



Oatley Uniting Church

PO Box 73, Oatley

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

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

Pentecost 4 and Pentecost 5

16 and 23 June, 2024

**SUNDAY
WORSHIP
SERVICES**

9.30AM

AND

6.00PM

The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda

So they asked him, "Who is this fellow who told you to pick up your mat and walk?" The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there. John 5:12-13

It's a feast time. Jesus is on His own, wandering through the city of Jerusalem, and He comes to the Pool of Bethesda. He goes in.

This is a place best avoided. People come here with their sick relatives: wounded people with broken limbs, sores, all manner of conditions not healing naturally. And sick people, dying; people coming hopelessly, as a last resort for diseases that won't heal. They hope this holy spa might heal them.

Here Jesus comes across a man who has been at this place for thirty-eight years (verse 5)! Here he is, dropped off every morning and left to fend for himself; to plunge into the water by himself when this 'angel' suddenly appears. As if he could! He's all alone and he can't get up.

And Jesus talks to him. Next thing: Jesus tells the man to get up with his mat and walk. And he does! He doesn't seem to notice Jesus, who slips away in the crowd.

The man doesn't seem to know what to do. First, he goes to the temple, carrying his mat. He is told he mustn't carry a mat, because it's Sabbath. But he says that the person who healed him told him to carry it. Who healed you? He doesn't know. He doesn't go home. He seems in a complete daze. All he knows is that he is walking!

This man has been so wrapped up in his own misery, his incapacity, his rejection, his broken-heartedness and isolation, that he has missed Jesus.

A bit later, Jesus meets him again in the temple. Now he registers who his healer has been. And Jesus says to him: 'Go away and don't sin any more or worse will happen to you.'

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LECTIONARY READINGS FOR 16 June

Pentecost 4

1 Samuel 15:34-16:13 : Psalm 20

2 Corinthians 5:6-10 (11-13) 14-17 : Mark 4:26-34

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR 23 June

Pentecost 5

1 Samuel 17:(1a,4-11 or 1 Samuel 17:57-18:5, 10-16

Psalm 9:9-20 or Psalm 133

2 Corinthians 6:1-13 : Mark 4:35-41 G 19-23), 32-4



I think it may have taken this man quite a time to take in what Jesus has done for him. And a long time to acclimatise himself to living outside of an institution. A long time to recover who he is; to notice people other than himself and his own needs and wants. But Jesus knew him and who he had been. And Jesus loved him – with his depression and bitterness – and brought healing to him.

Prayer. *Father, I am so glad that You know who I am. You know who each one of us is, with our hurts and damage, our fears and distrust. You know about the hopelessness we can feel, and how we can feel angry when it seems that nobody understands or cares for us. Please come to me today that I might know Your love, Your presence, Your Word for me today. Amen*

Rev Alex Thomas

NEWSLETTER CHANGE: Please direct any notices to Geoff Pritchard for 30 June and 14 July—geoffp@ihug.com.au

SAMARITAN'S PURSE—OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



"Shoebbox gifts are collected in Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Germany, New Zealand, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States. More than 11.3 million shoebbox gifts were collected globally in 2023, 10 million from the U.S. alone. In 2024, Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect enough shoebboxes to reach another 12 million children."

Let's set our sights beyond ourselves and start collecting for the child who does not know Jesus Christ or the joy of receiving a gift. The collection box will be in the Church Foyer each month until October. There will also be a tube to collect money for postage. Each box is \$10 to send. Your monetary donation is gratefully accepted to assist and an alternative if you are unable to shop for gift items. Pip Watts

THIS MONTH will be **STATIONERY ITEMS**

NOW SHOWING—Event Cinemas, Beverly Hills, are showing a wonderful movie called "Unsung Hero". It is a Christian movie based on the lives of the Smallbone family (For King & Country). Take a tissue or two. There are 3 screenings throughout the day—check times before going. Take a friend!



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.



AN INVITATION TO A MULTICULTURAL DAY CELEBRATION at Gympie-Miranda UC on 22 June, 2024 at 12.30pm. Share in a time of celebration of cultural origins—sharing food, entertainment. There is an opportunity to sell and purchase items for UnitingWorld's End of Financial Year Appeal. You can bring something to share with others that connects you to your roots. Enquiries: Gillian 0490 797 517

SCHOOL HOLIDAY FUN—KIDSFEST Rockdale Uniting Church is holding a holiday kids club with a Medieval theme—the topic is 'Kingdom'. It will be held 15—19 July from 9am-12pm. Games, craft, music, talks and "Medieval World" Enquiries: <https://www.trybooking.com/CPVIS> Spaces limited—book now.

God's Plan for Your Life in the World

What is God's Plan for Your Life? Are you listening?

In this passage of John 17:14-23 Jesus is praying for his disciples and also for you who believe in him. He knows that it will be difficult to live in the world. We want to fit in – but to live for Christ and in Christ we are different, and the world doesn't understand and comes against us. We are different – we will stand out – we will shine among them like stars (Philippians 2:15).

We will feel uncomfortable with the world. As we change the world will feel uncomfortable with us as we express different core values. We are not part of the world any more as the truth of God's word is making us holy.

God's plan is not to be separate us from worldly people but to engage with them, being careful not to fall for worldly things. God's word is his tool to protection – John 17:17 "Use the truth to make them holy. Your word is truth." Soak yourself with God's word - read and listen to what God is saying to you. God sends us into the world in the truth of his word. Jesus was sent into the world to save it and in the truth of his word he changed lives. Jesus recognises relational chances to share the word. He approached people with a sense of sent-ness.

We are sanctified – set apart for his use. Your purpose is what God is going to do through you.

Notes taken from KEC 2024—John North



◆ ... 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.

◆ ... Pray that you will stand for the faith you believe in.

◆ ... that God's grace will be enough in your life—beautiful, powerful, transforming.

◆ ... for Fiona Dewhurst who is the SRE teacher at Georges River College Penshurst. Pray that she will reach the students with the love of Jesus.

◆ ... for Kathy Baigent and her family. Kathy's mum, Joyce Fiedus, is in palliative care.

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, Jean Watts, Shirley Courtney and Norma Manwaring. Surround them all with God's peace, love and protection. We thank you that you are also caring for Rex and Coral Roberts and Judy Walsh.

◆ ... the Church Council.

◆ ... each other. Let us be a loving and encouraging community in Christ.

◆ ... 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. Lift up your people so that they see Jesus is ever present in their lives.

◆ ... 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

For all pastoral matters contact Rev Alex Thomas
H: 8411 2383 : M: 0448 35 35 39 : E: alexth@optusnet.com.au

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.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Pip Watts—0403 758 487—Please leave a message.

OR Email: pippa0183@gmail.com

Email heading subject: **NEWSLETTER**