



# Anglican Parish of Warracknabeal

Warracknabeal, Areegra, Minyip, Hopetoun, Brim

**Lent 1**  
**18 February 2024**

**Sunday Services: 9.30am - Warracknabeal**



Hello everyone! I hope that I find you well.

Welcome to our Lenten journey together. I hope that you have dusted off your chosen 'Lenten discipline' this week - as we seek to follow Jesus to Jerusalem: some of you may have chosen to deny yourself some normal pleasure; some of you may prefer to 'take up something extra' as a way to remind us of God's Grace and mercy. Whichever 'path' you have chosen - remember that its intention is to lead us deeper into God's heart - rather than to make us even more self-absorbed than we already are. "*Test their fruits,*" the scripture exhorts - and I trust that joy and freedom will accompany you this Lenten season.

Joan Chittister writes: "*Ash Wednesday signals the beginning of that season of the church year that is most commonly associated with penance. But there is a danger lurking in that definition. If penance is all that Lent is about, the season, if not almost useless, is at least somewhat trivial. It makes the spiritual life some kind of arithmetical balancing act. I do so many penances for so much human misadventure and payback time is over. The important thing is that I remember to come out even.*

*... But Lent is a much greater moment in life than that.*

*Lent is a call to weep for what we could have been and are not.*

*Lent is the grace to grieve for what we should have done and did not.*

*Lent is the opportunity to change what we ought to change but have not.*

*Lent is not about penance.*

*Lent is about becoming, doing and changing whatever it is that is blocking the fullness of life in us right now.*

*Lent is a summons to live anew.*

*The first challenge of Lent is to open ourselves to life. When we "rend our hearts" we break them open to things we are refusing for some warped reason to even consider.*

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*Project REGENERATE. Renew PEOPLE. Revive PROJECTS. Restore PLACE*

*We have refused for years, perhaps, to even think about renewing old commitments that we've allowed to go to dust - spending time with the children, visiting our parents, exercising, taking time to read good books. We've closed our minds, maybe, to the thought of reconciling with old friends whom we have hurt. We've refused to put the effort into reviving old spiritual practices like visits to church, meditation in the morning, the memorization of the psalms, that we allowed to die in our youth but failed to substitute for as we aged. We've failed to repent old abrasions, quick words, harsh judgments made in haste and expiated never. We have closed the doors of our hearts, as time went by, to so many of the things we need to live full and holy lives.*

*Lent is the time to let life in again."*

As you know I'm a big fan of Sr Joan. Her perspective is refreshing considering her tradition and chosen profession. I feel that her words via email link this week - really speak to a modern world in need of some "good old days" spirituality and devotion.

Faith has never been for the feint hearted. Don't let anyone fool you otherwise. For me, too much of 'church talk' is about how many people are attending church. But that means nothing if everyone is bitching behind each other's back. We can have all the most fantastic programs in the world, but if one member of the church is excluded from being 'part of the team' - what's the point? We can try and justify our actions (and often do) for the 'common good' - and don't get me wrong I am sure they are building up our community life together ... but in reality God only wants us to 'draw near - draw very near' to God's Presence. That's where God really wants us - to 'rend our hearts' for God and God alone.

In essence - we do have to 'move' and 'make life meaningful' in interaction with others. Lent is a wonderful time to be genuine 'pain bearers' - for friends, for family or for the 'random strangers' that God may place in our day or our prayers. To seek to understand. To seek to help make meaning. To seek the Spirit's guidance in helping ourselves and others negotiate the difficult choice to live - for many in various circumstances it is much easier to 'die' than to live!

*"Lent is the time to let life in again."*

Lent is the time to 'let joy in again.'

Lent is the time to 'let healing begin.'

Lent is the time to 'let hope infuse despair and banish it.'

Lent is the time to 'let your light shine' to banish the darkness.

Lent is the time for bold and courageous prayer and action.

May it be so for you, and for me.

**Every blessing, Rev James**

## Prayer in the Parish

### **In the Parish & Beyond:**

- +Garry; for Ballarat Deanery;
- For Sherry Barber (Suzy Callaghan's sister) – battling cancer;
- For all who are facing tests and trials and things that 'don't seem right';;
- For a STOP to war around the globe; and for all brokering peace;
- For the people of Ukraine;
- For the people of our State Victoria – facing hardship, tragedy or loss;
- For the people of Israel & Palestine;
- For those who hunger for God's Word; for those who thirst for God's Spirit; for those who seek God's mercy and consolation;
- For those facing exploitation and trafficking to ensure we have Easter eggs on our supermarket shelves; for all those advocating for Fair Trade and Worker's conditions;
- For those who are grieving;
- For all seamstresses and clothing designers;
- For our respective Lenten journey's – wherever they may take us;
- For the Christian Emergency Food Centre in Horsham; for Bev and all the volunteers;
- For the Boys' Shed Project;
- For those we love – near and far away;
- For PEACE in heart, mind and soul;
- For our neighbour;

**Years Mind:** Alice Marshall, Joyce Witney, Bob Taylor, Leslie Seipolt, Sasha Overall, Micah O'Loughlin, Lorna Weatherill

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

## Service Times Feb/March

### Lent 1 – 18 February 2024

9.30am – Warracknabeal

### Lent 2 – 25 February 2024

10.30am – Warracknabeal

(+Garry to visit)

### **12.00 – Mission Lunch**

5.00pm Café Church

### Lent 3 – 03 March

9.30am & 5.00pm – Warracknabeal

11.00am St Mark's Areegra

### Lent 4 – 10 March

9.30am & 5.00pm – Warracknabeal

12.00pm Lunch in Parish Centre

### Lent 5 – 17 March

9.30am & 5.00pm – Warracknabeal

### Passion Sunday – 24 March

9.30am & 5.00pm – Warracknabeal

11.00am St Mark's Areegra

### Maundy Thursday – 28 March

6.00pm for 6.30pm – Warracknabeal

### Good Friday – 29 March

9.30am – Warracknabeal

### Easter Sunday – 31 March

9.30am – Warracknabeal

### Mission Lunch - NEXT week!

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February at 12.00pm**

**\$25 and maybe bring a friend.**

Contact:

Sandra Taylor: 0408 991 235

Jill Bibby: 0438 909 202

**We need donations of salads please!**

Proceeds will be shared between  
ABM (Australian Bush Mission) and  
Oncology Unit at Wimmera Base  
Hospital. Thank you!

# TODAY'S READINGS

## LENT 1

First Reading:

Genesis 9:8-17

### ***A reading from the book of Genesis***

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: 'I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you – the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you – every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.' And God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.' So God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.'

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

Psalm:

25:4-9

**Response: *Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.***

1. Your ways, O LORD, make known to me; teach me your paths, Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my saviour. **(R)**

2. Remember that your compassion, O LORD, and your love are from of old. In your kindness remember me, because of your goodness, O LORD. **(R)**

3. Good and upright is the LORD, thus he shows sinners the way. He guides the humble to justice, and he teaches the humble his way. **(R)**

Second Reading:

1 Peter 3:18-22

### ***A reading from the first letter of Peter***

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits – to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolises baptism that now saves you also – not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience towards God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand – with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

**Gospel Acclamation:**

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!**

One does not live on bread alone,  
but on every word that proceeds out of the  
mouth of God

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!**

**Gospel:**

**Mark 1:9-15**

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

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.' At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!'

This is the gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

*"Only the humble, who are prepared to accept their humus, their earth-bound condition, their humanity, their shadow, will experience the real God."*

*Anselm Gruen  
(Heaven Begins With You)*

**THE PROPER**

**Sentence:** The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.

**Collect:** God of the new and eternal covenant, as the forty days of the great flood swept away the world's corruption and watered new beginnings of righteousness and life: grant to us, who are washed clean and born again in the saving flood of baptism, the wellspring of your grace, that your gift of new life may flourish once again; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

***Prayer is an adventure which brings not a thrill but new responsibilities.***

***Every time we come near God, it is either life or death we are confronted with. It is life if we come to God in the right spirit, and we are renewed by God. It is death if we come to God without the spirit of worship and a contrite heart; it is death if we bring pride and arrogance. Nothing is more significant, more awe-inspiring than meeting the God we set out to meet.***

*Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh*

***Draw near to God;  
and, God will draw near  
to you.  
(Someone said that!)***

# World Day of Prayer 2024

## Palestine



**Date & Time:** 01 March 2024

**Location:** 2.00pm  
Anglican Church

**Contact person:** Jenny Taylor – 0417 109 732

# Lent 2024

## Difficult text series:

During Lent, I will be embarking on a 'difficult text series' to help our Lenten journey and deepen our understanding of how God works in our lives.

Sometimes, I believe, facing 'difficulty' rather than avoiding it allows us to understand God's influence in our lives with a new perspective - especially as we wrestle with God in honesty and trust (faith) - as we seek healing and try to liberate ourselves from texts written in a very different context than our own.

Below are an outline of what the themes will be for each week.

- Lent 1:** 18<sup>th</sup> February - Testing of Faith and Covenant with God  
Genesis 22 - The binding of Isaac
- Lent 2:** 25<sup>th</sup> February - Confronting Genocide  
Joshua 6 & Joshua 10 (selected verses)
- Lent 3:** 03 March - Sexual Violence: Law and Lore  
Genesis 34: The Rape of Dinah & 2 Samuel 13: Ammon & Tamar
- Lent 4:** 10 March - Refining Fire  
James 1:2-4; James 5:7-11; 1 Peter 1:6-7
- Lent 5:** 17 March - The Mysterious Nature of God  
Isaiah 55:8-9 (John 12:20-33); 1 Corinthians 1:27-29

## Retreat in Daily Life - 10<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> March:

In addition, I am planning to provide an opportunity for parishioners to conduct a 'Retreat in Daily Life' again this year. I had some good feedback from those who engaged last year - and I hope you will find that this particular week enhances your prayer and praise and faithful Lenten journey.

More details will follow, as I work out what this week may look like and provide an opportunity for people to meet for fellowship and/or maybe have a Q&A style gathering during the week.

## Confession:

During Lent, if you would like to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, please get in touch with Rev. Not an obligation but rather an opportunity - should you feel the need or have a secret psychological desire to do so.

Get in touch if you want more information.

## Genesis 22 - The Command to Sacrifice Isaac

**22** After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." <sup>2</sup> He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you." <sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. <sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. <sup>5</sup> Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you." <sup>6</sup> Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. And the two of them walked on together. <sup>7</sup> Isaac said to his father Abraham, "Father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" <sup>8</sup> Abraham said, "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." And the two of them walked on together.

<sup>9</sup> When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. <sup>10</sup> Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill<sup>[a]</sup> his son. <sup>11</sup> But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." <sup>12</sup> He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." <sup>13</sup> And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> So Abraham called that place "The LORD will provide,"<sup>[b]</sup> as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."<sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven <sup>16</sup> and said, "By myself I have sworn, says the LORD: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, <sup>18</sup> and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice." <sup>19</sup> So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beer-sheba, and Abraham lived at Beer-sheba.

### Footnotes

- a. [22.10](#) Or *to slaughter*
- b. [22.14](#) Or *will see*; Heb traditionally transliterated *Jehovah Jireh*
- c. [22.14](#) Or *he shall be seen*