

# ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday 26 September 2021

Chit Chat  
Welcome and Notices  
Christine Bradbeer

Prayer of Invocation

Young @ Heart  
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: Acts 17:1-9  
Amanda Fairs

Sermon  
Turning the world upside down:  
Another King

Meditation  
Largo & Dolce, from a Sonata, by Telemann  
Amanda Fairs (viola)  
Sue Hamerton (violin)

Prayer of Intercession  
and  
The Lord's Prayer

Benediction



## NOTICES

26 September 2021  
[www.blackburnpc.org.au](http://www.blackburnpc.org.au)

Wednesday 29 September 1.30 pm Covenanted Prayer Time.  
Sunday 3 October 11 am Divine Service. Online Only.  
Live stream on Facebook, later with closed caption option on YouTube.

### For Your Prayers



Congregational members:  
**Carey and Cathy Cox**

and



**Craig and Jayni Manners** set up and manage ORBUS Ministries in Malawi and Central Africa with an emphasis on Education and Health.

GARDENIA ST  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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## GARDENIA ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BLACKBURN

26 September 2021



Excavations for the Thessalonki Metro revealed Byzantine, Roman and Greek cities under the modern city.

## WELCOME





The 2019 legislative elections in Tunisia produced a fragmented parliament. Through 2020, parliament made no progress in reforming laws that violate or threaten human rights. It also failed to agree on its allotted appointments of judges to the constitutional court, which could play a pivotal role in ensuring that laws conform with the rights provided by the 2014 constitution. President Kais Saied, elected in 2019, renewed a state of emergency. Tunisians who spoke out risked occasional criminal prosecutions for “defamation” and other speech offences, and those who demonstrated sometimes faced excessive force from the police

Human Rights Watch 2020

Compared to other countries in the Maghreb region, Tunisia (98% Muslim) is relatively open, and even the Islamists are considered more “reasonable” than those of other North African countries. A coalition government, established at the end of February 2020, includes Ennahda (Tunisia’s Islamist political party). About a fifth of Tunisian Muslims dress in a conservative Islamic way, but many others are questioning Islam. The Tunisian Ministry of Religion has a Muslim section, headed by an imam, and a Jewish section, headed by a rabbi, but nothing for Christians (even though they are more numerous than Jews in Tunisia).

The Christian community is mainly expatriates, especially from Africa, but also includes some Tunisian converts from Islam and their children. Historic churches with foreign links are in a relatively strong position legally. Local Tunisian churches are not prevented from functioning but have no legal status so cannot own property. Converts from Islam are stigmatised by the majority Muslim community and may be rejected by Muslim relatives.

Barnabas Fund 2020

Sermon Outline

## turning the world upside down Another King

### 1. Turning up the Via Egnatia (v.1) the way to synagogue

Still locked down in Melbourne, we are allowed to travel only 10 km from home. Paul and Silas embarked on the 152 km walk to Thessalonica from Philippi, today rated a 31 hour walk.

Recently the great marble paved Roman road, the *via Egnatia* turned up 7m. below the Thessaloniki street which still bears its Roman name (also the A24).

When Paul and Silas arrived they found the Jewish synagogue. The obvious place to speak about the promised Messiah.

### 2. Turning over the Scriptures (v.2,3)

As they turned over passages of Jewish scripture they *discussed and reasoned* together over three Sabbath days, the covenant promises which Paul and Silas *proclaimed*. These promises pointed to the Jewish Messiah. The Hebrew and Greek words mean ‘*anointed one*’.

What would he be like? How would he liberate his people? The apostles said he had done it through his death and resurrection! Where in the Scriptures might they have been looking?

### 3. Turning my life around (v.4)

There were Greek people who had attached themselves to the synagogue. They preferred the One God of Israel to the Greek and Roman pantheon of conflicted deities.

Interestingly, in John’s Gospel it was the desire of Greeks to see Jesus that resulted in him saying *The hour has come* (John 12:20ff). It was time for his *glory to be revealed*... on the cross.

Along with *many Greeks* there were a large number of women, especially noted as *leading women of the town* who surrendered to Jesus’ kingdom. What appeal might this have had and why might women be highlighted?

### 4. Turning out Jason’s house (v.5,6)

There were those who would not have any change in their lives, and who felt threatened by the changes. To preserve the status quo they stirred up a mob from the agora. Nothing new under the sun. They raided Jason’s house but couldn’t find Paul and Silas. Jason paid bail and was released. The apostles remained hidden.

### 5. Turning the world upside down (v.6,7)

The charge of the reactionaries held true. Jesus is ‘another king’. Like Caesar he asks the full allegiance of his people. He asks this because he has given all for them. Poet Les Murray writes “the true god gives his flesh and blood/Idols demand yours off you”.

As Greg Sheridan says, in parody of Monty Python: “What did we ever get from Christianity – apart from the idea of the individual, human rights, feminism, liberalism, modernity, social justice and secular politics?”

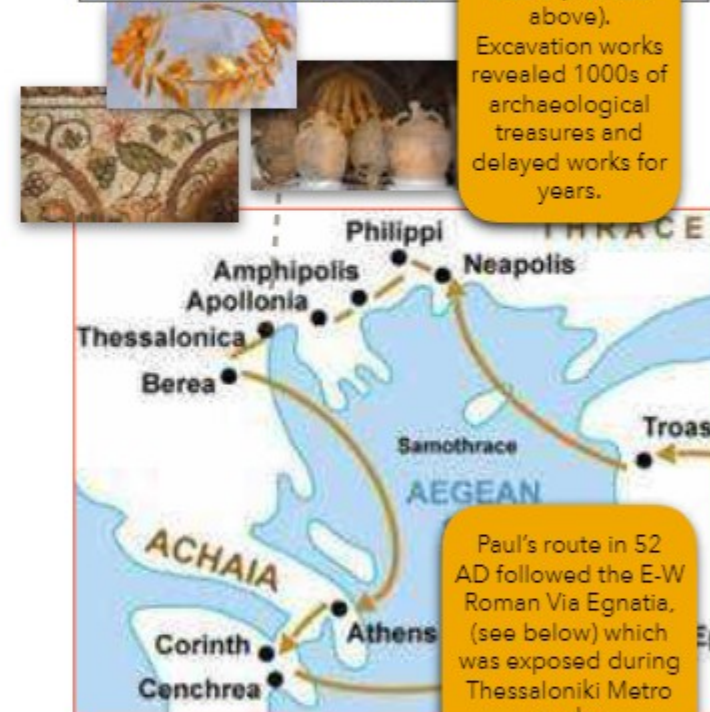
### 6. Turning up a letter for a better world (v.8)

Later, as he sojourned in the Greek city of Corinth for 2 years Paul wrote two letters to the Christians in Thessalonica. We have those letters in our Bibles. I invite you to read them for next week. I’m going to pick out one central idea to nurture us as we face our future. See if you can find out what it might be!



Acts 17  
Thessalonica

Route of the Thessaloniki Metro (marked above). Excavation works revealed 1000s of archaeological treasures and delayed works for years.



Paul’s route in 52 AD followed the E-W Roman Via Egnatia, (see below) which was exposed during Thessaloniki Metro works.

