

ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday 24 October 2021

Chit Chat
Welcome and Notices
Christine Bradbeer

Prayer of Invocation

Young @ Heart
All the love in my heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: Acts 18:18-28
Amanda Fairs

Sermon
I'll be back, God willing.

Meditation
Largo and Allegro
from Fantasia #2 by Telemann.
Amanda Fairs (viola)

Prayer of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Benediction



NOTICES

24 October 2021

www.blackburnpc.org.au

Wednesday 27 October 1.30 pm Covenanted Prayer Time.

Sunday 31 October 11 am Divine Service. Streamed on [Facebook Live](#). Later with closed captions option on YouTube.

For Your Prayers

Congregational member: **Helen Fernee**.

and

Paul and Anthea and family: Pray for contacts they have made and will make in their part-time work in the M community. [no image].

GARDENIA ST

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

53 Gardenia Street,

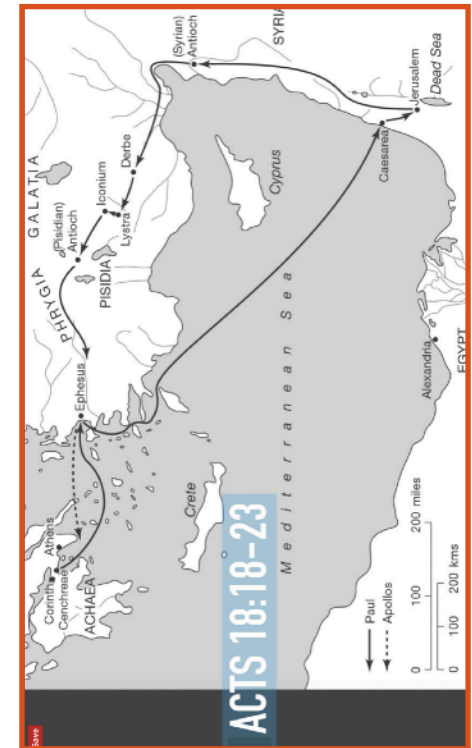
Blackburn 3130



Minister: Rev Graham Bradbeer
tel. 9041 7911 mobile. 0409 978 690
Session Clerk: Mr Keith Ferres 98305466

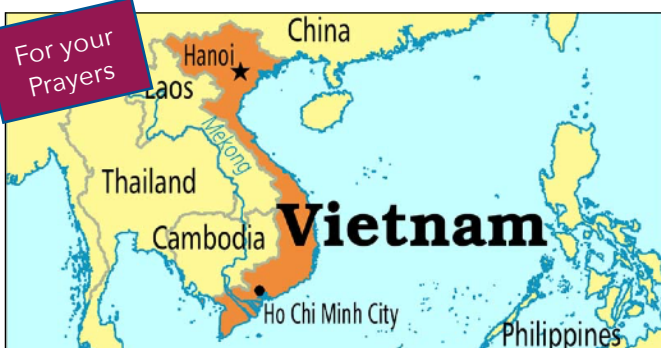
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BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694

WELCOME



GARDENIA ST.
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BLACKBURN

24 October 2021



Arbitrary arrests and prosecutions of human rights defenders significantly increased, with a record number of prisoners of conscience documented. Individuals who expressed themselves online were particularly targeted. Pro-democracy activists, independent journalists, authors and publishers faced sustained harassment, physical assault, arbitrary prosecution and torture and other ill-treatment in police custody. Authorities issued death sentences and executions were carried out. Violence against women remained a persistent and widespread concern. Viet Nam won praise for its COVID-19 response, effectively containing the spread of the virus. However, the authorities' punishment for distributing "disinformation" on the pandemic often amounted to arbitrary restrictions on the right to freedom of expression

Amnesty International 2020/21

Christians are accused of betraying their identity and culture in Communist Vietnam. Christianity is viewed as a foreign religion with no place in the country. Communists regard Vietnamese Christians as a threat to their ideology and a dangerous group capable of mobilising masses of people. New believers have their rights stripped away and are often forced to flee their homes to escape violence. Some of these believers are forced to flee as far as neighbouring countries due to the levels of violence and discrimination.

Churches and Christian property are demolished and attacked. Importing Bibles is restricted, and believers often find it difficult to reach Christian training. Some children from ethnic minorities are not allowed to attend school because of their new faith. Other Christian children are unable to receive sufficient medical attention. Christian men are targeted for arrest and abduction. Once in custody, authorities treat them harshly including beating them and pressuring them to renounce their faith.

Open Doors 2020

Sermon
Outline

The best laid schemes o' mice and men

Our title today comes from the close of a poem of Robert Burns. He wrote *To a Mouse* after his plow turned over the nest of a field mouse. Let's see why this might be suitable title for our exploration these verses...

Paul leaves Corinth for Syria. After a brief stop in the great city of Ephesus, his itinerary raises questions and introduces some key players.

1. the itinerary (18:2,5)

Luke's compact itinerary is deceptive. Travel in the Roman world relied on a huge network of principal roads. Designed to facilitate the movement of armies, they also served the interests of trade and commerce.

They were interconnected by less reliable sea lanes crossing the Adriatic, Ionian, Aegean and Mediterranean seas. From Corinth Paul's itinerary will include Ephesus, Caesarea, Jerusalem, and Antioch. God willing.

2. the questions (18:5-8)

At Corinth's Cenchreae seaport Paul had his head shaved because of a vow he had taken. What was that about? We are not told. But we do know that Jews made vows to express gratitude for the past or to seek blessing in the future. Some vows ended with a sacrifice at the temple in Jerusalem. (Numbers 6:1-21, Acts 23:21-26).

Did Paul visit Jerusalem? The language seems to suggest yes. The expression 'going down' to Antioch is more suited to the elevated city of Jerusalem, than to the seaport of Caesarea. IH Marshall suggests Paul was 'simply expressing gratitude to God in the manner traditional at this time; he was prepared to be "as a Jew" to the Jews (1 Cor. 9:20; cf Acts 16:3, 21:23f.); his action is historically possible and theologically acceptable.'

Then there is the question of what didn't Apollos didn't know! Who is Apollos?

3. the characters (17:24, 28)

Alexandria was not on Paul's itinerary, but it was a centre of Jewish scholarship and the place where the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek. This academic centre was the hometown of Apollos, 'a Jew, born in Alexandria, Egypt, and a terrific speaker, eloquent and powerful in his preaching of the Scriptures. He was well educated in the Way of the Master and fiery in his enthusiasm'. (18:24,25 MSG).

He knew about the Way of the Lord but, but knowing only the baptism of John, there was something more he needed to know. Priscilla realised this and she and Aquila spoke to him privately about it. But what it was we do not know.

Note Priscilla and Aquila's method - privately. Priscilla is here (and in Romans 16) is first named. With letters of endorsement from the Ephesian Christians Apollos went on to have an effective ministry in Corinth!

Think about Paul's plan changes throughout Acts. Plans to imprison Christians from Damascus, to travel with John Mark, to go into Asia (SW Turkey) to witness in synagogues, plans affected even by the weather! Would Paul be back in Ephesus? The answer is more hopeful than Robert Burns, a 'wistful agnostic' can see. Paul says "I'll be back, God willing"!



The Septuagint is the Old Greek version of the Bible.

It includes translations of all the books found in the Hebrew (Old Testament) canon, and as such it is the first known Bible translation. It also includes the so-called Apocryphal or deuterocanonical books, some translated from Hebrew originals and others originally composed in Greek.

It's called the Septuagint after the Latin word for "seventy". According to an old tradition (recounted in the *Letter of Aristeas*), the first five books of the Bible, known as the Pentateuch, were translated into Greek by about seventy elders sent to Egypt by the high priest Eleazar in Jerusalem at the request of King Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Alexandria, who wanted to add the Jewish Scriptures to his library.

Although the story originally applied only to the Pentateuch, the tradition expanded to include the other books as well. In time, the entire Greek version came to be known as the Septuagint, or the version of "the Seventy," and is abbreviated with the Roman numeral **LXX** (70).

There was a large community of Jews living in Alexandria, and it is likely that the Pentateuch was translated for their benefit. The rest of the books followed gradually, probably over the course of several centuries. One finds a range of translation styles in the books of the Septuagint, from very free to very literal. The identity of the various translators is not known.

The Septuagint matters for many reasons. Its translators faced many of the same challenges and issues that today's Bible translators do, so it forms an important resource for translation studies. It also helps us to understand how the Jews interpreted their Scriptures at an early stage. It translates a very early form of the Hebrew text and preserves important differences from surviving Hebrew manuscripts. Furthermore, **New Testament** authors often quoted Old Testament passages from the Septuagint version, and their **theological** vocabulary—which via Latin became the vocabulary of Christian **theology**—often stems from the Septuagint. The Septuagint plus the New Testament became the Bible of Christianity and remains the version used in the Greek **Orthodox** Church.

Professor Jannes Smith
Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary
Hamilton, Ontario.