DATES FOR THE DIARY

Monday	Patchwork Group meet @ 12.30pm
Tuesday	Friendship Group meet @ 10am
Wednesday	Golf Group meet @ 6am
Thursday	Lenten Study @ 10am

GAMES GROUP – will meet for the first time this year on Tuesday at 7pm. All are welcome to come along and enjoy playing some games, having a chat, and a coffee or tea to drink.

FLOWERS FOR EASTER – if you would like to make a donation towards the flowers for Easter, please speak with Bobbie Donaldson, Irene Shortland, Merle Jennings or Reverend Josie.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES
Palm/Passion Sunday 24th March at 7.30am and 9am
Maundy Thursday 28th March at 7pm
Good Friday 29th March at 9am
Easter Day Sunday 31st March at 7.30am and 9am

Please pray for: Paul; Monica; Isla; Keena; Charlotte; Maggie; Cheryl; Debbie; Dot; Cameron; Deidre; Andrew; Dave; Janet; Gazza; Budi; Stacy; Kieth; Brad; Bronwyn; Bruce; Bhav; Karen; Judith; Joyce; Wakefield family



This week Johnny is with Jennifer Stephens



Happy birthday to Jeff Edwick & Kate Bradley on 11th; Evelyn Hamilton on 12th; Isabella Strachan on 14th

Wardens -	Phil Goulding	Phone: 9247 4978
	Judith Smith	Phone: 9246 3745
Parish Priest –	the Reverend Josie Steytler	Phone: 0421 115 438

Electronic giving: Account Name - Anglican Parish Greenwood
BSB - 706 001 **Account Number** - 3000 3969
Website: https://greenwoodanglican.com
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/greenwoodanglican
Email address: greenwoodanglican@gmail.com
Phone Number: 9447 9243

Welcome to Worship

Lent 4

10th March 2024

We are a warm-hearted community who are delighted to have you worshipping with us today …

Our Mission is to

- **Know God personally**
- **Love and respect one another deeply**
- **Disciple and serve those around us**

Sentence: The Son of Man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. *John 3:14-15*

Collect of the Day
Everlasting God,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you: give us purity of heart and strength of purpose, that no selfish passion may hinder us from knowing your will,
no weakness prevent us from doing it;
that in your light we may see light,
and in your service find perfect freedom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Today's readings:
Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21

Next Week:
Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 119:9-16
Hebrews 5:5-14
John 12:20-33



Lent 4 – John 3:14-21

“God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him …”

Nicodemus is a Pharisee, a member of the ruling Sanhedrin. Like so many others who heard Jesus, he is fascinated by this Worker of wonders. So as not to attract undue attention, he arranges to meet Jesus at night.

In their meeting, Jesus tries to make Nicodemus understand the mission of the Messiah in a new light:

It is not Israel’s strict adherence to the ancient Law but the love of God that is the vehicle of salvation. God is motivated by a love so great that he gives the world his only Son, not to destroy but to transform the world. Redemption is initiated by God; reconciliation and healing are God’s work, filled with possibilities that are as limitless as they are undeserved.

The God of Israel is not the God of condemnation and destruction but the God of forgiveness, mercy and reconciliation. The Messiah comes as a “light” to enable humankind to realise the great love and mercy of God.

Contrary to the image Nicodemus and Judaism have of a powerful, triumphant Messiah who will restore Israel’s political fortunes, the real Messiah will suffer and die in order to conquer death and restore life. Jesus invokes the image of Numbers 21:4-9: As Yahweh directs, Moses lifts up the image of a serpent on a pole to heal those who suffer from a deadly plague caused by the bite of serpents. The crucified Messiah, too, will be “lifted up” to bring healing and wholeness to this hurting world.

Like Nicodemus, we are all seekers and Christ has assured us of his company on our journey; like Nicodemus, we find ourselves coming to Jesus in the middle of our darkest nights, seeking hope and consolation, direction and comfort — and Jesus neither rejects us nor admonishes us, but welcomes us. We discover the God that Nicodemus discovers: a God of light who transforms our despair into hope; a God of wisdom who enables us to re-create our Good Friday deaths into Easter resurrections; a God of compassion who heals our broken spirits into hearts made whole.

Too often, we approach faith as a series of “thou shalt nots” – religion is equated with guilt, spirituality with that nagging little conscience in the depths of our souls that serves as a safety valve to stop us from becoming the wicked people we know we are capable of becoming. Jesus challenges such a limited concept of faith: God is not a cosmic tyrant that revels in seeing us suffer; God has revealed himself as the loving Father of a perfect creation that has made itself imperfect in so many ways through sin.

Despite our rejection of the ways of God, our demeaning of the values of God, God continues to call us and seek us out. God loves his creation too much to write it off or condemn it; instead, God raises up his Son as a new light to illuminate our hearts, to make us see things as God sees them, to share God's hope for humanity's redemption.

© Connections/MediaWorks. All rights reserved