

SHEPPARTON UNITING CHURCH

WITH DOOKIE UNITING CHURCH



NEWS FEBRUARY 27, 2022

Transfiguration

MINISTERS

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27 Rev Loni Vaitohi

Readings Ex 34.29-35 Ps 99 2Cor 3.12- 4.2 Luke 9.28-36

Praying Together Beechworth, Stanley, Yackandandah, Myrtleford-Whorouly

ASH WEDNESDAY March 2 Joan McRae 7.00pm

Readings Joel 2.1-2, 12-17 Ps 51.1-17 2Cor 5.20b-6.10 Mt 6.1-6,16-21

READINGS

March 6 Deut 26.1-11 Ps 91 1-2, 9-16 Rom 10.8b-13 Lk 4.1-13

March 13 Gen 15.1-12, 17,18 Ps 27 Phil 3.17-4.1 Lk 13.33-35

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters of the region, the Peoples of the Yorta Yorta Nation and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.

SHEPPARTON WORSHIP

There are two options for worship every Sunday:

Worship in the church at 9.30am

or Worship online, using Youtube.

Go to www.youtube.com/user/SheppartonUniting

When the appropriate service link comes with the video link: click the link and you will be taken to the service. This may take a short while.

REQUIREMENTS FOR WORSHIP - ALL SERVICES

QR Codes – no longer required unless there is also hospitality

Masks – no longer required after February 25

DOOKIE CONGREGATION February 27

9.30am. Elders/Zoom

PASTORAL PRAYERS.

We remember Emily, Tracy Ford, Eve, Bron, Lisa and her family, Emma Fethney; Don Gill and Heather Turner (surgery); all our Tongan members and their families. The Vaitohi families. All with COVID, or isolating.

The Presbytery prays for Beechworth, Stanley, Yackandandah, Myrtleford-Whorouly *The WCC* prays for the lands and peoples of Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands. *The Assembly invites prayers for*

*The people of Ukraine. We pray for a de-escalation of tensions, respect for established national borders, a return to dialogue and peace to prevail.

*Those impacted by landslides in Brazil in the midst of the challenges already posed by the pandemic. We pray also for our Uniting Church communities from Brazil who are concerned for their loved ones.

*The Lutheran Church of Australia on its installation of Bishop Paul Smith as Bishop of the LCANZ. We pray for Bishop Smith in his spiritual leadership of the Lutheran Church of Australia and for the official Dialogue between the Uniting Church and the Lutheran Church of Australia.

THIS WEEK - AS USUAL!

Tuesday, March 1 Friendship Group *Stamps; Shrove Tuesday*
10.00am.

Crazy Whist 1.30pm. New players warmly welcome.

Thursday, March 3 Cuppa and Chat 10.00am to noon

THIS WEEK: SPECIAL EVENTS

Tuesday 1 Shrove Tuesday - Pancake Day 6.30pm

A congregational social evening will be held on Shrove Tuesday, March 1, to support Uniting's Pancake Day Fundraiser. Everyone is invited to come along to the Church from 6.30 for Dessert Pancakes and a cuppa and to make a donation towards the fundraiser. In order to abide by the Covid regulations everyone must be double vaccinated and the pancakes will be served 'restaurant style'. The catering committee will be providing the pancakes and are donating the ingredients and their time. This is a great opportunity to come together for a social evening after so many months of restrictions. For catering purposes, please contact Lorraine or Jillean to indicate your attendance, or if you need transport.

Wednesday 2 Ash Wednesday 7.00pm

The annual service to mark the beginning of Lent this year falls on March 2 and will be held at 7.00pm. You are invited to join this time of prayer, reflection and refreshment. Dust and ashes. How do we prepare for the penitential six weeks of Lent, leading to Good Friday - and Easter? Giving up? Taking up?

Friday 4 World Day of Prayer, St Brendan's Church, 10.30am.

Another annual service, always held on the first Friday of March. This year's service was prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The theme is *I Know the Plans I Have for You*.

NOTES ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR

Epiphany January 6 celebrates the bringing of the Light of Christ to an ever-increasing circle. The visit of the Star-led Wise People from the East to the Holy Family in Bethlehem marks a beginning of the revelation of God to the world in Jesus Christ. Since then we have travelled through the season After Epiphany (mostly abbreviated to 'Epiphany') until the last Sunday before Lent. This year, that is the seventh Sunday. This last Sunday is celebrated as the Feast of the Transfiguration, when the glory of Jesus is revealed in a new way.

Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday and is a day of preparation for the penitential season of Lent. The English word 'Shrove' began as 'shrive' and refers to confession of sins in preparation for Lent, so people are forgiven. It was originally a solemn day, marked by church services, especially in Europe during the Middle Ages. The service

included the burning of the palm leaves from the previous Palm Sunday, ready for Ash Wednesday. But today this understanding may well be overlooked by many, who forget the confession in favour of the feasting! This 'last hurrah before Lent' is often known by its French name, 'mardi gras' – Fat Tuesday. The custom of using up foods coming from animals, not to be eaten again until Easter - butter, eggs, cheese and fat, even milk – on the day before Ash Wednesday led to the feasting we, who do not give up those foods during Lent!- yet celebrate in the making of pancakes. (Countries whose language is derived from Latin celebrate Carnivale – farewell to meat.). Mardi Gras and Carnivale also have different meaning for many, these days!

Ash Wednesday always falls 46 days before Easter Day. The season of Lent has two main themes, repentance, and preparation for sharing in the death and resurrection of Christ. For us this is a time to grow through repentance, fellowship, prayer and remembering our baptism. The other very old aspect, fasting, or 'giving up', is less observed these days, especially in the Uniting Church. But we are encouraged to 'take up' some extra dimension of spiritual life, so that we are truly signs of God's kingdom in the world. In Lent, we focus on being receptive to God's grace, growing in our faith and spiritual life.

Ashes have a long history, dating back to Old Testament times, where they were a symbol of purification, and also a sign of penitence. In the early days of the Church, penitents often sprinkled ashes on their heads in public services of penitence. By the tenth century, Christians generally went to church the Wednesday before the first Sunday in Lent to have blessed ashes made from the previous year's palms put on their foreheads. This was a sign of their penitence. And yes, our palms are burnt on Shrove Tuesday for our ashes.

May we be blessed in our walking together through this holy season in 2022!