

ORDER OF SERVICE

6 March 2022

Doxology 709
Praise God

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn 419 (R)
Lord be my vision

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Welcome and Notices
Mr Keith Ferres, Session Clerk

Offering and Dedication

Hymn 438 (R)
God's law is perfect

Readings: Exodus 3:1-17
Elise Rutherford

Blueprint #5
Blazing, but not burnt up.
Exodus 3:15

Prayer of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 323 v.1-3
Here O my Lord

Service of Holy Communion

Hymn 323 v.4&7
Too soon we rise

Benediction



NOTICES

6 March 2022

www.blackburnpc.org.au

Wednesday 9 March

1.30 pm Prayer Meeting

Sunday 13 March

11 am Divine Worship. Guest
Minister Rev Dr Greg Goswell.

IN PERSON ONLY

NOT streamed on Facebook.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Congregational member: **Chye YAP**

and



**Rhys and
Rhondda HALL.**

Although at 'home'
they continue to contribute to some
major Pioneers projects in Uganda.



GARDENIA ST

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

53 Gardenia Street,
Blackburn 3130



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BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694

GARDENIA ST.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BLACKBURN

6 March, 2022

BLUEPRINT

FOR THE

ETERNAL CITY

#5

EXODUS 3

The Burning Bush, Bronze sculpture, by
Jim Derham, 2003, Scotch College,
Melbourne.

WELCOME



Police used excessive force against people who left their homes to look for food during the COVID-19 lockdown. There was a spike in gender-based violence as victims were trapped at home with abusive partners. Violence in the province of Cabo Delgado intensified, becoming an armed conflict which resulted in more than 2,000 deaths. The authorities failed to hold to account perpetrators of crimes under international law and serious human rights violations and abuses. Repression of freedom of expression took a new turn when a newspaper office was firebombed.

Amnesty International 2022

In 2021 for the first time, Mozambique was named in a list of the world's top 50 places where persecution of Christians is the worst. The country came in at No. 45 on the World Watch List compiled by Open Doors USA, an organisation raising awareness of the plight of persecuted Christians.

A majority of the Mozambique population is Christian. In a dossier about the southern African nation, Open Doors noted that 17.4 million (54%) of the country's 32.3 million inhabitants profess to be Christian; 5.6 million (17.4%) are Muslim; and 9 million (28%) belong to ethnic religious groups.

Yet the country's northern region, Cabo Delgado Province, has become known as the "land of fear" because of brutal attacks by radical Islamists on Christians, said the Barnabas Fund, which supports oppressed and persecuted Christians.

Both Barnabas Fund and Open Doors note Muslims have a prominent presence in the region. Islamist insurgents have been attacking, kidnapping or killing Christians and damaging or destroying homes, churches, schools and businesses.

According to the CIA World Factbook, insurgent attacks began in 2017. CIA statistics show that as of early 2021, fighting in Mozambique had left an estimated 2,500 dead and nearly 700,000 displaced.

Open Doors

Sermon
Notes

Blazing, but not burnt up

The burning bush has long been used as a symbol in Reformed and Presbyterian churches, but why? I hope we shall see it clearly exposes the primary infrastructure of God's blueprint. Let's explore the significance of this "strange sight" which Moses "moved closer" to see.

1. Moses

Moses (at 85 times) is mentioned in the New Testament more than any other Old Testament character, and always with approval.

He was born to a people enslaved during a genocide. Pharaoh decreed that the Hebrew babies should be killed. Hebrew women set up an underground resistance. Shiphara and Puah, Jochebed and Miriam, and the unnamed princess who gave Moses his name! Eventually as an adult Moses sought personal escape from the tensions arising from his dual upbringing. He had plans for a quiet shepherd life. Then he saw the "strange sight". The fire in the bush was a manifestation "the Angel of the LORD" (YHWH) who had other plans for Moses.

2. Angel of YHWH

Sandals off! What is holy ground? It is reverence appropriate to the presence of the living God (as opposed to the idols which are totally non gods). Moses will learn that YHWH is an awesome God. Holiness relates to the transcendence of God (as per Genesis 1) YHWH will expect transformed living compliant with the 10 commandments (of Exodus 20). This is the Moral Law and ethical foundation of the tribes of Israel. Not only so, but there will be critical guidelines for clean living and pollution eradication. Hygiene and health are important.

The living God remembers. Thinking back, the cry of "my people" reminds us these are the children the covenant through whom God will bring blessing to the world. His plan is to save people and set them free. This he pledged to do this; and to do it he calls for Moses.

3. Passover

The mission of YHWH is to save (3:8) and redeem (6:6, 15:13). These words in connection with Moses set up the key design features of the Blueprint. Israel was liberated to live by the wisdom of YHWH whose ethics are expressed in the "ten words" (Exodus 20).

While the bloodied doors posts marked their homes, inside the people ate roast lamb. Under this cover Israel was secure, and set free. Christ is our Passover Lamb; he liberates us to love and serve the same LORD.



Ogilvie Russell with his wife May participated in the life of Blackburn Presbyterian Church before Christine and I did. Their long and interesting stories began in war ravaged Scotland.

Both emigrated, May to Australia, Ogilvie to Canada. Both experienced deep sorrow and loss. Eventually, each was widowed. May in Melbourne, and Ogilvie in Canada.

However they had a mutual friend in Scotland. May's brother Billy. He suggested Ogilvie return to Scotland, the long way round, via Australia. When Ogilvie met May it wasn't long before they decided to make common cause of life together. They married in 1993.

When I first visited them they had downsized to a two bedroom cottage in a Wantirna retirement village. From there they travelled each Sunday, dressed for church, to worship with us. Later they moved into care at Ferndale Gardens in Ringwood North. Attending church was more of a challenge. When I visited we always shared a Bible reading and prayer.

After May's death in 2020 Ogilvie often told me he prayed that the Lord would take him now. On Tuesday of this week his prayer was answered.

Ogilvie's strong accent instantly betrayed his origins, but was not always easy for non-Scots to understand. His reading interests were wide and he loved to converse about ideas. But as the end came near reading was difficult and conversation was impeded by poor hearing.

May's family have advised that the family favour a 'private memorial'; a funeral is unlikely. I am hopeful that in time we will have opportunity to share stories about those whom we have loved and lost in these Covid years. GB