

ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday 7 February 2021

Welcome & Notices
Session Clerk: Keith Ferres

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn 15 (RCH)
Let all the world in every corner, sing!

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: Ephesian 4:20-32
Amanda Fairs

Offering

Psalm 15
(Scottish Metrical Version, 1650)
*Within Thy tabernacle, Lord
who shall abide with Thee?*

Sermon
SPEAK TRUTH TO **One Another**
Ephesians 4:25

Prayers of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 491 (R)
May the mind of Christ

Benediction
Threefold Amen

NOTICES

7 February 2021

Website: www.blackburnpc.org.au

Wednesday 10 February 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting.
Sunday 14 February 11 am Divine Worship.
All Welcome, Covid safe practices.

An Invitation

Forty Lenten Reflections [15 mins per day]
Commencing Ash Wednesday. See details inside.

For your prayers this week:

Congregational members:
Will Findlay and Elise Rutherford
and



D and C and family. Return to Asia delayed due
to flight closures. Thank God for opened state
borders and safe travel to and from NSW.



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
Treasurer: Mr Vic Ansell 5447 7118

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





The armed conflict continued, resulting in more than 2000 civilian deaths and at least 1 million were forcibly displaced. While some steps were taken to bring perpetrators to justice for conflict-related human rights abuses, the authorities failed to hold to account the most senior officials associated with crimes under international law, and impunity remained widespread. Most of the population was denied basic rights like health, while some progress was made when the government introduced free primary education for all. Amnesty International

The Islamic extremist group Alliance for Democratic Forces (ADF-NALU) is responsible for the persecution of Christians in the eastern part of the country, attacking Christians and churches. The attacks from the ADF and other militant groups in DRC are why violence is a huge risk for the Christian population and churches in the regions where militants are active. The violence has resulted in more than a million internally displaced people. Additionally, followers of Jesus are at risk of kidnappings, torture, murder, forced recruitment into militia groups, forced labour and having their homes destroyed. Christian women are vulnerable to rape and sexual slavery.

Converts, both from Islam and from tribal religions, face pressure to take part in non-Christian religious activities and ceremonies. Representatives of the Catholic Church, who publicly urged the government to abide by the constitutionally mandated electoral deadlines, reported they had experienced verbal harassment and interference based on their advocacy. The previous president of DRC illegally remained in office years after his term was supposed to expire. Open Doors Australia

3. SPEAK TRUTH TO *One Another*

Sermon
Notes

Last week we saw that Christians, as "members of one another", make up a body called *the church*. High expectations are placed on the quality of Christian communication.

Today we explore some of the Bible's 'one another' phrases about *communication*, and discover why it matters; there are some deadly pitfalls and some beautiful possibilities.

1. Don't eat one another (Galatians 5:15)

This letter to the Galatians has this savage description of the destructive power of words. It sounds as if the apostle had some insight into the contemporary polarity in so much of today's public discourse and social media.

But Paul's letter is written to a Christian congregation. It was a struggling congregation, its faith was weak. It was as if they had been 'bewitched' (3:1)!

There was a dissenting voice in the group (5:10) who said they needed to return to keeping the Jewish law (3:10-12). This created rivalry among them. How much obedience made one acceptable to God? (5:11,12). - If salvation is by the Law then no one can be saved (2:16).

Forgetting that they belonged as one body, they would fragment into mutually destructive rival groups (5:20). It is possible by our words to eat and devour one another! (5:15).

At the cross we are one, we stand before God united by faith in our crucified Saviour.

2. Don't grumble, don't lie to one another (John 6:43, Colossians 3:9)

Jesus rebukes the crowd for their grumbling or murmuring (John 6:43). The topic is the Bread of Life and questions need to be clearly asked and answered.

Jesus proceeds to be very clear about the point under discussion. The "work of God is to believe in the One whom He has sent" (6:29). Yet even in this the initiative lies with God (6:44). We cannot make ourselves believe. It requires the work of the Holy Spirit.

If our scepticism is being eroded and faith is creeping into our understanding of Jesus then we should take heart for the Father is drawing us (6:45).

Our conversations need to be honest. Don't lie to one another says Paul to the Colossians (3:8-10 especially v.9). This passage emphasises the

An Invitation: Forty Lenten Reflections

In 1945 Bonhoeffer, was executed by the Nazi's for his outspoken opposition to Hitler. Would you like to participate in 40 daily emailed Lenten reflections on Christian Discipleship drawn from the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer? Why not try this series of 40 daily Lenten devotions? Commencing on Ash Wednesday, 17 February. Email, phone or grab me on Sunday to say "Yes!" gbradbeer@gmail.com

quality of communication that should characterise believers. In Christ God has spoken truly and in person to the world.

As the saying goes: "What a tangled web we weave when first we practise to deceive". The lie comes from darkness.

As I deleted the junk mail folder in my email this evening I was reminded that the truth is always under attack.

3. Speak truth in love, build up one another (Ephesians 4:25, 1 Thessalonians 5:11)

So what is the goal of our communication within the church? If we don't eat one another, and don't grumble, and don't lie... Then what are we to say, and how, and why?

The answer is that we are to speak the truth to one another. To be like our heavenly Father we must do this *lovingly*.

However unlike God we are not omnipotent. Not all truth is at our disposal. This suggests a need for caution, and the Bible encourages it. We should be "slow to speak" says James. Someone else said "God gave us two ears but only one mouth, so we'd listen twice as much as we speak".

The truth in any given situation may not be self-evident, but we should seek it and speak it with a particular intention. And what is it that the truth does? Communicated lovingly truth builds people up.

Truth also cuts too, but used lovingly it cuts as a surgeon cuts, with the intention to heal. The truth reveals our need. But spoken in love it will bring healing.

The minute we think we have the truth we are tempted to use it for self-aggrandisement. We need a Saviour. In Jesus we have One who is more concerned with us than with himself. Motivated by his love of the Father, and for others, His gospel truth restores, redeems, reconciles, and brings joy.

Aah, the wonderful returns of quality Christian communication!