



Connecting God's People

worship. witness. service

Casuarina Uniting Church

29 March 2020

Hello from our Minister, Helen

Hello everyone! How are you going? There have been so many changes this last week it's hard keeping up with them all. During this time of uncertainty and upheaval I'm praying that each one of us will keep trusting God to provide what we need and bring new life even in situations that are distressing. It is 2 weeks till Easter and our Bible readings this morning invite us to anticipate the new life made possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Come let us worship God our Maker, know the presence of the living Lord Jesus beside us, and the Holy Spirit guiding us.

Opening Prayer

Loving God we thank you for this opportunity to worship you on this new day. It is hard not being able to meet face to face. Be with all our Casuarina Uniting Church friends wherever they are. Although we are dispersed, unite us in your love and hold us close to your heart. Whether we are sitting down at home, or outside enjoying your creation, may we know in a special way your love and care for us today. Show us how to continue to live out the good news of the Gospel as your people facing challenging times.

Amen



I am the product of Christian parents who taught me to see God's creation through the natural things around me. These days I really enjoy sharing my enthusiasm with today's kids who are at an age when they are really perceptive to the beauty of Creation.

Ian Morris

As you look at Ian's photo remember how wonderful is the world God has created. *Write down a few things that you are thankful for and offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God.*

Read Psalm 130

This Psalm reminds us that we can honestly name how we feel to God including the feelings we may hide from others. 'Out of the depths' the psalmist cries out but notice that he cries out to God. The Psalm is a confession of faith. Fear is turned into faith. May we too trust in God and know God as our Saviour whose steadfast love never fails. **Alleluia!**

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Church website: www.casuarinauniting.org.au

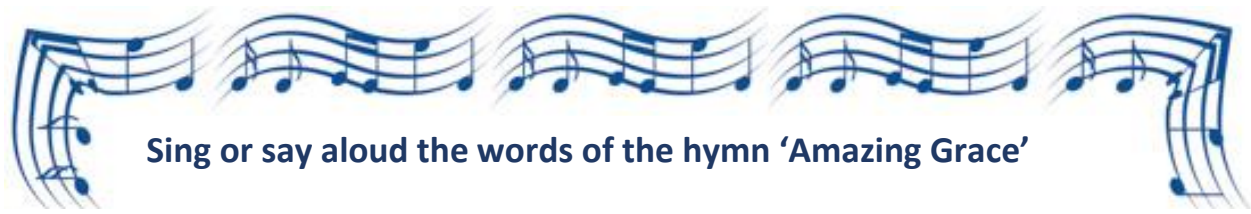
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Articles for Connecting God's people send to Heidi by

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Sing or say aloud the words of the hymn 'Amazing Grace'

Read Ezekiel 37:1-14 *Some notes drawn from Prof James Wallace, Prof of Theology.*

Here is one of the most dramatic readings in Scripture. God not only gives life but restores life and death will not have the last word. What does the valley of dry bones represent for you? How does the vision of Ezekiel invite you to trust in God as the One who restore life to the lifeless? *'Can these bones live?' Yes Lord we believe and we know most definitely yes!*

Prayer for Others from Ros Swenson

Heavenly Father thank You that as the people of Casuarina Uniting Church we can come together to pray for our world and more specifically for others we know who need us to intercede on their behalf. Our world is in a very difficult situation. A new virus has affected all countries and because it has come out of the blue so to speak, there is no known medical prevention or immediate cure. We ask for wisdom for those at the forefront of the medical world as they work together to pool all their knowledge to see a way forward. We bring all political leaders before You and pray that You will give them wisdom as they lead their countries and protect their people. Here in Australia we pray for wisdom for our Prime Minister, Premiers of all States and Chief Ministers of the Territories as they work hard to protect everyone. We ask for Your protection for all medical staff, doctors, nurses, allied health people, who see people face to face who are sick. Be with those providing food for our daily living needs. We ask that everyone will care for others and not be greedy in the way they shop. Some of our members need to know Your love in present situations.

We remember them now.....

We pray for all the residents in Pearl residential care. May the staff be protected from illness. We uphold Rev Helen our Minister to you. Please guide her every day and the Ministry Team. Help us to support each other however long it takes before we can gather together again as your people. Let us look for the new thing You are doing in our lives in this new journey.

In Jesus Name, **Amen**

Gospel Reading John 11:1-41

You may like to read the Dramatic reading attachment and think about the questions.

Notice Martha's great profession of faith, certainly worth noting. Can we also believe that here and now in the midst of our lives God's power to restore life is still available even when hope seems gone? Today Jesus' work of 'unbinding' and 'letting go' continues. What are the 'strips of cloth' binding you? Perhaps these are worries, financial troubles, resentment, anxiety, addictions, sadness and loss? Can you hear the words of Jesus saying *'Unbind him and let him go?'*

Let us hand over to God those worries and concerns and receive this morning the gift and promise of new life through Christ. And then we are called to participate in what God is doing today turning fear into faith, despair into hope and proclaiming life in the face of death looking towards that day when God will wipe away all tears and sorrow.

You may like to watch a short message about this reading:

https://www.commongrace.org.au/i_am_the_resurrection_and_the_life

You may like to listen to a song on YouTube 'Four Days Late' by Karen Peck

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?=Pto64ya7qEO>

To Ponder

Think of how God's timing may be different from ours. Think of a time when God did something wonderful even when things seemed hopeless.

Raising of Lazarus, Jesus Mafa painting



Kids Bulletin & activity sheets (attached) <https://sermons4kids.com/>

Check out this great resource that has crossword puzzles, word search and multiple choice questions that go with our readings each week. Kids might like to send a copy of their colouring in back to Heidi or Helen!

CUC member spot: What God has shown me this week...

In subsequent weeks we'd love to have a segment that comes from you! Please send your short reflections (100 words or so) to Heidi. We look forward to hearing your stories.

Want to go deeper and do some more bible study?

- Bible Study by Craig Mitchell to delve deeper into today's Bible passages (*attachment*)
- Bible Project video resource <https://bibleproject.com/explore/how-to-read-the-bible/> is free to download and graphically well done, also suitable for young adults

Some uplifting song suggestions from Poasa Jrn

The Blessing by Kari Job and Cody Carnes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zp6aygmVzM4>

Take me back by Maverick City Music <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kd16GGMX3dM>

Blessing

Live out your lives this week remembering that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Allow the grace of God to minister through you that we may be beacons spreading hope to others. May the Holy Spirit fill you with peace this day and the coming days. **Amen**

Connecting with others

Why don't you ring someone (phone, or face time, skype or messenger) and see how they are going. You may like to read one of these prayers in this service sheet together, or share your thoughts on the Bible readings.