



Anglican Parish of Warracknabeal

Warracknabeal, Areegra, Minyip, Hopetoun, Brim

Epiphany 6
12 February 2023

Sunday Services: 9.30am & 5.00pm Warracknabeal



"There is only ONE race. The human race."

Robert Sobukwe

What will it take for the human race to wake up to itself and realise that war and violence are futile, and that life is too short to waste on inflicting pain and disadvantage on neighbour - let alone enemy.

Not even a major earthquake which is now an international concern is going to make a difference I fear. What is happening in Türkiye and Syria is incomprehensible on so many levels. How long will it take our news channels to get tired and move onto the next disaster? A 12,000 dead people (and rising) 'blip' in the cycles of life and death and war and dictators and postering and ... *(please add your own)*. The fires in Chile - at least got one night's coverage. We dare not talk about what is happening to the people in Venezuela. The Pope in his recent visit to Africa was brave enough *(or stupid enough)* to mention the Democratic Republic of Congo and the misery of many people of that country who have been at war with each other for over twenty years now ... silently, viciously, incomprehensible evil that has gone almost unanimously unchecked by the International community.

I don't think I would make a very good diplomat. I have enough trouble negotiating with my own thought processes as I try and improve my own mental health and try to negotiate the world as a privileged white, educated and wealthy Australian man: 'God wants us to be real, not 'nice" - a bloke I know said last weekend. Is that all we can bring before God - our own reality, in our own context, with our own struggles and 'demons' and shadow-selves - as we try and make sense of a world that seems to be crumbling around us - or within us?

Who do you see when you look in the mirror? How do you talk to that person in the privacy and intimacy of that image looking back at you or in the depths of your heart? That is being REAL. May our conversations lead to peace! Rev.

Project REGENERATE. 140 years in 2026.



Prayer in the Parish

In the Parish & Beyond:

- +Garry; the people in Parish of Stawell;
- For Nola Browell; Belinda – undergoing surgery & for a swift recovery;
- For the oldest continuous culture on the planet and all her people;
- For refugees & those who seek asylum;
- For all people dealing with violence, war, injustice and exploitation;
- For the people of Ukraine;
- For the people of Auckland; Chile; Türkiye; Syria; South Sudan; Democratic Republic of Congo;
- For those experiencing grief; for those dealing with misfortune & disappointment;
- For our neighbours;
- For Christian Emergency Food Centre;
- For those facing the Black Dog, loneliness, isolation & pain;
- For our region's schools – their Principals, Teachers & support staff;
- For those we love – near and far away;
- For those celebrating birthday's and anniversaries and milestones;
- Thanks for our all God's blessings;

Years Mind: Evelyn Megee, Alice Marshall, Joyce Witney.

“Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.”

Services – Feb/March

Epiphany 6 – 12 February

9.30am & 5.00pm Warracknabeal

Transfiguration – 19 February

10.30am – *Baptism Service*

5.00pm Warracknabeal

Ash Wednesday – 22 February

5.30pm Warracknabeal

Followed by simple Rectory meal

Lent 1 – 26 February

10.30am & 5.00pm Warracknabeal

12.00pm Parish Luncheon

Lent 2 – 05 March

9.30am & 5.00pm Warracknabeal

11.00am Areegra

Lent 3 – 12 March

9.30am & 5.00pm Warracknabeal

Lent 4 – 19 March

9.30am Warracknabeal

5.00pm Retreat in Daily Life begins

Special Morning Tea - next week

19th February in the Parish Centre

following our 10.30am Baptism service for Molly & Posie.

Please bring a plate and join the celebration!

Parish Luncheon Returns!

26th February in the Parish Centre

at 12.00pm following our 10.30am morning service. \$25 per person.

Donation of Salads will be welcome.

Book now to avoid disappointment.

TODAY'S READINGS

EPIPHANY 6

First Reading : Deuteronomy 10:12-22

A reading from Deuteronomy

And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the Lord's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good? To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. Yet the Lord set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations – as it is today. Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt. Fear the Lord your God and serve him. Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name. He is your praise; he is your God, who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes. Your ancestors who went down into Egypt were seventy in all, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky. This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Psalm: 119:1-8

Response: *Blessed are you Lord God: O teach me your statutes*

1. Blessed are those whose way is blameless: Who walk in the law of the

Lord. Blessed are those who keep his commands: And seek him with their whole heart. **(R)**

2. Those who do no wrong:
But walk in the ways of our God.
For you, Lord, have commanded us:
To persevere in all your precepts. **(R)**
3. If only my ways were unerring:
Towards the keeping of your statutes!
Then I should not be ashamed: When I looked on all your commandments. **(R)**
4. I will praise you with sincerity of heart:
As I learn your righteous judgements.
I will keep your statutes: O forsake me not utterly **(R)**

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly – mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? For when one says, 'I follow Paul,' and another, 'I follow Apollos,' are you not mere human beings? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded

according to their own labour. For we are fellow workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, **Alleluia**

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening:
you have the message of eternal life.

Alleluia

Gospel:

Matthew 5:21-37

***A reading from the Holy Gospel
according to Matthew***

'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, "You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment." But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister, will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, "Raca," is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, "You fool!" will be in danger of the fire of hell. 'Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. 'Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny. 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to

be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. 'It has been said, "Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce." But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery. 'Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, "Do not break your oath, but fulfil to the Lord the oaths you have made." But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. All you need to say is simply "Yes," or "No"; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

This is the gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

The Propers

Sentence: Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord.

Collect: Almighty God, you gave the law to guide our lives: grant that we may never shrink from your commandments, but, as we are taught by your Spirit, may fulfil your law in perfect love; through Christ our Lord and Master, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

The Only Sermon

by Andrea Ayvazian

if we dug a huge grave miles wide, miles deep
and buried every rifle, pistol, knife, bullet, bomb, bayonet
if we jumped upon fleets of tanks and fighter jets
with tool boxes, torches
unwelded them dismantles them turned them into scrap metal
if every light-skinned man in silk tie said
to every dark-skinned man in a turban
I vow not to kill your children
and heard the same vow in return
if every elected leader agreed to stop lying
if every child was fed as well as racehorses bred to win derbies
if every person with a second home gave it to a person with no home
if every mother buried her parents not her sons and daughters
if every person who has enough said out loud I have enough
if every person violent in the name of God were to find God
we would grow silent, still for a moment, a lifetime
we would hear infants nursing at the breast
hummingbirds hovering in flight
we would touch a canyon wall and feel the earth vibrate
we would hear two lovers sigh across the ocean
we would watch old wounds grow new flesh and jagged scars disappear
as time was layered upon time
we would slowly be ready to begin

[Sojourners magazine: date, year and other publication details unknown. Used without permission.]

'That Which Surprises and Liberates Us'

Mary Lou Kownacki, OBS writes;

Once I heard an interview with John Lennon on the radio, a section of which I copied into my journal. Lennon was asked why he devoted so much energy to peace, and wasn't that a waste of time? Lennon replied that he believed that it was Leonardo da Vinci who made flying possible by projecting it, by bringing it into people's consciousness as even a possibility. "What a person projects will eventually happen," Lennon said. "Therefore, I always want to project peace. I want to put the possibility of peace into the public imagination. And I know, as certain as I am standing here, that someday, peace will be."

Can we imagine peace and nonviolence? Can we imagine what ear has not heard, what eye has not seen, what has not yet captured the human heart? In his landmark book, *The Prophetic Imagination*, Walter Brueggemann writes: "The church must be a poetic community. A poetic community that offers explosive, concrete, subversive, critical images around which people can organize their lives." We are desperate for poetry, for that which surprises and liberates us, opens our minds to new possibilities, poetry that nurtures hope beyond cynicism, that frees us, and evokes a new social reality.

I think of storytellers like Eduardo Galeano. He tells us that in Uruguay, political prisoners must not talk without permission, or whistle, smile, sing, walk fast, or greet other prisoners, nor may they look at images of pregnant women, couples, butterflies, or birds.

A schoolteacher is jailed for "having ideological ideas," and undergoes torture. One day, Galeano says, the teacher is visited by his daughter, Milay, age 5. She brings him a drawing of birds. The guards grab the paper and destroy it at the entrance of the jail. On the following Sunday, Milay brings a drawing of trees. Trees are not forbidden, and the drawing gets through. The teacher praises her work and asks about the colored circles scattered in the treetops, many small circles half-hidden among the branches. "Are they oranges? What fruit is it?" Milay puts her finger to her mouth: "Shhh." And she whispers in his ear, "Silly, they're eyes. They're the eyes of the birds that I've smuggled in for you." Galeano and little Milay overcome death and despair with new possibility.

I think of people like Gene Knudsen Hoffman who, for twenty years, has been speaking and writing about compassionate listening. She goes into troubled spots like the Middle East and brings together those on both sides of the conflict. "We peace people have always listened to the oppressed and disenfranchised. That's very important," she writes. "One of the new steps I think we should take is to listen to those we consider 'the enemy,' with the same openness and compassion we bring to those with whom our sympathies lie. We must learn to listen deeply and understand the suffering of both sides."

And I think of Nelson Mandela and Bishop Tutu who led South Africa toward healing through the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. Or we can turn to Australia where, in 1988, the people created "Sorry Days" to apologize to the indigenous people for the

crimes their government committed against the aboriginal people. All of these give us glimpses of a new heaven and a new Earth.

Most of all, I think of Jesus. Through stories and parables and a brief life that lit a black sky with a moment of brilliant light, Jesus helped us to imagine. His words and life were a poem of promise: the blind shall see, the lame walk, the hungry will be fed, the sorrowing consoled, and tears wiped away. "Nothing is impossible," is Jesus' legacy. Like the fig tree in the parable, Jesus expects us to fly in the face of the expected and produce fruit out of season. You and I are made for the impossible.

from *The Nonviolent Moment: Spirituality for the 21st Century*, by Mary Lou Kownacki (Pax Christi USA)

Forgiving and Forgiven

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."
Matthew 5:23-24



Based on Matthew 5:21-24

R X M T R D A N G E R B R Y O
 F V I E B C D A D K V R E J Y
 P X S U X P R A X J Q O C D I
 K A G W P N J E L A X T O P K
 J P C I Z N R A M T X H N X Y
 F C F V F I O H H E A E C I J
 U A A P F T X Y C E M R I M U
 O F F E R I N G R G L B L R D
 O M C O K U V D E B L L E I G
 X A F P C F H O Z W W I D R E
 G N M L A I H M X U A I I S M
 T G T E H R J O E X G W T U E
 T R G K S S N K N W E O D D N
 Y Y S R X T V Q H W F O O L T
 X X B A A M U R D E R Y E J K

ALTAR	ANGRY	PEOPLE	REMEMBER	MURDER
OFFERING	FIRST	FOOL	JUDGEMENT	GIFT
BROTHER	HELL	DANGER	RECONCILED	FIRE