

ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday 28 March 2021

Welcome and Notices
Mr Keith Ferres, Session Clerk

Hymn 691
Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Prayer of Invocation

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 2:18-25
Will Findlay

Hymn 105
There is a green hill

Sermon
Isaiah's 4th Servant Song
#3 He was punished

Prayer of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Hymn
How deep the Father's love
by Stuart Townend.

Benediction

NOTICES

28 March 2021

Website: www.blackburnpc.org.au

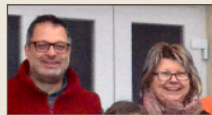
Wednesday 31 March 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting.
Friday 2 April 9.30 am Good Friday - Isaiah 53 #4
Like a Lamb
With coffee and hot cross buns after.
An Offering on Good Friday will go to Whitehorse Churches Care.
Sunday 4 April 11 am Divine Service. All Welcome
Easter Day Isaiah 53 #5 - He will live!
Covid safe practices.

For your prayers this week:



Congregational members:
Geza and Sidonia KOSA.

and



Laszlo & Eva MIHALYI minister with
PIONEERS in Hungary and Romania. They
are based in Budapest.

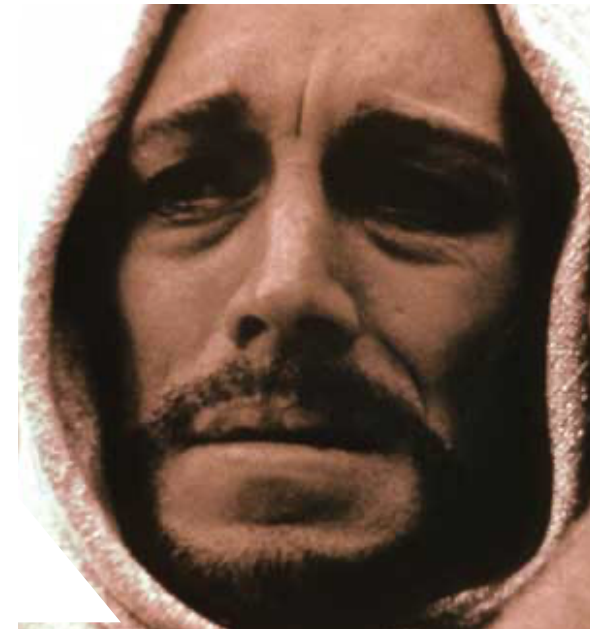
GARDENIA ST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
53 Gardenia Street,
Blackburn 3130



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

WELCOME
TO
GARDENIA ST.
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BLACKBURN
Palm Sunday
28 March 2021



The anguished face of Christ
in the movie
'The Greatest Story Ever Told'
was portrayed by
Max von Sydow
in 1965



Arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings of demonstrators by Iraqi security forces in late 2019 and into 2020 led to government resignations and the nomination of a new prime minister, Mustafa al-Kadhimi, in May 2020. Despite an initial seeming willingness to address some of Iraq's most serious human rights challenges, al-Kadhimi's government failed to end abuses against protesters.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a particularly harmful impact on students kept out of school for months during nationwide school closures, many of whom were unable to access any remote learning.. Human Rights Watch

After years of violence, an uncertain peace has come to Iraq—but 2020 saw recurrent violent protests and the instability in Iraq is a catalyst for the ongoing persecution of Christians.

Christians from a Muslim background often keep their faith a secret, because of the pressure and threats they are likely to receive from extended family members, clan leaders and the wider society. Christian converts risk losing inheritance rights or the right to marry—and they are not allowed to marry Christians, as the law still considers them Muslim.

Islamic extremists remain active in Iraq, attacking and kidnapping Christians. The government also discriminates against Christians in various contexts, from the workplace to check points. Blasphemy laws can also be used against those who try to spread the gospel Open Doors

Early this month the Pope made a four day visit to Iraq, the first ever by a pontiff. His visit to the ISIS devastated Mosul received wide media coverage. It is to be hoped that his visit will be a catalyst for change in the ravaged nation. GB

Isaiah's 4th Servant Song #3: Chapter 53 verses 4-6 *He was punished*

Sermon Notes



What do you think the prophet means "all we all like sheep have gone astray"

1. We all, like sheep.

In the central stanza of this *Servant Song* (53:6) we are told that we are all like sheep. What did the prophet mean by this metaphor?

In a world without fences, sheep needed a shepherd 24/7. They easily got lost, the terrain itself was dangerous and sheep were vulnerable to predators. Owners, who relied primarily on sheep's milk and fleece employed shepherds for a difficult and demanding job. If lamb was on the menu it marked a special event.

It is the need of a shepherd that gives the metaphor its significance. We know that human beings are also vulnerable in many ways and prone to the feeling of being lost, spiritually and emotionally..

Have you noticed the conversation about loneliness recently? The UK has a minister for Loneliness and some of our Federal MP's are in discussions about this issue. Strange in the world of 'social' media we could feel so isolated? None of us are stainless steel and bullet proof.

2. Just another casualty?

With people so endangered we might be tempted to form opinions about the suffering of others. "They brought it on themselves" we might be tempted to say. Tim Keller comments on this attitude to 'the weak'.

I had a bit of a wake up call on this in third year Civil Engineering. We were shown a film set in various undeveloped countries. The impoverished conditions of the people seemed to require urgent engagement and hard work, but their lifestyle appeared laid back and lazy. As if they couldn't be bothered.

The film revealed the problem! It was lack of clean water supply and waste disposal. As a result the people were prone to a huge range of debilitating infections and parasites. Civil Engineering 101, clean water! So much for my prejudices. It's easy to be harsh on others and gentle on ourselves.

Similarly, people formed an opinion of the servant of the Lord; he must have done something terribly wrong to earn the hostility and hatred that he experienced. Remember Job? We thought God dealt him a raw deal, but we didn't know the half of it! So much more was happening.

3. It was for us!

The prophet says the servant's wounds were for us? He brings his readers into the picture. Let's see if we can get a clear picture.

Four times (v.5) Isaiah presents a clear contrast between the Servant (he/him) and sinners (we/us). The servant "not merely shares our griefs, but actually suffers in our place as sinners" (AM Harman). The poetic structure clearly communicates the intensity.

<i>He</i> is pierced, ...	for <i>our</i> transgressions
<i>He</i> is crushed, ...	for <i>our</i> iniquities, the chastisement of
<i>our</i> peace ...	upon <i>him</i> , and with
<i>His</i> wounds ...	<i>we</i> are healed

Can you believe this?

4. Assuredly, he has done it.

There is a photo of earth which gives an unexpected perspective. It is taken from the vast distance of 6 billion kms. With our planet, so infinitesimally small, how do we feel about ourselves?

Surprised that we could be known? Struggling to believe that the Creator could care about us? Isaiah goes way deeper.

Assuredly (v.4), he has done this. On this planet, with its teeming family of humanity, struggling to find and hold on to joy and happiness God has acted decisively to take away sin and bring healing and hope. It is a rescue operation of unimagined planning, detail and engagement. The Old Testament tells how God worked His story into history.

Isaiah is telling us that the sin that we each contribute to personal hurts and social damage, everything that spoils earth's perfection and beauty, YHWH will remove. His servant will take away the garbage from our lives, from our planet. If we ask he will do this for us personally. He will make all things new!