



Oatley Uniting Church

PO Box 73, Oatley

<https://oatley.uca.org.au/>

Mission Statement: Loving, Caring, Transforming
our community through Jesus Christ.

Pentecost and Trinity Sunday
19 and 26 May, 2024

Staying Centered



“But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot; shaping it as seemed best to him.” **Jeremiah 18:4**

I recently read an interesting fact about the art of pottery. When a potter is preparing to shape a new vessel from a lump of clay, he needs to ensure that the clay is placed exactly in the middle of the potter’s wheel. Once he starts shaping that pot and the wheel is spinning, the clay will respond to where it’s been placed on the wheel to start with. If the clay is off centre, the centrifugal force will sling it against the wall, or its shape will be marred by the fact that its balance is out. This illustration drives home the importance of where we position ourselves in our relationship with God, and how we respond to His shaping process in our lives.

The Word speaks of the fact that God’s the Potter and we’re the clay (Isaiah 64:8). A piece of clay doesn’t reason with the potter regarding what he’s planning. Isaiah 45:9 says, ‘*Shall the clay say to him who fashions it, “What do you think you are making?”*’ So often we question God about the way He created us to be. We’re unhappy with the image we see in the mirror or dissatisfied with our abilities or lack thereof. We question God’s goodness and His plans for our lives when we see the flaws and struggles within us. All the while we forget that the great Potter is the One Who designed us and intricately woven us together in our mother’s womb. He shaped us and placed within us all that would be needed for us to bring glory to Him through our lives. ‘*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness*’ (2 Peter 1:3).

Back to the lump of clay: In spite of the fact that God is the Potter and we’re the clay, He’s given us a free will. Like any good potter, God places and centres us on His potter’s wheel in order to make us into something He can use and display for His glory.

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LECTIONARY READINGS FOR 19 May

Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21 : Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Romans 8:22-27 : John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR 26 May

Trinity Sunday

Isaiah 6:1-8 : Psalm 29

Romans 8:12-17 : John 3:1-17



We can CHOOSE to obey Him or not, we can CHOOSE to submit our lives to the Potter, or to rebel against His hands. He may be pressing and shaping and moulding us, and He may even be placing us inside a fiery furnace to strengthen our frame, just as a potter would bake his vessel to harden it. We’re even able to choose what kind of vessel we want to be: ‘*But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honour and some for dishonour. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honour, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work*’ (2 Timothy 2:20-21).

If you want to be a vessel for honour, sanctified and useful to the great Potter, then trust His hands as He shapes and presses and moulds you. Stay centred on the potter’s wheel. Submit to the fiery furnace He may be placing you into to strengthen and refine you.

Prayer: Dear Lord, I desire to be a vessel for honourable use to You. Help me to remain centred on Your Potter’s wheel and to submit to Your hands that mould and shape my life, even when it’s uncomfortable and doesn’t make sense from my perspective. I trust You. Amen.

Rev Alex Thomas

A FEW GOOD MEN will meet on Tuesday 21 May from 10.00am to 11.00am in the Church Hall. All men are invited to join us with a cup of coffee for a good chat and some inspirational encouragement together. Please BYO coffee and I look forward to seeing you there. Geoff Pritchard Mob: 0428 250 546.

ARE YOU ABLE TO ASSIST THE WAYSIDE CHAPEL . . . Who are presently in need of hoodie tops and track pants. Also, do you have any towels and small hotel toiletries as they go through them very fast as 500 homeless people shower there each week. A box will be left in the Church Foyer for your donations. Thank you so much. Linda Pritchard 0487 777 210.



Always leave people better than you found them.
Hug the hurt. Befriend the lost. Love the lonely.

Toby Mac#Speaklife

SUNDAY
WORSHIP
SERVICES

9.30AM

AND

6.00PM

FLOWER ROSTER VACANCY—A willing person is needed to fill the gap in the roster. It would be a commitment every 5 weeks. There are boxes of artificial flowers available for your use if the garden isn't blooming.... If this is something that you can do please let Ross Cooper or Pip Watts know.



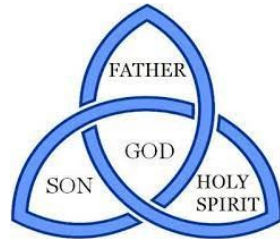
The Bill Crews Foundation—Exodus Thank you everyone for your generous donations to Exodus. Please continue to give things that are necessary pantry items—long-life milk and non-perishable food items i.e. canned items, rice, pasta, tea, coffee, cereals, biscuits and even personal items—soap, toothpaste, shampoo. These things all go to make home packages.



God's Redemptive Model—To paraphrase an article that I recently read—a man wanted to help a friend and give solace and comfort as he was going through a tough situation and thought that he was unable to help. He was told by his pastor that he had everything he needed. The Holy Spirit would give him the words of comfort and a way to be supportive of his friend. God's model is to push us out of our comfort zone. It isn't because we lack compassion, life experience, or biblical wisdom—we lack courage and practical understanding of God's redemptive model.

The model is simple: No one has been chosen by God just to be a recipient of the redemptive work of his kingdom; no, everyone who has been chosen to be a recipient has also been commissioned to be an instrument of the work of that kingdom as well.
Pip Watts

“Don't be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest. The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—ignoring God!—harvests a crop of weeds. All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, eternal life. So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith.” Galatians 6:7-10, The Message



The Trinity

For all pastoral matters contact Rev Alex Thomas
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Hall Bookings: Please contact Rosemary Cooper
– on 0402 428 560 – for all Hall Bookings.
Please also let her know if you would like to borrow any equipment.
Your prompt return of any borrowed items is appreciated.



- ◆ ... to a faithful and holy God who loves us immeasurably and who lifted up his Son to die for us; to save us from ourselves.
- ◆ ... That the name of Jesus will continue to challenge the unbeliever; and continue to challenge world views.
- ◆ ... and give praise for the Holy Spirit who now dwells inside you. The Spirit who is Counsellor stands for truth. He will convict the Christian of right and wrong. He will instruct and remind you of God's word.

Bless...

- ◆ ... our Minister Alex and his wife Elizabeth as they lead and support our church at Oatley.
- ◆ ... Linda and Geoff in their Pastoral Care work.
- ◆ ... all our friends and loved ones in Nursing Homes— Grace & Ian McKay, Noelene Baker and Rhonda wife of Vic Stewart and Marlene Woodham's mum Betty McKay, Joyce Fieldus, Jean Watts and Norma Manwaring. Surround them all with God's peace, love and protection.
- ◆ We thank you that you have also been caring for Rex and Coral Roberts and Judy Walsh.
- ◆ ... the Church Council.
- ◆ ... each other. Let us love and be an encouragement and a blessing in all we do.
- ◆ ... for our congregation—that we grow in ministry and seek the will of God in this place.
- ◆ ... the various prayer groups and Bible Study groups.

Uphold...

- ◆ ... Countries where there is political unrest, natural disasters and wars—Pray for the work of doctors, nurses, aid agencies in these places.
- ◆ ... our farming communities. Help them to remain resilient.
- ◆ ... those doing it tough because they have no home, no regular meals, no job.
- ◆ ... aid agencies who support people in distress like The Wayside Chapel, The Bill Crews Foundation, the Storehouse, Mission Australia...
- ◆ ... our Government—for good leadership, wisdom, discernment, co-operation and collaboration. To stand for the truth and care for the disadvantaged.
- ◆ ... Governments across our world where political leaders offer lies for truth.
- ◆ ... the Uniting Church in Australia—that God's word is not compromised.

Let us allow the Holy Spirit to show each of us how best to pray—and to pray for all these things In the mighty name of Jesus—**Amen**

CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER
Pip Watts—0403 758 487—Please leave a message.
OR Email: pippa0183@gmail.com
Email heading subject: **NEWSLETTER**
