



# Oatley Uniting Church

PO Box 73, Oatley

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

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

25 August and 1 September, 2024

Pentecost 14 and Pentecost 15

## Growing in Love

*"The Lord is on my side. I will not fear,  
What can man do to me?" **Psalm 118:6***

How can we develop our love for God so that our obedience is prompted by love instead of some lesser motive? The Scripture gives us our first clue, or beginning point, when it says, "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Our love to God can only be a response to his love for us. If I don't believe God loves me, I cannot love him. To love God, I must believe that he is *for* me, not *against* me (Romans 8:31) and that he accepts me as a son or a daughter, not a slave (Galatians 4:7).

What would keep us from believing God loves us? The answer is a sense of guilt and condemnation because of our sin. The same tender conscience that enables us to become aware of sins that lie deep beneath the level of external actions can also load us down with guilt. When we're under that burden and sense of condemnation, it is difficult to love God or believe that he loves us.

We cannot love God if we think we're under his judgment and condemnation. James Fraser said, "But whilst the conscience retains the charge of guilt, condemnation, and wrath, there cannot be purity, or sincerity of heart toward God, or sincerity of the love of God. Human nature is so formed, that it cannot love any object that is adverse and terrible to it."

This means we must continually take those sins that our consciences accuse us of to the cross and plead the cleansing blood of Jesus. Only the blood of Christ cleanses our consciences so that we may no longer feel guilty (Hebrews 9:14; 10:2).

*Rev Alex Thomas*

**SUNDAY  
WORSHIP  
SERVICES**

9.30AM

AND

6.00PM

### LECTIONARY READINGS FOR 25 August

#### Pentecost 14

1 Kings 8: (1,6,10-11), 22-30, 41 : Psalm 84  
Ephesians 6:10-20 : John 6:56-69 -43

### LECTIONARY READINGS FOR 1 September

#### Pentecost 15

Song of Songs 2:8-13 : Psalm 45:1-2,6-9  
James 1:17-27 : Mark 7:1-8,14-15, 21-23



### SAMARITAN'S PURSE—OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Each month until October we, as a church, will be collecting items to fill Christmas boxes for children across our world who do not know the joy of receiving a gift. This is also part of a worldwide outreach to bring them the joy of knowing Jesus Christ as their saviour. For the month of **SEPTEMBER** your gift of **T-SHIRTS, SHORTS, CAP OR HAT, HAIR BANDS OR CLIPS** is gratefully appreciated.

There is also 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.

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### PRAYER MEETING for supporters of PCCCEB

Please plan to join with Fiona and others to pray for the work of SRE at GRC Penhurst and Oatley. The meeting will be held Saturday 21 September, 2024, at 9am at Penhurst Anglican, 2 Carrington Street, Penhurst



God is still writing your story.

Quit trying to steal the pen. Trust the author.

Without reading Psalm 84 in its entirety there is a sense of God's majesty in the beginning of each stanza of a praise worthy, caring, strong and loving God.

<sup>1</sup>Lord who rules over all, how lovely is the place where you live!

<sup>3</sup>Lord who rules over all, even the sparrow has found a home near your altar

<sup>5</sup>Blessed are those whose strength comes from you

<sup>8</sup>Lord God who rules over all, hear my prayer.

<sup>10</sup>A single day in your courtyards is better than a thousand anywhere else.

<sup>12</sup>Lord who rules over all, blessed is the person who trusts in you.

Our response to our God is in the words of this chorus:


The greatest thing in all my life is loving you...

The greatest thing in all my life is knowing you...

The greatest thing in all my life is serving you...



Let Him touch your vig heart.

 **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.

History proves, when King David chose the right path, he brought honour to the name of God. When he chose his own path, he did the opposite. May we live in such a way that honours the name of God.

### A Repentant Heart

*"If you, Israel, will return, then return to me," declares the Lord.  
Jeremiah 4:1*

A friend had violated the vows of his marriage. It was painful to watch him destroy his family. As he sought reconciliation with his wife, he asked my counsel. I told him he needed to offer more than words; he needed to be proactive in loving his wife and removing any patterns of sin.

The prophet Jeremiah offered similar advice to those who'd broken their covenant with God and followed other gods. It wasn't enough to return to Him (Jeremiah 4:1), though that was the right start. They also needed to align their actions with what they were saying. That meant getting rid of their "detestable idols" (v. 1). Jeremiah said that if they made commitments "in a truthful, just and righteous way," then God would bless the nations (v. 2). The problem was the people were making empty promises. Their heart wasn't in it.

God doesn't want mere words; He wants our hearts. As Jesus said, "The mouth speaks what the heart is full of" (Matthew 12:34). That's why Jeremiah goes on to encourage those who would listen to break up the unploughed ground of their heart and not sow among the thorns (Jeremiah 4:3).

Sadly, like so many people, my friend didn't heed sound biblical counsel and consequently lost his marriage. When we sin, we must confess and turn from it. God doesn't want empty promises; He desires a life that's truly aligned with Him.

By: Matt Lucas, Our Daily Bread



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**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.

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- ◆ ...to a faithful and holy God who loves you and whose grace is enough in your life.
- ◆ ...for Fiona Dewhurst who is the SRE teacher at Georges River College Penshurst. Pray that this term is rewarding.
- ◆ ...for a life that is full to brimming over with joy.

- ◆ ...for countries where there is political unrest, natural disasters and wars. Pray against the work of the devil. Ask for God's intervention.

#### 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, 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.
- ◆ ...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...

- ◆ ...the work of doctors, nurses, aid agencies in places of unrest.
- ◆ ...those whose lives have been turned upside down because of war. Lift them up so that they see Jesus is ever present in their lives and that you Lord would draw many to yourself and rebuild lives. Change the hearts of our Arab and Jewish brothers to the Gospel.
- ◆ ...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.
- ◆ ...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**

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#### CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

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

OR Email: pippa0183@gmail.com

Email heading subject: **NEWSLETTER**

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