

ONLINE SERVICE

during COVID-19

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4 October 2020

Welcome and Notices

Amanda Fairs
viola

Call to Worship

Prayer of Invocation

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: Acts 2:22-42
Reader: Suzanne Hart

Great Texts of the Bible #9
This IS That

Lead me to the Cross
Isabella Bradbeer

Prayers of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Benediction



NOTICES

4 October 2020

Wednesday 7 October 1.30 pm Sweet Hour of Prayer
Sunday 11 October 11 am Great Texts of the Bible #10.

For your prayers this week:

Recently bereaved congregational member:
Ogilvie RUSSELL.

and



Paul & Anthea are with Pioneers and served in the Middle East. They are currently based in Australia.

PLEASE NOTE: Members who wish to continue their freewill offerings during the COVID 19 restrictions may post to our Treasurer. Vic Ansell, 59 Queen St Kangaroo Flat, Vic 3555 or use the electronic banking details below.

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

BLACKBURN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Session Clerk: Mr Keith Ferres 98305466
Treasurer: Mr Vic Ansell 5447 7118

GARDENIA ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BLACKBURN

4 October 2020



Republic of Togo Stamp
(circa 1969)
El Greco, Pentecost.
Acts 2

WELCOME



The ongoing conflict had a devastating impact on the civilian population and over 1,000 were killed and injured. The authorities cracked down on critics, including journalists, and opposition members stifling their rights to freedom of expression and assembly, in some cases using excessive force resulting in deaths. Al-Shabaab also severely restricted journalists' ability to work. Sexual violence against women and girls remained widespread. Conflict, drought and floods displaced more than 300,000 people. Over 2.6 million displaced people remained at risk of exploitation and abuse. Impunity for human rights violations was widespread.

Amnesty International 2019

There is no safe place in Somalia for Christians. Civil war, social fragmentation, tribalism and violent Islamic extremism restrict church life. Believers must practise their faith in secret. With a weak government, much of Somalia is controlled by extremist groups. With extremists desiring to eradicate the country of Christians, believers live under severe persecution, often without any fellowship.

Almost all Christians in Somalia come from a Muslim background. Their faith is viewed as a betrayal of their Somali family and clan and a threat to Somali culture. Community and family members harass and intimidate anyone suspected of converting to Christianity. If their conversion is confirmed, new believers are often killed. Despite the risks, Somali people are coming to faith in Jesus – some in miraculous ways.

Open Doors 2020

Great Texts of the Bible #9 Acts 2:22-42

Sermon Notes

Most likely St Luke, who wrote the Gospel, also wrote the book of Acts.

Notice his prologue to Acts [1:1-4]. If his "first book" is about what Jesus "began to do and teach" then the clear implication is that Acts is a book about what Jesus continues to do and teach.

Luke is the only Gospel writer who continues the story of Jesus. He initially follows the ministry of Peter, and then of Paul. The Agent of Change is the Holy Spirit in the lives of the disciples.

Pentecost was fifty days from Passover and celebrated the Feast of Weeks when the wheat harvest began [Exodus 23:16, Deuteronomy 16:9]. What happened that Pentecost is with us still.

1 Only Nine O'clock [v.14-21] Strange things happened that particular Pentecost. It was a theophany, with what sounded like a mighty rushing wind and what seemed like flames of fire. The result sounded like God being praised in a huge range of languages. How was this to be explained?

Early morning intoxication said some. But "No" said Peter. It's only nine o'clock in the morning!

This is what Joel [2:28-32] predicted would happen. "In the last days I will pour out my Spirit on everyone" not just on a select few, prophets, and priests and kings. This is a marker from God that the last days have arrived. This IS that! God's salvation is here now!

2 Jesus, undeniably accredited [v.22] "Listen!" says Peter, "you've heard about Jesus". Hadn't everybody! There was no need to talk up the impact of Jesus' life on the community from which he came. His name and mighty works were well known. Even in his own day those who opposed him never denied the miracles. Instead they said they were, demonic, a result of his collaboration with Beelzebub.

Later critics also did not deny his 'mighty works' but said he was a sorcerer. Jesus came "thoroughly accredited by God to you". The miracles and signs that God did through Jesus were well known.

3 Well Thought Out Plan [v 23,24] Amid the turbulence and chaos of their lives and the brutal execution of Jesus, Peter exposed the breathtaking plan of God.

The death of Jesus was not a bungled attempt at another insurrection. It was a coming together of the determination of God, and the evil of human sin that brought about the crucifixion. But God has raised Jesus. King David anticipated this. Peter quotes Psalm 16. It wasn't true of David, his tomb is nearby! But Jesus has been raised!

David also wrote [in Psalm 110] about the Messiah, the LORD's anointed. God has acted to bring his salvation to humanity. He is enthroned and reigns.

4 We Killed Who!?! [v.36,37] The one you have crucified, says Peter, is both Lord and Messiah!

Whoa! The listeners hadn't meant anything like this. It was all just the hurly burly of life under a tyrannical overlord and multiple power groupings within society. Could this be God's work?

Led to the cross, the listeners understood they were complicit, actively or passively, in deeds and structures that brought about the death of the righteous Jesus. They were cut to the heart.

What could they do? What should they do?

5 Receive the Gifts [v.38] Peter had an unexpected answer. It echoed the radical change that John the Baptist had called for and anticipated in his exalted cousin.

Two things that go together like two sides of a coin: Repent and be baptised.

Repent, *metanoia* is the word, we saw it two weeks ago; a radical change of mind and of life. This accompanied with a new found faith in Jesus, made evident from the start by identification with Jesus - be baptised [washed] in his Name.

This great turning comes with a double gift. You will receive forgiveness. of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

You and I can enter into the experience of sins forgiven and the gracious presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Read [to the end of the chapter] to learn the sense of joy and community that pervaded their early church. May that be our portion also.