

ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday 12 September 2021

Chit Chat
Welcome and Notices
Christine Bradbeer

Prayer of Invocation

Young @ Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: Philippians 3:1-12
Amanda Fairs

Sermon: Philippians #3 [of 4]
Are we there yet?!

Meditation
Chaconne by Vitali
Amanda Fairs (viola)

Prayer of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Benediction



NOTICES

12 September 2021

Website: www.blackburnpc.org.au

Wednesday 15 September 1.00 pm Don Duncan Funeral will be streamed live by Heritage Funerals.

1.30 pm Covenanted Prayer Time.

Sunday 19 September 11 am Divine Service. Online Only.
Live stream on Facebook, later with closed caption option on YouTube.

For your prayers this week



Congregational members:
Christine and Graham BRADBEER
and



Rhys and Rhondda HALL are currently at home and grateful to have been able to work on some major projects. They ask for prayer for their future direction.

GARDENIA ST

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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GARDENIA ST.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BLACKBURN

12 September 2021



© ASSOCIATED PRESS Australia's Madison de Rozario crosses the finish line to win the women's T54 marathon as Switzerland's Manuela Schaefer follows at Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, Sunday, Sept. 5, 2021, in Tokyo, Japan. (AP Photo/Eugene Hoshiko)

WELCOME



Parties in Syria continue to disregard human rights and humanitarian law protections. While the Syrian government, with its allies' support, has regained significant territory using tactics that violate the laws of war, areas under its control also are rife with abuse. Security services arbitrarily arrest and torture hundreds, and millions are going hungry due to the government's diversion of aid and failure to equitably address the economic crisis. In Idlib, the last anti-government territory, the Syrian-Russian military alliance still poses a threat to over 3 million civilians trapped there, while the dominant anti-government armed group restricts their freedoms. The UN Security Council's gutting of a cross-border aid mechanism has exacerbated humanitarian crises in non-government areas. In Turkish-occupied territories, Turkey and local factions are abusing civilians' rights with impunity. Following ISIS's territorial defeat in northeast Syria, Kurdish-led authorities and the US-led coalition have yet to provide compensation for civilian casualties, offer support for identifying the fate of those kidnapped by ISIS, or justly address the tens of thousands that are trapped in camps and prisons.

Human Rights Watch

Syria's continuing civil war has made the country a breeding ground for Christian persecution. The economic crisis caused by COVID-19 has only made the situation worse, leaving many displaced Christians struggling to survive. In areas controlled by Islamic extremist groups, public expressions of Christianity are forbidden and most churches have been seized or destroyed. In government-controlled areas, this threat is less, but many young Christians have still been abducted.

Open Doors Australia 2021

Sermon Outline

no confidence in the flesh
Are we there yet?

Prelude: In the song at the heart of this letter reminds us that God's redeeming purpose came to us through the unfathomable self-denial of Jesus, the Beloved, for which the Father raised and exalted Him in ineffable glory.

There is no other basis on which a person may claim to be in the 'right' with God. It begins and ends with the love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ. With St Paul, we have 'no confidence in the flesh!' (v.3)

1. Pedigree rejected (v.7,8)

Paul once thought he had a pedigree to boast about. He documents it for us. But since his encounter with Jesus his perspective has dramatically changed. All that he boasted about he now regards as worse than worthless. It was a stumbling block to him. "They made him self-reliant and self-satisfied, content to offer to God his own goodness". [GF Hawthorne]

We kid ourselves if we imagine our family pedigree, our church background, our education or wealth or charitable activities can be a basis for being 'right' with God. Jesus Christ has to be central, and his grace the motivation for everything.

2. Priceless experience (v.9-11)

That *grace*, the wonder of the love of God is beyond words. To express it Paul's letter is full of lyricism, and characterised by joy and rejoicing. He expresses similar awe in Galatians *The Son of God loved me and gave himself for me!* (2:20)

Paul want to *know Christ* (v.10). This is *experiential* knowledge. McLaren says; "it is no mere theoretical or intellectual knowledge which is intended. Such knowledge would need no surrender or suffering 'the loss of all things'". We are to think of the difference between knowing about Christ, and knowing Christ. The former may be a great privilege, but the latter is beyond price.

"We must learn to measure ourselves, not by our knowledge about God, not by our gifts and responsibilities in the church, but by how we pray and what goes on in our hearts" JI Packer

3. Pursuit of Christ (v.12-14)

- a) What then is the result of the work of Christ our King, in and among us? It has not yet been attained. There is much to be done. There have been colossal gains, but there are also tragic flaws. John Dickson's book *Bullies and Saints*. We're not there yet! (13a) This energised Paul, and it should energise us. Consider Madison de Rozario and the discipline of the athlete!
- b) Pressing forward for the coming of the king. Earnestly pursue what is right, and don't forget the poor. Longing for resurrection life. In September 2000 Bono met North Carolina senator Jesse Helms... Find out what happened!

4. Prized by Christ (v.12-14a)

Consider the hymn "Jesus loves me". Yes, Jesus has loved us, taken hold of us! As we press forward in his service we realise that he has his hand on us. We are prized by the Saviour, and beloved of the Father for his sake. It is Job who hints (14:15) at this, saying to God; *you will long for the work of your hands*.

Hebrews (2:11-13) brings the scene full circle, [Jesus] *is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters...* Saying to the Father, *Here I am with the children God has given me*. His people are God's 'treasured possession' Malachi 7:6 etc.



Last week we set out the 'Carmen Christi' with descending and ascending arrows.

*Though he was in the form of God
He did not consider equality with God as something to be grasped
He emptied himself
Taking the form of a servant
Becoming in the likeness of men
Being found in form as a man
He humbled himself
Becoming obedient to death
Even death on a cross*

*To the glory of God, the Father
"Jesus Christ is Lord"
Every tongue confess that
(of heavenly, earthly and subterranean beings)
Every knee shall bow
At the name that belongs to Jesus
And bestowed on him the name above every name
Therefore God highly exalted him*

Notice who is active and who is passive:

↓	CHRIST IS ACTIVE	THE FATHER IS ACTIVE	↑
	COMING TO US	RAISING HIM IN GLORY	