

ORDER OF SERVICE

27 February 2022

Doxology 711
To Him who sits upon the throne

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn 534 (R)
Lord of Creation

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Welcome and Notices
Mr Keith Ferres, Session Clerk

Offering and Dedication

Hymn 535 (R)
How lovely is your dwelling place

Readings: Genesis 12:1-9
and Hebrews 11:8-12
Carey Cox

Blueprint #4
Abe and Sarah, city seekers.
Hebrews 11:10,16

Prayer of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 532 (R)
Turn your eyes upon Jesus

Benediction



NOTICES

27 February 2022

www.blackburnpc.org.au

Wednesday 2 March 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
Friday 4 March 1 pm Board Meeting
Sunday 6 March 11 am Divine Worship.
Service of Holy Communion
Burning but not consumed
Blueprint #5: Exodus 3
MEETING IN PERSON **AND** streamed on Facebook.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Congregational members:
Sonya and Ian RUTHERFURD

and

Daniel, Courtney and family.

Give thanks for a great house to rent.

Pray for Daniel's recovery from COVID and for safety in a move against team members 'in country'.



GARDENIA ST

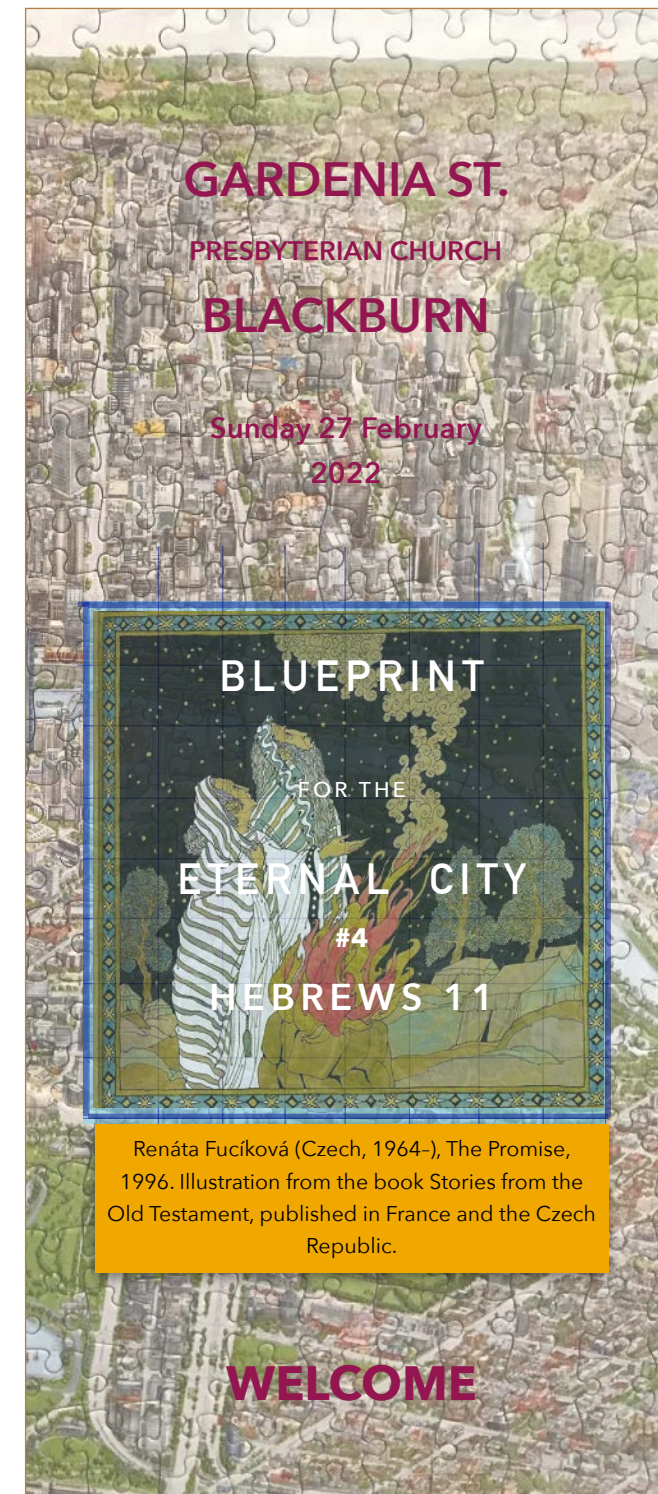
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694



For your prayers



Armed groups and security forces committed crimes under international law with impunity. Police used excessive force against protesters and others. Activists and officials affiliated to the former government were arbitrarily arrested and detained. The authorities failed to act to protect women and girls from female genital mutilation (FGM). People were discriminated against based on their perceived social status. Amnesty International 2022

Ten years ago in northern Mali, churches were burned and Christians were forced to flee for their lives when Islamic extremist groups took control of the region. Though some Christians have trickled back in with police protection, there are areas where there are no Christians. Christian activities draw the attention of jihadists, and Christian missionaries live under the constant fear of abduction. Anyone who converts from Islam risks personal violence and pressure from their relatives if their faith is discovered. Northern Mali is also unsafe for non-governmental organisations. Open Doors 2022

Mali has a secular government and the population is 2% Christian. Islamic State in the Greater Sahara has exploited the tri-border region of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, spilling terrorism over borders. As armed forces retreat from this remote region, it is becoming a no-man's land under the rule of a jihadi insurgency.

Figures at the end of 2019 show there are over 200,000 internally displaced persons and more than 1,200 schools have been forced to close. Many Christians have fled for safe areas, but these places have insufficient food and shelter. "People continue to move because where they were living they risked being killed by terrorists," wrote a Christian leader in Mali to Barnabas in July. Barnabas Fund 2021

Sermon Notes

- Abe and Sarah - city seekers

From the end of the Primeval narratives (at Genesis 11) we have the start of the Patriarchal narratives. The story of Abraham and Sarah and their growing tribe occupies the remaining 38 chapters. Many of the stories are known through children's bibles, but the whole picture opens up the themes that shape the Bible. This is especially true of the Covenant theme; this uniquely unfolds the pledged love of God.

We will focus on Abraham and Sarah.

1. Abraham and Sarah: city leavers

Abraham and Sarah came from Ur. A city where the moon was worshipped. They moved up the Euphrates to Haran. But then they moved again. It wasn't a tree change or sea change. So, why change? Why become pilgrims and sojourners in land they never owned?

The strange but recurring presence of the *Angel of YHWH* undergirds the communication to Abraham. (God 'spoke', a vision, 'appeared', etc.)

2. Covenant: more secure than a city

God enters a covenant with Abraham and his family. In this way the hope seeded (Genesis 3:15) starts to shape a human family. The very idea speaks fidelity: God is trustworthy, and makes promises.

(i) land, (ii) a son and (iii) blessing for all nations

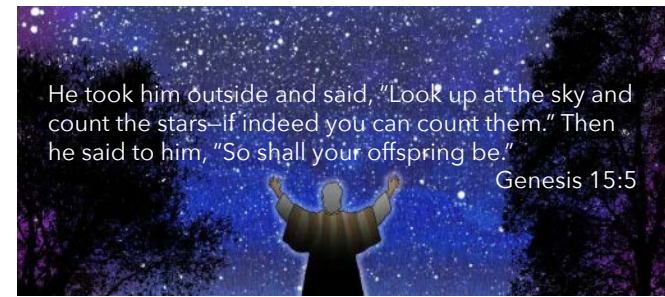
The Hebrew scriptures trace the unfolding of the Blueprint for a hope more secure than any city. Without the covenant the Bible would not have come into existence. Those cities are ruins, a blueprint unfolds.

3. Abraham and Sarah: the birth of a nation

The bulk of Genesis (12-50) takes up the story of the family of Abraham and Sarah. Many of the stories are renowned. A son to Sarah? Haha. What's that? Sounds like laughter. Just Isaac. Finding a wife for Isaac. Rebecca's twins, Esau and Jacob, the cheater. Jacob's ladder. His wrestle with the angel who renames him - Israel. The women in his life and his twelve sons, especially Joseph and Benny.

4. Abraham and Sarah: together

The beauty and joy of their long and faithful journeying is accompanied by episodes of honest and gritty realism. At times we see them each struggle with faith. Their faith is a 'living, busy, active and mighty thing' (Martin Luther.) Leaving the idolatry of the cities of Ur and then Haran, they journeyed with the angel of the LORD and sojourned at the Oaks of Mamre. Their faith is esteemed (Hebrews 11).



He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

Genesis 15:5

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob... to Moses

"The proper names are those types current in the early second millennium BC... human individuals, not deities and tribes only.

Social customs, laws of inheritance, adoption, etc find clear counterparts in law collections of the 19th and 18th centuries BC... not every parallel is valid, but there is no excuse for evading either the validity of the main material or its significance.

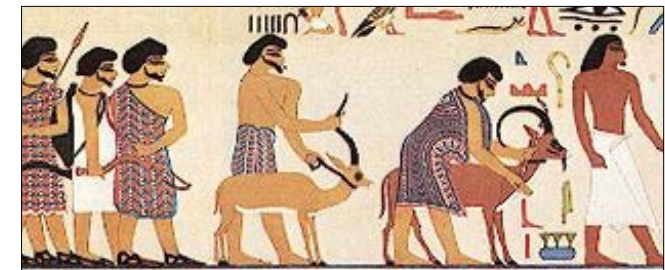
The wide scope of travel of the patriarchs and their pastoral way of life with time in the Negev area fits well...

Thus from many angles there is every reason to regard the patriarchal narratives as authentic traditions about real people...

The authenticating background, clear content, and later significance combine to make the hypothesis that they were real people who acted as depicted the only one worth serious consideration...

They are to be regarded as the historical forerunners of Israel, whose family and ancestral traditions were handed down to their descendants."

Kenneth A Kitchen
TSF Notes, 1972



A famous Egyptian Depiction of Semitic traders arriving in Egypt, from Beni Hasan. This Egyptian tomb picture evokes the arrival of Jacob's tribe in Egypt at the request of Joseph (Genesis 46). The painting is clearly dated by an inscription to the sixth year of Sesostri II, ca. 1890 BC