

ORDER OF SERVICE

20 March 2022

Doxology 708
Now to Him who loved us

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn 320 (R)
The kingdom of God is justice and joy

Young at Heart
Christine Bradbeer

Welcome and Notices
Mr Keith Ferres, Session Clerk

Offering and Dedication

Hymn 427 (R)
Freedom and life are ours

Readings: Exodus 24:12-25:22
Will Findlay

I've got you covered
Sermon series: Blueprint #6
'The Mercy Seat', Exodus 25:22

Prayer of Intercession
and
The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 441 (R)
Love divine, all loves excelling

Benediction



NOTICES

20 March 2022

www.blackburnpc.org.au

Wednesday 23 March 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting
Sunday 27 March 11 am Divine Worship.
MEETING IN PERSON and streamed on Facebook.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Congregational member: **Morag ZWARTZ**



and

Joy HILL has returned from Europe to work in Melbourne providing remote admin support to Oceania and Europe teams.



GARDENIA ST

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

53 Gardenia Street,
Blackburn 3130

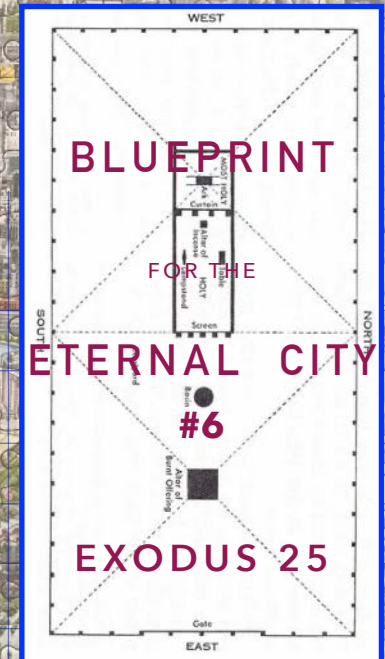


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BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694

GARDENIA ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BLACKBURN

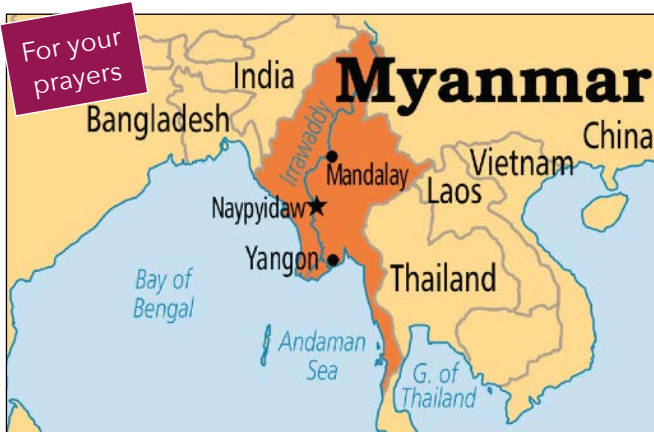
20 March, 2022



The Covering of the Box.

The Tabernacle design is a model for the coming together of heaven and earth, Creator and creation in restored harmony.

WELCOME



In 87% Buddhist Myanmar (Burma), the identity of the ethnic Burman majority is tied to Buddhism. Christianity is portrayed as a foreign religion. Most Christians are from non-Burman ethnic minorities including the Chin, Karen and Kachin. These ethnic minority Christians are offered free education at Buddhist schools, but all pupils must study and practise Buddhism. Those who officially convert will have their national identity cards amended to their new religion and be guaranteed a government job.

For decades, the military-controlled government has brutally oppressed Christian and Muslim ethnic minority groups. Hundreds of thousands of them have been displaced, often by aerial bombardment, and many are living in IDP (internally displaced persons) camps. In 2020, about 100,000 ethnic Kachin, who are predominantly Christian, remained scattered across 138 IDP camps where, in crowded conditions with little sanitation, they were at great risk from coronavirus.

The “persecutory intent” and “ethnic cleansing” tactics used by the Myanmar Army against the Kachin were condemned in a 2018 United Nations Human Rights Council report that included many testimonies of torture, rape and other abuses by military personnel.

In 2020, thousands endured severe food shortages for at least six months because the government put up road blockades, cutting off food supplies to the area.

In March last year traumatised Chin Christians fled for their lives after military jets opened fire on their villages, killing at least 28 people and burning many homes. The Chin ethnic group is about 90% Christian and Chin State is very poor.

Open Doors 2022

Sermon
Notes

I've got you covered

'The Mercy Seat'

The five 'books of Moses' are foundational for God's unfolding purpose. The final City vision of the Bible builds on the blueprint of the Pentateuch. An elementary prototype structure of a tent for God is outlined. Its very structure is designed to teach Israel that a distinctive lifestyle is critical, if God is to be with them. Let's explore:

1. A national covenant - united by blood

In a form quite different from the covenant ceremony with Abraham [Genesis 15] what began with Moses is ratified with seventy elders of Israel. It is a national Covenant [Exodus 24] and centres on the 'ten words' [of Exodus 20].

The covenant ritual involves sprinkled blood, and the elders enter into fellowship with God. The language is richly anthropomorphic [see, eat, drink], and underscores their privilege.

2. Shaping a holy nation - ethical and cultural formation

Holiness befitting a people whose God is YHWH is to be shaped by the 'the ten words', but also includes education, diet and hygiene. The daily *shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4-9) and the concepts of *clean* and *unclean*, are to shape the national psyche and provide boundaries.

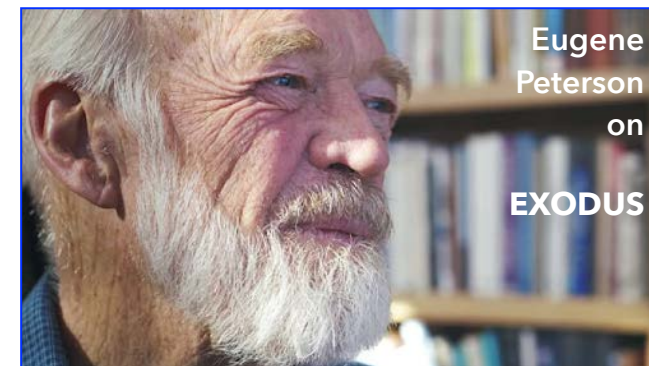
The dietary laws regulate Jewish life. There was daily recognition that animals belonged to God and the sanctuary was where they should be dedicated and slaughtered.

Jesus lived and taught the importance of love of God and to neighbour (as the law required - Deuteronomy 6, 11, Leviticus 19).

Fellowship with God makes a difference to how we view the whole of life. Living in a superstitious and pagan environment it was easy for Israel to forget to be holy. Are things different today?

3. Heaven on earth - making a model prototype

The design is from above, but the manufacture is supervised by Bezalel and Aholiab. The materials are a response from the people. The work is from inside outwards. Beginning with the covenant box. It was of acacia wood, covered with gold. It contained the tablets of the law. The solid gold cover, the *kapporeth*, is linguistically related to *atonement* [A covering (for sin)]. This is the only item in the inner cube shaped room. YHWH was there. Everything radiates outwards from the Box, and teaches God should be central in our lives. *God is journeying with us.*



The human race is in trouble. We've been in trouble for a long time. Enormous energies have been and continue to be expended by many, many men and women to get us out of the trouble we are in - to clean up the world's mess. The skill, the perseverance, the intelligence, the devotion of the people who put their shoulders to the wheel to pull us out of the muck - parents and teachers, healers and counsellors, rulers and politicians, writers and pastors - are impressive.

At the centre and core of this work is God. The most comprehensive term for what God is doing to get us out of the mess we are in is salvation. Salvation is God doing for us what we can't do for ourselves. Salvation is the biggest word in the vocabulary of the people of God. The Exodus is a powerful and dramatic and true story of God working salvation. The story has generated an extraordinary progeny through the centuries as it has reproduced itself in song and poem, drama and novel, politics and social justice, repentance and conversion, worship and holy living. It continues to capture the imagination of men and women, especially men and women in trouble.

Exodus draws us into a story with a plot and characters, which is to say, with design and personal relationships. Story is an invitation to participate, first through our imagination, and then, if we will, by faith - with our total lives in response to God. This Exodus story continues to be a major means that God uses to draw men and women in trouble out of the mess in history into the kingdom of salvation.