



THE UNITING CHURCH  
in Australia

ORMOND

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The heavens keep telling the wonders of God, and  
the skies declare what he has done. Psalm 19:1

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PATHFINDER

SEPTEMBER 2024

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# MINISTER'S LETTER

## YOU ARE INVITED: Approach or Gathering for Worship

Living in our home with three of our grandchildren, is always exciting but even more exciting when their birthdays and associated parties come around. Each of the three get a birthday party once every second year. When it is their turn a lot of effort goes into: Who to invite including creating invites (this can be quite a 'political' juggling act)? What they want to do (Aquarium date with penguins, Bounce (trampolines), Children's Farms, Chocolate party, Mess party – the list is endless!) And finally, what food and gifts they want at their party (Peking Duck!!, Dumplings, Pizzas and the list of potential gifts is too long to list here – just a few -Lego, Tickets to Taylor Swift, Sketch books etc etc.)

What have kids' birthday parties got to do with Gathering for Worship!?

Last Pathfinder I offered a brief description of what the Approach or Gathering for Worship is, namely, it 'is like a letter of invitation to attend a very important event, only the invitation is from God for us to join together, in community, and ready ourselves to hear the 'guest speaker' to end all guest speakers!!!' This invitation is to something much more momentous than a birthday party!

The constituent parts of the APPROACH/GATHERING to Worship are as follows

**THE GRACE:** 'Bone Fide' worship is bracketed by GRACE and BENEDICTION. We and the whole Creation live by GRACE and BENEDICTION alone (more on BENEDICTION in December's Pathfinder.) And that abundant Life is pure gift (grace), love beyond measure, and eternal spiritual nourishment from God. When worship is entered into with that understanding of life and faith, we are authentically prepared to recognise and declare the ultimate and surpassing joy of God's presence in our lives, and in the life of the gathered people of God, and in the 'life' of the whole of Creation!

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:** This is a new part of the gathering for most of us. Of course, it ought not have been, but maybe we are beginning to come to our senses as a nation (and church) in relationship to the original stewardship of this land. Place is important for God. Jesus died to restore and remake all things in heaven and on earth, which includes all of creation. So, as we gather, we acknowledge the earth as a precious gift from God and in so doing acknowledge those who have cared for it, as a precious gift from the Almighty, for a very long time!

*Continued on page 3*



## **‘Who do you say that I am?’ Understanding Jesus Christ**

As the Ormond Learning Hub continues to explore the question of who Jesus was, we have touched on some stimulating, challenging and life-giving topics. We have looked at Jesus’ mission to liberate the sick and the troubled, what his obedient sacrifice on the cross means for us, and how his resurrection renews the world.

As the facilitator of the course it has been a great joy to feel such enthusiasm and generosity among participants. As I said to them in our most recent session, when we talk about the ongoing presence of Christ in the world we need to recognise that he is with us now!

Remaining topics include Jesus’ divinity, Jesus as the personification of ancient (female!) Wisdom and Christ as the foundation of our human relationships. It’s not too late to join in if you're curious. Just let Cate in the office know.

By addressing the question of who Jesus is, the Ormond Learning Hub is beginning conversations that can continue beyond it. It is my great hope that our lives and our communities may become richer by understanding Christ’s transforming love.

Brad Denniston

**From "With Love to the World" 23/8/24**

"God of strength, when the world falls apart, be our centre;  
When the world turns sour, be our sweetness;  
When we become weak, be our strength"

*Continued from page 1*

**PRAYER OF APPROACH:** In the awesome presence of God, we humble ourselves. (Often, I incorporate the sentiment of this prayer into the Prayer of Adoration.)

**CALL TO WORSHIP:** This is the heart of the invitation. An invitation issued by God. God calls us into God's presence. Why? Yes, for us followers to declare the outstanding worth of God, but principally to 'formalise' God's connection to his creatures, connecting them with the source of all love. (An invitation to belong to God and therefore with each other, surrounded by the love which made and remade heaven and earth.)

**PRAISE:** In the presence of Almighty God, we 'fall to our knees' in wondrous praise and what better way than to sing to the praise of God with unfettered voice. This first hymn/song should be truly joyous and uplifting – full of praise for the Almighty.

**PRAYERS OF ADORATION, CONFESSION and ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**(FORGIVENESS):** In God's presence, again we 'fall to our knees,' this time in prayers of veneration/glorification of our extraordinarily loving God. This prayer is several degrees 'up' from thanksgiving – it reflects being awestruck by the wonder, glory, majesty, love and closeness of God. And as a result of recognizing and adoring God we become acutely aware of our own insufficiency. Thus, we make confession of our sin and brokenness as humans (NB This is more about our species' brokenness than just individual sin). But we are never left for long to wallow in our fractured relationship with God and each other. No! Again and again, God comes to our rescue with extra-ordinarily gracious love, to forgive and renew us – offering the new life Jesus achieved through his death and resurrection, to all – This the Church calls, The Assurance of Pardon (Forgiveness).

**THE PEACE:** The liturgist, at this point offers Christ's Peace to all because, as forgiven people, by faith, we know the peace only God can bring to us through his Son – (The Peace which passes human understanding – that is, Christ's peace comes to us as a gift of Christ's new life, offered to us all, which equips the believer to truly understand that one can be at peace even when the turmoil of the world threatens to tear you apart). What an extra-ordinary gift!

Having moved through these acts of GATHERING we are now prepared; we are now in a faithful position to 'hear the WORD from the Guest 'Speaker!' - see you next month for 'WORD.'

Blessings,  
Ron

## **From the Formation Group:**

We've been speaking about "mission" and the "missional" church. Where does OUC fit in with these concepts?

Some thoughts:

- It's not that God's church has a mission, but that God's mission has a church
- The church is the result of God's mission in the world - it reaches out rather than gathering in
- In our new, re-furbished building there are three main focus (focii):
  - worship (the heart of who we are)
  - mission (what God is calling us to)
  - tenancy (a means to be financially sustainable in order to fulfil worship and mission.)
- Learning was at the heart of our previous wonderings - is this something we could focus on? (even though GEALC is no longer to be involved)
- Social isolation is a real problem across our community - is this something we could focus on?

Working in collaboration with Church Council, we'll be continuing to prayerfully explore these concepts and ideas.

Heather Baxter

For the Formation Group

### ***FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE***

*Friendship Circle's next meeting is at Jan & Graeme's house at  
1.30 on WEDNESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> September.*

*You are welcome to drop in. Join us for a chat and afternoon tea..*

*Take care  
Jan Davenport  
( ph: 9578. 1713 )*



## THE GREAT OUTBACK BBQ is back!

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1.00 p.m.

at Lorraine's House

The Great Outback BBQ raises funds for Frontier Service's work with farmers. We'll have more details next month, but please write the date in your diary now. People of all ages welcome. We will organise transport if required. This will be a lovely opportunity to socialise as well as raise funds for the work of Frontier Services – an agency of the Uniting Church working in remote areas.

Here's a little about their work:

**Bush Chaplaincy:** Our Bush Chaplains fulfil a role that most people would struggle to do. Visiting people on properties for a cuppa and a chat, they are often on the frontline for identifying issues. They lend a sympathetic ear and can refer people to other service providers as appropriate. They provide practical, pastoral and spiritual support to those in need.

Travelling tens of thousands of kilometres every year, our Bush Chaplains collectively visit thousands of families and individuals (including farmers and miners).

**Outback Links Volunteer Program:** For decades, Outback Links has been connecting volunteers with people doing it tough in rural and remote Australia. Volunteers provide practical support which can include anything from caretaking to property maintenance, gardening to painting or perhaps general farm support is what's needed most. Outback Links volunteers bring hope by showing up and showing they care. They are there to lend a helping hand to relieve some pressure and get those tasks done.

**Gary Richter** has done a couple of stints as a volunteer, working in Gippsland, so if you're curious to know more, talk with him.

**Frontier News** is a quarterly publication explaining the work and impact of Frontier Services. Paper copies are available at church, or read online at <https://frontierservices.org/news-media/frontier-news/>

**Excellent programs supporting remote communities.**





## Good news from Good Sammy

Good Sammy is a proud Uniting Church agency in Western Australia. Founded in 1958, Good Sammy's purpose is to create employment opportunities for Western Australians with disability and believes that creating inclusive workplaces is the foundation for an inclusive society. At Good Sammy, people with disability are empowered to make their own choices so they can identify their goals, feel connected to their community, and be supported as they work towards independence and employment aspirations.

Good Sammy is best known for their [27 op shops](#), located from [Albany](#) to [Geraldton](#). More than 50% of the workforce is made up of people with disability, and the organisation is active in providing other employment opportunities.

Through their recycling initiatives, almost 7 million kilos of used goods are recycled each year, and they are an authorised collection organisation for the Containers for Change program. Overall, this has a huge impact on reducing waste and caring for the environment.

Not only does recycling goods prevent materials going to landfill, but it also reduces the number of new goods which need to be manufactured. This means the need for energy, water, raw materials, and

transport is reduced, and therefore greenhouse gas emissions are reduced.

Good Sammy is also responding to the Western Australian Synod's request for agencies to work towards Net Zero by 2040. They have employed a part time Carbon and Energy Advisor and established their 2021/22 and 2022/23 carbon footprint. A Net Zero Action Plan has now been developed based on tackling the highest carbon emitting sources.

As Good Sammy expands, they are actively pursuing strategies to reduce emissions. This includes recruiting supporters to assist in installing solar panels, and they plan to test electric vehicles in their truck fleet, building upon their existing use of e-bikes.

There is also some major work happening to enable the reuse operations to be recognised as official carbon credit units because of the materials and energy saved. If this work bears fruit, more funds will be available to help the organisation's disability employment mission.

Good Sammy is a great believer in the "Circular Economy", and as governments reinforce the requirement to reduce emissions, it will be in a great position to respond to increased demand for recycled goods, both locally and globally.

In September we celebrate the “Season of Creation” Common Grace, a Christian movement for justice is conducting a Climate Challenge, encouraging people to take action for the protection and flourishing of God’s beautiful creation by taking actions to reduce our individual ecological footprints and live more sustainably.

They suggest several challenges which people might choose:

- “Sustain My Plate” – changing the way we eat
- “Shelve My Purchases” – buy nothing new for the month
- “Shift My Gears” – change your transport

You may not want to formally join a Climate Challenge through Common Grace, but perhaps think about what you could do to live more sustainably. Perhaps choose to buy locally produced fruit and veg, repair that broken appliance instead of purchasing a new one or use public transport (or walk) instead of using the car.

Interested to know more? Go to

[https://www.commongrace.org.au/climate\\_challenge](https://www.commongrace.org.au/climate_challenge)





## For reflection.....

*I thought this reflection was very timely at this point of our church's journey this year. Fiona asks some good questions as well as drawing out some wonderful thoughts on the reading and gathering and belonging aspect of communion. I hope you find this both thought provoking and faith affirming.*

Warwick

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2024: John 10:11-21: **En-Folded**

“... He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.”  
(Ps 95.7) Thank the Good Shepherd that you are in his fold today.

“How is your church going?” asked a friend yesterday. Depending on my mood and recent events, I observe different things. I visualise the people who are not there, because they are distracted or have lost their faith because they are wounded or disappointed or bitter.

I watch those damaged by family, or circumstance or church, both struggling and responding to the healing touch of Jesus. In worship, I marvel at God's Spirit, transforming lives, through groups, and conversations, amidst all our fallibilities. It is amazing to witness.

This image of Jesus, enlarges my vision for Church, charging it with fresh expectation. Because he is the Good Shepherd: the noble, faithful, worthy Shepherd no less than five times here, he describes himself as laying down his life. From their lambing, he actively watches over his sheep. He is alert to the ravaging wolves and robbers outside the fold. He recognises the threats from inside, when under-shepherds prize pay above protection. By contrast, Jesus gives up his time, strength, energy, and sleep for their safety. He reveals intimate knowledge of each sheep, and in the face of danger he faces the fate that would otherwise be theirs.

As death threats against him grow, Jesus is utterly in control. He will give his life, it will not be stolen from him. Inextricably tied to laying down his life is his resurrection, when he takes it up again.

This is our winsome Shepherd. We are included in his heart's reach. We two are gathered into his sacrificial, life and death, into intimacy with the Father. As I stand with the sinful and the sorrowful, the gifted and the grumpy, to receive the body and blood of Christ in communion, I recognise my place and purpose in the Shepherd's plan for the scattered and lost. I'm filled with wonder and hope.

How is your church? What do you observe? What, by faith do you grasp of the Shepherd's purpose for those outside the fold? (*Pray for your church.*)

(from Encounter with God (SU). Written by Fiona Barnard, chaplain at St Andrews University, Scotland and staff worker for Friends International Students )

# Lectio nary Readings

September 1	<b>Pentecost 15</b>	Song of Solomon 2:8-13, Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9, James 1:17-27, Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23
September 8	<b>Pentecost 16</b>	Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23, Psalm 125, James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17, Mark 7:24-37
September 15	<b>Pentecost 17</b>	Proverbs 1:20-33, Psalm 19 or <i>Wisdom of Solomon 7:26 – 8:1</i> , <i>James 3:1-12</i> , <i>Mark 8:27-38</i>
September 22	<b>Pentecost 18</b>	Proverbs 31:10-31, Psalm 1, James 3:13 – 4:3, 7-8a, Mark 9:30- 37
September 29	<b>Pentecost 19</b>	Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22, Psalm 124, James 5:13-20, Mark 9:38-50
October 6	<b>Pentecost 20</b>	Job 1:1, 2:1-10, Psalm 26, Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12, Mark 10:2- 16

## Thank you, Lumos.....

A big thank you to **LUMOS BAKERY** for their generous donations of goods to the congregation. They are yummy!

A suggestion from Formation Group is that we could use this as an opportunity to raise some funds for ASRC or the Free Little Pantry. So when you are taking something from the tray, please consider leaving a donation which will be used to support others.

PS: Fancy some yummy pastries? – Lumos is located at 240 McKinnon Road and is open 7 days a week.

# Rosters

	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Prayers</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Welcoming</b>
September 1 <sup>st</sup>	Lisa S T	Marg D	Gary Richter Robyn M	Mardie T Graeme D
September 8 <sup>th</sup>	Marg D	Warwick B		Gary R Warwick B
September 15 <sup>th</sup>	Heather B	Heather B		<u>Lorraine D</u> <u>Frank O</u>
September 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Suzie F	David N		Lynne P Nev P
September 29 <sup>th</sup>	Brenda G	Mardie T		Jan D Graeme D
October 6 <sup>th</sup>	Lisa S	Marg D	Heather B Lorraine D	Mardie T Frank O

	<b>Sound</b>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b>	<b>Resource Delivery</b>
September 1 <sup>st</sup>	Nev P	Lorraine D Lisa S	Marg D
September 8 <sup>th</sup>	Robyn M	Brenda G Jan D	Ron T
September 15 <sup>th</sup>	Gary R	Nev P Mardie T	Marg D
September 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Graeme D	Suzie F Jan D	Frank O
September 29 <sup>th</sup>	Nev P	Suzie F Lynne P	Brenda G
October 6 <sup>th</sup>	Lisa S	Suzzie F Jan D	Marg D

## Images

Cover: Lorraine D

<https://frontierservices.org>

others by OUC members

## Diary Dates

<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September</b>	<b>4.00 p.m. Worship Revd Ron Townsend</b>
<b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>7.30 p.m. Learning Hub “Who Do You Say I Am?”</b>
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>4.00 p.m. Worship</b>
<b>Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>7.45 p.m. Church Council</b>
<b>Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>7.30 p.m. Learning Hub “Who Do You Say I Am?”</b>
<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>4.00 p.m. Worship</b>
<b>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>1.30 p.m. Friendship Circle</b>
<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September</b>	<b>4.00 p.m. Worship</b>
<b>Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>8.30 a.m. Bob’s Boys</b>
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>4.00 p.m. Worship</b>
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>4.00 p.m. Worship</b>
<b>Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>6.00 p.m. Material for <i>Pathfinder</i> due</b>
<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>4.00 p.m. Worship</b>
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>4.00 p.m. Worship</b>
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>1.00 p.m. The Great Outback BBQ</b>

Please note:

**October Pathfinder will be available on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October**

(one week later than usual)

Please email contributions to [dianne\\_ric@yahoo.com.au](mailto:dianne_ric@yahoo.com.au)  
no later than Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October.