remote village in western Nepal, the land of Everest. I come from a very religious Hindu family. My grandfather married a Hindu woman and through her Hindu beliefs and worship came to be part of my family history.

Once the richest man in the village, my grandfather sold almost everything he owned and used the money to build a temple and carry out many other religious activities. In search of salvation, he took a vow not to speak. He built a huge temple in the forest where he lived in silence. Since my grandfather was Hindu, his descendants were automatically Hindu. He had a thirst for knowledge and used to visit India often to meet with gurus (teachers). On one such trip he happened to bring a Christian tract back with him.



As a young child I was always curious to read the materials stored in the temple. One day I came across this tract which talked about Jesus. I found it so revolutionizing and extremely powerful! I was filled with questions, but since there was no one in my village to answer to me, they only remained as a seed in my heart. My father was struggling to raise his children, and he did not like how my grandfather was spending his time and money. We were on the verge of being enslaved by the rich people in the village and had to freely work in their fields in order to get our food, which we later had to pay for.

My father died when he was only 37, leaving behind five kids and my widowed mother. I was around ten when he died and I began to search for the meaning of life. People expected me to succeed my grandfather in priesthood work. I struggled to understand what happens to the soul when a person dies. If my grandfather, who was the holiest man I knew, was not assured of goodness in his next life, how was I to be confident of my destiny? Then God began to grow the seeds of faith.

I used to go [to] the nearest town to buy salt and kerosene and I began to make friends there. One time, one of these friends invited me to church (underground). I did not understand what he meant by asking me to go to church, but I agreed to go along. The experience was amazing. I saw people worshipping God as if He was hearing their worship and prayer! It was incredible! I found the Bible to not only be a true historical recording, but also the inspired Word of God. It was indeed Good News to me. I was free for the first time from all the myths I had been practising. There and then I gave my life to the Lord.

To truly know and accept the free gift of salvation was wonderful! But there was a cost to following Christ. My friends tore my Bible. I could no longer sit with them [at] the same table because I was untouchable. I was lowered down to the lower cast from the higher cast and I brought the shame to my family. In this hardship and loss, a verse from the Bible began to speak to my heart; *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he cannot be My disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow Me cannot be My disciple."* (Luke 14:26-27)

When I finished school, my father's cousin gave me an opportunity to come to the capital city of Kathmandu for further study. I began to look for Christian fellowship. Sometimes, my uncle's kids also wanted to come with me to the fellowship. My uncle began to smell Christianity in my life, and he was ashamed of me. It is a great tragedy in a Hindu family for someone to give himself to a cow eating religion. In Hinduism, cows are sacred — the punishment for killing a cow is equal to murdering a person.

Uncle devised a plan and began to spread a rumour to our friends, family and relatives that I ate cow every day. I began to get a lot of pressure from my family and relatives. My uncle thought that his plan was successful and I would quit going to church. But instead, I went to my uncle and told him that I was going to leave his place! Since I had no money, he thought that I would be forced to stay with him and I would quit the church and continue my school. He was so unhappy that his plan had failed. I went to work for a parliament member from my district and stayed with him. This situation was very difficult. The work was hard and the hours long, and my boss also threatened to put me in prison.

Written 29 Sept, 2021 – from *New Life News Aust.* December 2021 edition. To find out what happens and see prayer points for Nepal, go to *Pioneers* link here: <https://pioneers.org.au/ordinary-people-extraordinary-god/>

Pioneers is a Christian mission seeking to share the Gospel and plant new churches.

Our mission partners, the Edwardes family, are doing Church planting work with *Pioneers* in Ireland.