

ONLINE SERVICE

21 June 2020

Welcome and Notices

Amanda Fairs
viola

Call to Worship

Prayer of Invocation

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: Matthew 18:1-20
Suzanne Hart

Gospel of Matthew: Marker #4,
The Christian's New Normal
Matthew 18

Prayers of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Amanda Fairs
viola

Benediction



NOTICES

21 June 2020

Wednesday 24 June

1.30 pm Covenanted Prayer Time

Sunday 28 June

11 am Way Markers in Matthew #5.



Streaming online during COVID-19

blackburnpc.org.au or

www.facebook.com/blackburnpresbyterian/

For your prayers this week:

Congregational member: Ian HILL and family

and



Andrew ADAMS from the
Canterbury church who is working in Japan with
Pioneers.

MEMBERS who wish to continue their freewill offerings may use the banking details at the bottom of this page or post to our Treasurer. Vic Ansell, 59 Queen St Kangaroo Flat Vic 3555.

GARDENIA ST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
53 Gardenia Street,
Blackburn 3130

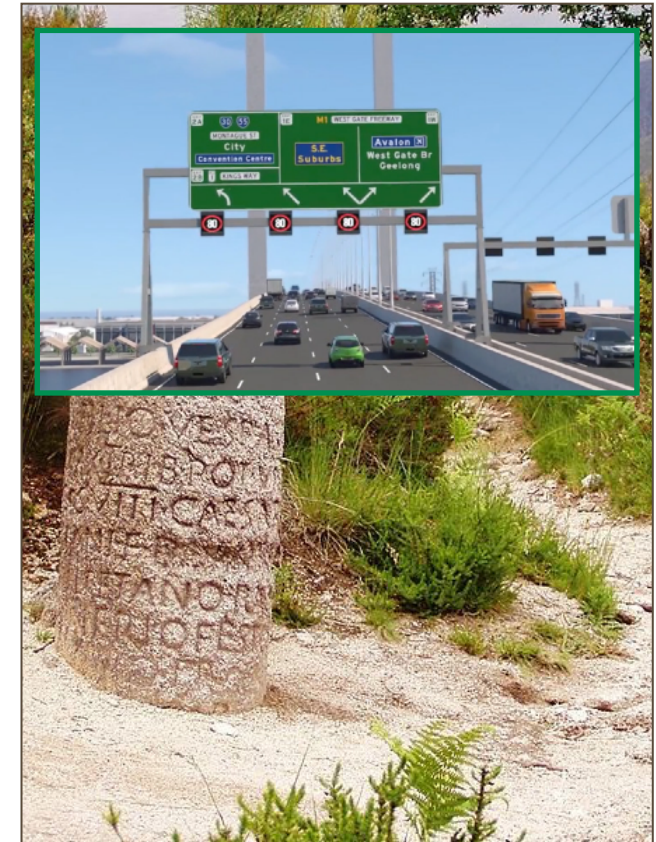


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Electronic Banking Details: ANZ Forest Hill,
Account name: Blackburn Presbyterian Church
BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694

GARDENIA ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BLACKBURN

21 June 2020



Roman Wayside Marker
Inset, Contemporary Roadside Advice

WELCOME



Authorities heavily suppressed the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly. Security forces used lethal force unlawfully to crush protests, killing hundreds, and arbitrarily detaining thousands of protesters. The authorities arbitrarily detained over 200 human rights defenders and imposed sentences of imprisonment and flogging against many of them.... Women continued to face discrimination and the authorities intensified their crackdown against women's rights defenders campaigning against forced veiling laws. Ethnic and religious minorities faced entrenched discrimination. Torture and other ill-treatment, including through the denial of medical care, remained widespread and systematic; they were committed with impunity. Cruel, inhuman and degrading judicial punishments were carried out. Scores of people were executed, sometimes in public; several were under the age of 18 at the time of the crime.

Amnesty International

Christians in Iran face intense persecution by the government. The country follows Sharia (Islamic) law that suppresses any religion that is contrary to Islam. Authorities monitor Christians while local Muslim leaders incite violence against Christians. It is incredibly dangerous to own a Bible or to meet with other Christians.

Open Doors Australia

Upside down Kingdom

Route Marker #4

Sermon Notes

We are following Matthew's five "wayside markers". Each marks a block of the Lord's teaching; a new kind of 'five books'. The markers are listed below. Today we look at the fourth which refers to Jesus' words in chapter 18.

7:28 When Jesus had finished these words...

11:1 When Jesus had finished teaching his disciples...

13:53 When Jesus had finished these parables...

19:1 When Jesus had finished these words...

26:1 When Jesus had finished all these words...

Jesus' upside down kingdom is marked by forgiveness. Let's notice how four questions gather the chapter themes.

1 Who is greatest? We have all kinds of ways of awarding status and recognising people who are important in society. Wealth, power, intelligence, influence, beauty, celebrity and family ties all rate highly. Things are very different when God reigns.

The disciples were wondering about who would rank highest in the kingdom that Jesus was preaching about. They had a lot to learn!

Jesus called a child to the middle of the group. "Unless you change and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" he said, "The greatest is the one who humbles himself..."

2 Which little ones? We noticed that a cup of cold water to the least of the "little ones" is done as to Jesus himself (10:42). This is now enlarged. Causing a little one to stumble from the faith is deadly dangerous to the perpetrator.

If what disciples see, where they go or what they handle causes loss of faith it would be better to lose the eye, foot or hand! This is hyperbole, but it makes a most serious point! Sin is deadly.

The shepherd searches and cares for every wayward sheep. Each one matters. Who do we "screen out" from view? The homeless, the coloured, the refugee, elderly? Their angels behold the face of God.

3 Where is Jesus? This kind of attitude creates a covenant community (See Jeremiah 31:31-34) like a family, where

Forgiveness is as indispensable to the life and health of the soul as food is for the body. So the [Lord's] prayer is, "Forgive us our debts". Sin is likened to a debt because it deserves to be punished. But when God forgives sin, he remits the penalty and drops the charge against us. The addition of the words "as we also have forgiven our debtors".. [reminds us].. that God forgives only the penitent and that one of the chief evidences of true penitence is a forgiving spirit.

Once our eyes have been opened to see the enormity of our offence against God, the injuries which others have done to us appear by comparison extremely trifling. If, on the other hand, we have an exaggerated view of the offences of others, it proves that we have minimised our own. It is the disparity between the size of debts which is the main point of the parable of the unmerciful servant. Its conclusion is: 'I forgave you all that debt (which was huge) ...; should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?'

John Stott, *Sermon on the Mount*, IVP 1978

harmony is a high priority. If there is hurt between members steps towards a phased reconciliation are set out. Go privately... go with one or two others... tell the church... " (18:15,16) Great guiding principles here.

Working for reconciliation in this way is a sign that Jesus is right there "in the midst" (v.20).

4 Forgiveness: how much? Peter, struck by the demand for forgiveness asks how often must one forgive? "Seven times?" No says Jesus, "seventy times seven".

He tells a parable about a king who forgave his servant an unplayable debt. Afterwards the servant imprisoned a man who owed him a tiny fraction that he had been forgiven.

Imagine what the king would do! That is what God will do "unless you forgive your brother from your heart" (v.35).

NT Wright suggests forgiveness is not like a Christmas present, but more like the kiss-of-life. Unless you breathe out offering it to others, you cannot receive it.

Jesus soon talks about Jeremiah's new covenant and the cost of forgiveness in words we all know (Matthew 26:28).