

MAY PREACHING PLAN

May 5th

8.30 Lockyer HC	Rev Corina	Acts 10: 44 - 48
9.30 Denmark	J Wilson	Psalm 98
10.00 AUC HC	Rev Corina	1 John 5: 1 - 6
11.00 Mt Barker	S Wilson	John 15: 9 - 17

May 12th

8.30 Lockyer	E Burns	Acts 1: 15 - 17, 21 - 26
9.00 Denmark HC	Rev Corina	Psalm 1
10.00 AUC	E Burns	1 John 5: 9 - 13
11.00 Mt Barker HC	Rev Corina	John 17: 6 - 219

May 19th Pentecost

8.30 Lockyer	A Hortin	Acts 2: 1 - 21/Ezekiel 37: 1 - 14
9.30 Denmark	Rev E Sanderson	Psalm 104: 24 - 34, 35b
10.00 AUC	A Hortin	Romans 8: 22 - 27/Acts 2: 1 - 21
11.00Mt Barker	R Anderson	John 15 : 26 - 27, 16 : 4b - 15

May 26th Trinity Sunday

8.30 Lockyer	R Anderson	Isaiah 6: 1 - 8
9.30 Denmark	D Laffin	Psalm 29
10.00 AUC	R Anderson	Romans 8: 12 - 17
11.00 Mt Barker	S Wilson	John 3: 1 - 17

THE ARC MONTHLY



*ALBANY REGION
CONGREGATIONS*

*Lockyer, Albany Uniting Church,
Mt Barker, Denmark*



MAY 2024



*Whether in the heights or depths,
light or darkness;
may you never forget
God's unending love for you.*

From the website of the Church of Scotland,
a paraphrase of Romans 8: 39

Message from the Manse: God is love

Soon after a natural disaster, or in the middle of a pandemic like the one that is still affecting our lives in one way or another, people often ask “How can God allow suffering on such a grand scale to happen?” Why is life the way it is? Why do we get ill, old, and die? Why is there conflict? Why can people be violent? Why do even children suffer? There is not a simple answer to any of these questions. Certain is that the life we know is all we have. It is not all we would or do hope for, and we can’t fully understand it. However, life is a wonderful gift, full of possibilities, no matter how (super) senior we are. Thomas Moore said that he would rather have life as it is, than not have it at all. I am using his article *God is Love* as the basis for my contribution to this Magazine.

The question of God’s goodness or lack thereof is a hard one. Many religions teach about who or what is divine. Imagine a scale to measure the level of wisdom of your idea of God. Somewhere near the bottom would be an image of God you may have picked up as a child: God is a man (old, in his sixties!) with a long white beard, looking down to earth from above the clouds, keeping an eye on every move of every being. A more educated image might be God as an invisible reality, personal, good, creating and sustaining. Asking, “why God allows so much suffering?” turns God into a human grandfather toying with life from somewhere up in the sky. We could also imagine God as unknown, and hidden. Whatever we can say in human words does not perfectly describe eternal God. Great theologians have stated in different ways that God is not A being; that we can live as though God is not a factor, yet in the presence of God; that God is alive in everything and yet unknown to us... Perhaps if we did not create God in our own image so much, we would have a different reaction to natural or human made disasters. We might have an inkling of divinity hidden in the folds of nature, not as a rosy cheeked grandfather but as the source of life that starts a reality that is complete only with the beauty – and fury – of

DIARY DATES

- THUR 2nd MAY** } SCOTS CRAFT MART open daily 9 – 3pm, come and
FRI 3rd MAY } enjoy morning tea or a light lunch and browse
amongst the stalls.
- TUES 14th MAY** LOCKYER LADIES FELLOWSHIP, Lockyer UC, 12noon
AUC FELLOWSHIP, Handasydes, 2pm. All welcome,
- THUR 16th MAY** FELLOWSHIP Morning Tea, 10am, Vancouver Café,
ALL WELCOME. Details from Mary 0427 554 947
- FRI 17th MAY** AUC COUNCIL MEETING, Lesser Hall, 4pm
- SAT 25th MAY** THE QUIET SPACE – Tony King on acoustic guitar
- THUR 30th MAY** } SCOTS MART, the last before the winter break.
FRI 31st MAY }

DIRECTORY

MINISTER	Rev Corina van Oostende	0417 169 544
		Email: Corinamode@gmail.com
PASTORAL CARERS	Denmark	Margaret Cocks 0428 608 620
	Lockyer	Joan Wright 0429 413 759
	Mt Barker	Sue Wilson 0437 184 692
	AUC	Edith Verran 9841 2729
PRAYER COORDINATOR	Heather Bailey	0428 936 824
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Rosters for AUC and Lockyer:

AUC: Recording/

	<u>DOOR</u>	<u>READING</u>	<u>FLOWERS</u>	<u>Music</u>
<u>5th May</u>	S Harris	A Lucas	B Reed	T Reed/ P Elms
<i>Lockyer: J Thompson</i>		<i>J Dunbar</i>	<i>J Wright</i>	
<u>12th May</u>	D Hockey	W Dwyer	C Ferry	J Pel/ S Harris
<i>Lockyer: J Dunbar</i>	<i>M Hannington</i>	<i>J Dunbar</i>		
<u>19th May</u>	D Hosking	S Harris	A Tero	M Vertigan/ P Elms
<i>Lockyer: M Hannington</i>	<i>A Hortin</i>	<i>J Thompson</i>		
<u>26th May</u>	D Coxall	C Ferry	B Reed	W Dwyer/ P Elms
<i>Lockyer: J Bowman</i>	<i>A Hortin</i>	<i>S Wood</i>		

Morning Tea, Lockyer only

5th May *J Bowman/J Wright*

12th May *J Thompson*

19th May *S Wood*

26th May *J Dunbar*

Please swap with someone if you are unable to take your turn and inform Lisa at the office of the change. Thank you to those willing to take part, helping to make services run smoothly.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: This is the last space I fill before heading to the office to do the printing so before being side-tracked with other issues, I would like to underline Lisa’s plea for any updates for the Region Directory. Communication with one another is important so please let Lisa know of any additions, or corrections that need to be made, before it is too late. She would also like to draw people’s attention to the selection of bibles and religious books, in the foyer (York St side) or in the office during opening hours. Purchase is by donation so have a look. I am tempted to suggest that a book swap could be a good idea but the practicality of that is something that would need to be brought up at a Council meeting. Clare Ferry

nature. We might learn to protect ourselves and develop a sufficiently mature world community to this end. Life is always going to be a challenge, constantly changing, and bringing grace as well as destruction. We do need analogies and metaphors if we want to share some of our thoughts about God. But we should be careful not to make God into some super human, and in doing so, take the divinity, the holiness, out of God. God is not a puppet of the human mind.

World religions often suggest that God is one, and that community is not far away from the essence of the divine. In Buddhism, the community is essential. In Islam the community of followers is the heart of the religion, with a strong focus on the one God. In polytheism, the divine is imagined as a richly diverse community. In Christianity, the image of the Trinity suggests that somehow, God is one *and* a community at the same time. At Pentecost (19th May this year) we will celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. The divine Spirit of the one God, flows through us at an unimaginably subtle depth, bringing life to the body of Christ, the community of believers. We reflect this divine presence most when we act in genuine community with all its individuality and diversity.

So, when faced with natural disasters, maybe we need to ask a different question than “Why, God?” We need not to have been on this earth very long to learn that life is a mixture of tragedy and pleasure. A better question might be, “Will we ever become trusting enough to move beyond our petty personal passions and make the world a real community?”

We could ask the same question about the countless children being killed or wounded in wars across the globe. This horror exists because we have not matured enough to create a global community that truly serves the welfare of children. This is a theological issue.

We still operate under the infantile illusion that the various religions are competing, and we defend convictions set in concrete, or our

anxious beliefs, with everything we can use.

We profess religions that are ninety percent ideology, full of “me, me, me”, and in the face of this pseudo religion, create a materialistic society, which per definition, is incapable of true community. God is not responsible for the suffering on and of our planet. We are. Compared to our learning in almost all other areas, our notions of religion are childish. Religion is not a club of like-minded people. It is a way of being, that notices the profound mystery of life, with all its contradictions and paradoxes. Religion is a way of life in which we make a serious effort to look past our own individual person, discovering that God is love – the kind of love manifested in community.

Blessings, Corina

BITS FROM BARKER:

Following our Service of Worship and a shared lunch, we held our Annual General Meeting last Sunday. All members who currently attend services were present, with only Carolyn, Milly and Eileen absent. We didn't ask Corina to come as we felt it was too much to expect her to travel up for what was expected to be a short meeting. They still belong to the congregation, but Milly and Eileen are not well enough to come to church now and Carolyn is still in Queensland.

We met to discuss our future plans for the Plantagenet Congregation and decided to continue as we are, while we are able to. The Office Bearers remain the same as previously.

The monthly service at Overton Aged Care was well attended. We were given the Centre Newsletter which featured thanks to Nita and myself for conducting the service, which was appreciated by us, and it has been placed on our church notice board.

Valerie paid a visit to Mt Barker the week following Easter and she offered to give Nita a rest from playing for our Service on the Sunday. This was appreciated by us all and especially by Nita.

collaborations, so we have our own pipeline for developing our direction, which we'll be discussing on Thursday 2 May. It may seem we're taking a long time but what little we have to invest in it must be done carefully, lest we waste resources and the trust and interest that is growing.

What does that mean for you? Many skills will be needed. Whether they be physical strength or presence at events, donations, speaking, writing, art or music skills, cooking, flowers from your garden, historic knowledge, or simply encouraging others. I recall one of Paul's epistles in which he urged them to use whatever gifts they had for the greater good. If a 104-year-old can give me the motivation to improve, then surely we all have something to offer. We've started a database of our volunteers, so get in touch and we can work out the best way for you to be involved. Please take note of the busy event schedule coming up, not only in Wesley but further afield as well. We don't just want hire fees – with happiness and skill development, a rising tide lifts the boat.

Music coming up at Wesley:

It's that time of year when there's something for everyone!

20th – 23rd May – [Albany Eisteddfod](#)

24th May: [Showcase Concert](#)

25th May: [The Quiet Space with Singer and Guitarist Tony King](#)

29th May: [Faure's Requiem with Albany Choral Society conducted by Adam James Cook, with soloists Shamara de Tissera and Rusty Lynch](#)

In the Wider Community: **4th MAY:** [Cushion Concert for Kids](#), Albany City Wind Ensemble, **11th May:** [The New World](#), Albany Sinfonia and about FACE Youth Choir, **from 10th May:** [“We Will Rock You”](#) Albany Light Opera and Theatre Company, **31st May to 2nd June:** [Denmark Festival of Voice](#), **22nd June:** [The Lion King](#), Albany Children's Theatre

Got something to share? Events outside Albany? Gear free to good home? Send them over and we'll help where we can!

Remember – No Quiet Space in June. Join us for Faure's Requiem instead!

Seb Harris, Music coordinator

Wesley Music News – May

First of all, congratulations to Albany Chamber Orchestra for a superb concert on 19th and 20th April at Wesley. A good crowd attended to hear some of Albany's best classical musicians take us through a striking variety of music.



It was also fantastic to see the “development pipeline” happening before our eyes, with our long-term local professional musicians continuing to offer advanced students the chance to play in this high-standard ensemble, whether school-aged or mature-aged. We even saw a father join his daughter on stage while her mother pitched in at the door, and participants continued to come from across the Region.

We also hope you were able to join us for The Quiet Space on Saturday 27th April with rock/jazz/blues guitarist Ross Dwyer. Ross has since written to confirm that like us he's “pumped” about the event. It's ironic that on this occasion we have to contain our excitement to make sure our growing following can enjoy their own company, and not have to think about the music. Thanks to those who gave us feedback on the last event – every comment helps us to measure how well we're doing.

The May Quiet Space will also be a guitarist and singer, but of a very different kind. This diversity is part of making Wesley Music as appealing and flexible as possible for everyone. I personally think of Jesus who seemed to teach us not to discriminate against people on account of their profession, their past, their means or anything else. He set us the example to love and serve everyone.

On that subject, we've started to receive enquiries from near and far about Wesley Music, whether just about a Perth choir hiring a space for a recording, Denmark songwriters asking to play at The Quiet Space or expressions of interest from hip hop artists for ongoing

Doug continues to keep up with any maintenance issues that arise, for which we are most grateful.

Blessings, Sue Wilson

LOCKYER NEWS:

Easter has come and gone as have the eggs and chocolate. The biggest excitement was having Alistair finding us a miracle man to clean the carpets. The downside is that I'm now scared to walk on them, we all need wings. Otherwise, it's been a very quiet month so I'll leave you with a prayer from Spurgeon;

Oh, to have one's soul under heavenly cultivation,
no wilderness, but a garden of the Lord,
walled around by grace,
planted by instruction,
visited by love,
weeded by heavenly discipline,
and guarded by divine power.
One's soul thus favoured
is prepared to yield fruit
to the glory of God.

Are you praying Spurgeon's prayer?.

Cheers, Joan



PRAYER PROMPTS: Please continue to keep Allan and Judy in your prayers and also John Archer who is having eye problems. Pray for those who have lost loved ones recently, particularly thinking of Carole Faulks’ family and also those families having to come to terms with the loss of loved ones recently killed in motor accidents and in the dreadful stabbing attacks in Sydney. Pray too for farmers suffering from adverse weather conditions, too dry for many and floods for others, depending on where they live.

SHOEBOX SNIPPETS: Thanks to all who helped on the last Bargain Bonanza stall and to those who supplied goods, we raised \$337.90. We raise funds at the monthly Scots markets as well, at least until Scots is sold.

Thanks to those who have noted our needs and added to our supplies. We now have enough undies for this year but still need marbles, tennis balls, small dinky-type toys, toothbrushes and soap. Keith is still making his beautiful little wooden toys which we put in the 2 – 4 boxes. Many thanks to those who have knitted the little balls which also go in the 2 – 4 boxes. We now have enough of those as well.

The next **Bargain Bonanza fund-raiser** will be on **9th June**, so keep that in mind when sorting through cupboards and storage boxes and let me know in good time if you need me to collect anything.

For your interest I have included a segment from this year’s Samaritan’s Purse Newsletter on the work they are doing in Cambodia to improve the education facilities, equipment and materials, upgrading existing schools and building new ones. This is one of the countries WA sends our boxes to. God bless, Edith

Building Hope in Remote Cambodia:

Dear friend, it’s been nearly 40 years since the Khmer Rouge seized power in Cambodia, brutally executing thousands of teachers and leaving a generation of young adults who were mostly illiterate and

vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation. I've visited Cambodia several times, and I'm always impressed by how much the people I meet value education for the sake of their children and their future. Samaritan's Purse has been working for decades in Cambodia where we've built 46 schools, many of them in neglected and impoverished villages. Last year, thanks to the generosity of Australian and New Zealand supporters like you, Samaritan's Purse was able to build new buildings for 3 schools. In the coming year, our ANZ office has taken the leadership to build 2 new schools and a church in western Cambodia, near the mountainous border with Thailand, in a province that once was a stronghold for the Khmer Rouge. Our schools are designed to bless the entire community as we include wells, water filters and latrines to improve public health. We equip students with backpacks filled with supplies they need in class and these schools bring hope to a forgotten community such as Pailin which endured conflict until as recently as 1997 and remains haunted by active landmines. Collapsed healthcare and social infrastructure has given way to disease and drug epidemics. Sadly, assistance remains impeded by the region's remote location but from the start of 2024 a 6-year program has been implemented to further address the developmental needs in Pailin, including two additional schools, literacy and STEM programs, and workshops on Safe Migration and Trafficking Awareness implemented through the schools. Thank you for your prayers and gifts which makes it possible

for us to work in places like Cambodia in the name of Jesus Christ.

Sincerely,
Franklin Graham

