

Remember God calls us to maintain justice, his justice, and do what is right, for soon his salvation will come, and his deliverance will be revealed.' (Isaiah 56.1)

The Lord be with you.

Prayer Points

Thanksgiving

- For the grace of God in our lives.

Petitions

- Peter, Summer, Helen, Lorna, Debbie, Kaye, Chris, Rita, Julia & John and their families.
- Those affected by COVID 19,
- For our healthcare professionals (who are working ridiculous hours at the moment.)



The Lighter Side of Life



Anglican Parish of the Otways Newsletter

11th Sunday after Pentecost

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**Anglican Parish of the
Otways**

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

I do hope you are all keeping warm. It certainly has been cold. We popped home last week when it snowed and briefly thought we might need our snow chains! But despite the cold I love the snow. It was lovely to see a picture of St Anselm covered in snow, exactly how it looked the very first time we saw it 4 years ago when we first came to have a look at the parish. Where has the time gone!

I must thank everyone for the many birthday wishes I received this week. It was lovely to be remembered and I had a lovely day with Richard. We used our exercise time to go orchid hunting in the forest near our home and found three species of greenhoods we hadn't seen before. I feel very blessed.

Once again I ask that you continue with your faithfulness in stewardship. The parish has received several accounts of late which need to be attended to. Bank details are Anglican Parish of the Otways, BSB 633 000 ACC 1685 80009. Thank you.

In regard to our annual meeting, instead of a face to face meeting, reports and nominations for Parish Council will be circulated to all parishioners in the next week. If you have a nomination for parish council or a question or idea you would normally have brought to the AGM, please forward it to me. These will be dealt with ASAP and results/answers forward to you. It's a bit unusual but it is the best we can do this year.

Please remember I am available on the parish mobile at any time and I will try to be in contact with each of you personally during this time.

May the Lord bless you with peace and joy.
Jenny

Prayer of the Week

God of freedom, you have broken the tyranny of sin and sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts:
give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service,
that all people may know the glorious liberty of the children of God;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Reading. **Matthew 15: 21-28** **Romans 11.13-32**

Reflection

Today's gospel story is one that often troubles people, but I love this story. It is a story of prejudice, rejection and grace. We see Jesus and his disciples in the pagan region of Tyre and Sidon when he is approached by a Canaanite woman, a pagan with whom Jews would have nothing to do with. Jesus apparently ignores the woman and the prejudice of the disciples is evident as they plead with him to send her away. One can only imagine the rejection this woman must have felt as the man whom she thought was her daughters only hope appears to reject her.

Prejudice is very real in our world today. One only has to look genocidal events around the world or grievances between different groups of people that often turn violent. When we were in the territory it broke our hearts to see the prejudice and rejection our students faced simply because their skin was black. I remember sitting at a water hole with our girls who had just witnessed a large group of tourists leave when we arrived, vocalising very loudly how they were not going to share a water hole with filthy blacks. It broke my heart when one of the girls asked me, "Why do they hate us Aunty".

If we return to our Gospel story, we see that things did not turn out the way the disciples expected. I imagine Jesus appearing to go along with their preconceptions about this woman, not because he agreed with them, but because it would make a very important point to them, although he may have come to the House of Israel the blessings of the kingdom of God were for all humanity, regardless of race, creed or colour. We see in this account what seemed prejudice and hostile rejection turn to the abundant grace of God. The woman is commended for her great faith and her daughter is healed.

What prejudices do you hang on to? Who do you struggle to accept?