

Vision Statement:

We see a Jesus-orientated church having a passion for the Gospel and compassion for the world expressed through dynamic worship, love in action, the empowering of the servant leaders and the growing of disciples.

Reverend Jonathan Button can be contacted at j.button@bigpond.com.

I am available in the event of emergencies at any time, but other than that would appreciate not receiving calls on Wednesdays, where possible, as this is my day off.

Church Telephone Number: 8251 4298

This Week's Roster

15th August, 2021

Preacher: **Reverend Gordon**
Leader (am): **Cath**

Leader (pm): **Tim**
Marshal (Church): **Cath**
Marshal (Hall): **Owen Davis**
Reader: **Brunetta**
Musician: *********
Stewards: *********
Manager: *********
Kidz Connect: *********
Morning Tea: **Peter, Yvonne & Ken**
Audio Desk: **Rykhardt & Ralph**
Camera Operator: **Ruan**
Computer Operator: **Lucinda**
Overflow Overseer: **John**

Cleaning:

Next Week's Roster

22nd August, 2021

Preacher: **Jonathan**
Leader (am): **Jonathan**
Leader (pm): **Ross Honey**
Marshal (Church): **Andrew**
Marshal (Hall): **Rykhardt**
Reader: **Chris DeB.**
Musician: **Pat**

Stewards: *********
Manager: *********
Kidz Connect: *********
Morning Tea: **Ailsa, Chris & Tina**
Audio Desk: **Ruan & Lucinda**
Camera Operator: **Tim**
Computer Operator: **Ralph & Rykhardt**
Overflow Overseer: **Rykhardt**

Cleaning:



Prayer Chain

If you require prayers to be put on the Prayer Chain, can you please contact Ray Holroyd on his mobile only, at **0468 681 497**. Please do not leave messages on the land line until further notice.



Most Important: Could all members of the Prayer Chain, please remember, if they cannot get hold of the next person on the list, they need to make sure they keep passing on the message until someone answers? Thank you, Ray.

Golden Grove Gazette

Keeping in touch with the G.G.U.C. family

www.goldengroveuniting.org.au

Sunday, 15th August, 2021

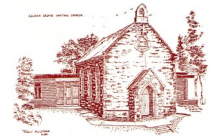
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Preacher: **Reverend Gordon**

Theme: **From the Depths**

Bible Reading: **Psalm 130**

Mission Statement: To draw people



to our Lord Jesus Christ

and nurture them through our church



You are welcome

Nicola McDermott has become a household name since achieving what no other Australian woman ever has. She has become the first Australian woman in 57 years to win an Olympic medal in the high jump (2.02m), claiming silver and setting a new national record in the process.

Josie Psaila, co-pastor of Connect Church on the Central Coast of NSW, where McDermott has been a congregation member for the past few years, said that Nicola was not only an Olympic athlete but a 'right-hand woman in ministry'. She continued, "As a person, Nicola is full of joy. She has a strong faith and she's not afraid to share it. She loves people. She's great with young adults, but also with all age groups."

After her brilliant performance, Nicola spoke of her faith. "As a teenager, I was always an outcast, and I got welcomed into a faith community that loved me." It was then that she decided to pursue God above sport. Her experience highlights the outcome of a church that is a welcoming fellowship.

The initiative of Renée and James in launching Café Youth tonight is to be lauded. It gives honour to God and demonstrates that our young people, like Nicola, are committed to sharing their faith and 'passing on the baton'. They are to be commended. Please pray for them.

(Reverend Gordon)

A Message from the Elders

Anne Hibbard (ACC National Council Secretary) has let our church know that, as a result of the COVID-19 situation, the upcoming Adelaide based ACC AGM and Conference with Hopenet, which was scheduled for 9-11 September, has been cancelled and will be held online instead.

The online conference is planned to have two 90-minute sessions on both Thu 9 Sept and Fri 10 Sept (probably late afternoon and evening). Details regarding the exact times, topics and speakers will be made available by the ACC in due course. The ACC AGM is planned to be held online on Sat 11 Sept via zoom.

Those interested in attending the ACC online conference and/or AGM need to register on the Hopenet website, which will open soon and give all the details for the new online arrangements.

Find included in your Gazette a reflection on 2 Samuel 6 by Reverend Walter Abetz, member of the ACC National Council, given as a devotional at the National Council Meeting on 26th July, 2021.

Our church elders are: Jonathan, Cath, Ceri, Ray and Rykhardt.



Congregational Member Survey Reminder

As announced in the church last week, congregation members, who would like to take part in the annual review survey by the Generate Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee, can make contact with Rykhardt Wilkinson to gain access to the short, 9-question survey about the life and witness of our church ministry. There is time until 20th August to take part in and complete this survey. The survey is voluntary and open to any member of the congregation.

OUR WANING AUGUST DIARY DATES

- **Sunday Morning Worship: 15th August: 10.00 am**
- **Café Youth Launch Event: Sunday: 15th August: 6.30 pm**
- **KYB: Monday, 16th August: 10.30 am to 11.30 am**
- **Church Council Meeting: Tuesday, 17th August: 7.00 pm**
- **Thursday Morning Prayers: 19th August: 8.00 am to 9.00 am**
- ***mainly music*: Friday, 20th August: 9.30 am to 11.30 am**
- **Sunday Morning Worship: 22nd August: 10.00 am**
- **Café Church: Sunday, 22nd August: 6.00 pm**
- **KYB: Monday, 23rd August: 10.30 am to 11.30 am**
- **Pastoral Carers Meeting: Tuesday, 24th August: 7.00 pm**
- **Thursday Morning Prayers: 26th August: 8.00 am to 9.00 am**
- ***mainly music*: Friday, 27th August: 9.30 am to 11.30 am**
- **Sunday Morning Worship: 29th August: 10.00 am**
- **Café Youth: Sunday, 29th August: 6.30 pm**
- **KYB: Monday, 30th August: 10.30 am to 11.30 am**
- **Estia Worship Service: Monday, 30th August: 2.00 pm**

Today's Hymns and Songs

All people that on earth do dwell (Together in Song 59)

Be still my soul, the Lord is on your side (Together in Song 123)

Let us with a gladsome mind (Together in Song 83)

The Lord's Prayer (sung version)

O the deep, deep love of Jesus (Together in Song 232)

The Lord bless you and keep you (Together in Song 776)



Connect Women's Conference – 28th August



After an exhausting year, plus being locked in and locked down, and even locked out, having to adjust and adapt at a moment's notice, you're invited to come and be re-filled and re-fuelled at our Connect Women's Conference.

Sit under the teaching of our guest speaker, Steph Tai, join an elective or two and indulge in good food prepared just for you. Come ... celebrate our sisterhood in Christ! Women looking after women; it's powerful!

Come and take a little time out to restore, refresh and renew.

\$50 Adult \$25 Concession/Pensioner

Registrations close on 18th August and you can obtain more information and register at:

<https://wp.ucasa.org.au/>



(The Ark of the Covenant, the most sacred relic of the Israelites)

A DEVOTIONAL FOR 15TH AUGUST

There were clear instructions about how to transport the Ark: **A reflection on 2 Samuel 6 by Rev Walter Abetz, member of the ACC National Council, given as a devotional at the National Council Meeting on 26th July, 2021.**

This story about the Ark of the Covenant is confronting. King David waited for three months before he acted to finally bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. The Lectionary reading leaves out the death of Uzzah and the three months' delay. It then sounds like a smooth operation of great rejoicing by the people. But it was not. However, the ark starts off on a cart and gets carried into Jerusalem

There were clear instructions about how to transport the Ark of the Covenant, but they were not adhered to. Are you, like King David, angry at God for killing Uzzah? Does it make you afraid of God, as it did King David for three months?

Because there was no High Priest after Samuel's departure, there was nearly a generation who missed out on worship in the tent of meeting. And, most likely, there was little teaching of the faith and of the laws of Moses. Twenty years before, in the days of Eli, the ark was being misused – as a tool of war, but it was captured by the Philistines. And now the symbol of the presence of God was about to be returned, to be taken to Jerusalem.

Taking the ark into battle twenty years earlier was an attempt to force God's hand. That is not worship. It is making an idol out of God, an idol that they had control over and hoped to use to their own ends. And the people's celebration, when King David wanted to return the ark to Jerusalem, seems to have had that same attitude. We are in charge of God's presence again.

They had forgotten that about 70 men lost their lives trying to look into the ark, when it first arrived in Kiriath-jearim two decades earlier. Of course, it is easy to make excuses for the people who no longer knew how to transport the Ark of the Covenant. They remembered that it came from the Philistines on a cart. It worked.

If we think it is sufficient to do what seems right to us, we will make excuses for Uzzah. He had absolutely good intentions – trying to stop the ark from slipping off the cart.

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Compassion for Uzzah is natural. But the retrieval of the ark had a wrong foundation. Instead of reflecting on why the Israelites had lost the Ark of the Covenant in the first place – using the ark as a secret weapon in war – instead of reflecting on this, they simply celebrated (because they were in charge of the Ark of the Covenant again).

If you think Uzzah did the wrong thing, and you say we should NOT be angry at God, that puts you in the ORTHODOXY camp, because you highlight obedience. If you think that Uzzah did the right and proper thing at that moment, and should not have been struck down, that puts you into the COMPASSION camp.

Where do you fit? To which camp do you belong? There are two common watchwords right now in the Uniting Church: Compassion and Orthodoxy.

Both aspects are essential to the Christian faith. BUT neither is sufficient on its own. Focussing on Compassion leads into disobedience, just as focussing on Orthodoxy leads into a loss of love. Both compassion and orthodoxy are essential. Neither is sufficient on its own. We make a great mistake when we confuse essential for sufficient.

Along with recognising God's compassion, we must recognise what the Israelites here ignored: God's holiness. They had been told to fear Yahweh, to walk in obedience to him and observe his commands and decrees. This, too, was an essential part of their understanding and knowing God. Uzzah's death was a result of their lack of respect and obedience. When we excise a biblical passage from the lectionary, when we avoid the Uzzah episode to focus on a God of compassion, we don't get a better God, we get a false god - one of our own making.

We could also do the opposite - to fixate on the God who strikes Uzzah dead. This is how the atheist Richard Dawkins would prefer it, so that he can reject a brutal god. But that overlooks the God who mercifully returns to be Israel's God – visible in the ark's procession to Jerusalem - even after their repeated rejections and rebellions. If we fixate on Uzzah's punishment, we would likewise be worshipping a god of our own making, one who desires judgment, rather than mercy and compassion. Compassion tells us to listen to those on the margins, the minorities, the least of these, and the lost. Orthodoxy tells us to listen to those who've gone before us, who passed on the Scriptures. To whom should we listen? Both!

Our compassion tells us we should give special attention to the marginalised and oppressed, whatever the cost. Orthodoxy tells us we should give special attention to reverent obedience to God's word and the church's

teaching, whatever the cost. So, to which should we attend? Both!

Compassion tells us we should be wary of injustice. Orthodoxy tells us we should be wary of heresy and idols. Which should we be wary of – injustice or inventing a god to our own liking? Both!

Our problems come when we take only one of these as essential and claim that is the sufficient rule for our faith and life. If we elevate the one, we thereby nullify the other. If I find myself regularly speaking up for those on the margins, I may need to spend extra time listening to those who speak of joyful obedience to God from the Scriptures (without omitting anything!) If I find myself regularly talking about joyful obedience to the Scriptures, I may need to spend extra time listening to those on the margins and provide some advocacy or direct help.

Have you ever restored anything? You need compassion and orthodoxy. You love to see the item become useful again - compassion. You also do some research about the former state of the item – orthodoxy – if it is to be a faithful restoration.

“Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god. Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God?” (1 Samuel 6:20)

Compassion and orthodoxy together glorify God. Compassion on its own does not glorify God. It leads to wrong actions. Compassion must also point to the God who commands obedience. And orthodoxy on its own does not glorify God either. We become harsh instead of restorative. It must also point to the God who loves us from the beginning of the world, and who freely teaches us obedience through his Spirit.

“Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God?” (1 Sam 6:20)

We can, because we are adopted into God's compassionate and orthodox family of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

Our loyalty is not to compassion, nor is it to orthodoxy. As Christians we move forward together in sole loyalty to Christ, not a truncated re-imagining of Christ, but the Son of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Christ of the Scriptures. He embodies both compassion and right teaching.

Amen.