

Prayer Points

Thanksgiving

- For the opportunity to continue to worship during these difficult times.
- For the encouragement we receive from God's word.

Petitions

- Peter, Summer, Helen, Lorna, Debbie, Kaye, Chris, Rita, Marion, Paige and their families.
- Those affected by COVID 19, those in lockdown in Melbourne and our government as it leads us through the Pandemic.



Up Coming Events

- Services—Small services are resuming at the usual times in all centres.
- Bible Study— Wednesday 10.45 am, Apollo Bay
- Parish Council— Monday 13th July, 1 pm.

The Lighter Side of Life



Anglican Parish of the Otways Newsletter

6th Sunday after Pentecost

12th July, 2020

Priest in Charge — Rev'd Jenny Brandon

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**Anglican Parish of the
Otways**

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

We have another birthday to celebrate, although a week late. Happy birthday to James. We hope you enjoyed having your sister in town for your birthday. Best wishes mate for the year ahead. I was lovely to catch up with Katie briefly when she was in town. All the best Katie for the semester ahead.

As school holidays end and the kids go back to school and university, please hold them and their teachers and support staff in your prayers. I suspect it is going to be a difficult term for students and teachers in the city.

I know that many of you are concerned with the spike in COVID19 cases in Melbourne. This is a time for us to continue to be a calm presence in our community, showing them that we can trust God to continue to provide for us during this time. It is also important that we continue to act responsibly to keep both ourselves and our community safe. Please pray for those people who are in lockdown in Melbourne, especially those in the high density housing complexes. This is going to be a very difficult time for them.

Stay warm! I think our nice sunny winter days are in hiding!

Blessings Jenny.

Prayer of the Week

Bountiful God,
we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word:
by your Holy Spirit,
help us to receive it with joy, and to live according to it,
that we may grow in faith and hope and love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Readings. **Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9,18-23**

Reflection

We all get things wrong in life, don't we? We have all made mistakes, errors of judgement – and the history of our lives is littered with events and choices and decisions that, if we had the opportunity to go back in time, we would do differently.

But the wonderful truth of the Christian gospel is that there is nothing in our lives that we have ever done that is too big, or too bad, for God to forgive. He is always more willing to wipe away the guilt of the past than we are willing to ask of him. God's grace and love for us is beyond comprehension. And that is what Paul was talking about in the passage from Romans.

He begins in verse 1 with the most wonderful claim: "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Why? Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. If we are 'in Christ', the mistakes of our past no longer has any power over us because we have been set free by his saving work.

Now, because of this, our future looks different from our past, because we can now walk in the power of the Holy Spirit and make better choices for God and for other people and for ourselves.

If we walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, we are not condemned to an endless cycle of making the same mistakes but we can move into a more positive future with God.

Paul isn't saying here that we will never sin again; but is referring to our motivation for living; the direction in which we are walking. It's a question of what motivates us: if we want to pursue the flesh, use our bodies in opposition to God's intention, we are motivated by the flesh, and choose for the world. But if we want to pursue the Spirit, choose to use our bodies as God intended we are motivated by the Spirit and choose for God. We don't always succeed but what's important is our primary motivation.

As Christians we live in the world with all its temptations and tensions, and we see the consequence of sin around us.

But we also live in Christ, united with him and recipients of his peace and grace. We can see the power of God's mercy and love in action. This is why we can live life in hope and never despair because we wait for life, not death.

The Lord be with you.