



Parish Newsletter: July 18th 2021

Dear Friends,

The resurgence of COVID has impacted people in a variety of ways. Anxiety & fear has become for many the 'background

emotion'. Compassion & love have been called upon, as we abide by restrictions & get vaccinated for the benefit of others, as much as ourselves. COVID's local resurgence has also aroused anger in some. Increased frustration has seen people angrily correct others for failing to comply. Attitudes to government action (& inaction) has a 'raised tone'. Anger has noticeably bubbled to the service.

The Scriptures are more nuanced about anger than we might realise. Anger is not – in & of itself – sinful. God Himself is angry & never sins. In fact, He's angry at sin – but slow even then (Exodus 34v6 'The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness'). It follows that God commends a form of anger within us. We read in our NIV translations 'In your anger do not sin' (Ephesians 4v26). Other translations capture better the sense of the original: 'Be angry and do not sin' (ESV). Righteous anger is commendable. Injustice & suffering should rile us. But even when riled, we must maintain godly anger.

Christopher Ash explodes a series of myths about anger. I share two to get started (with more to follow in coming weeks). Reflect on them prayerfully, asking God to give you a righteous, loving anger.

Myth #1: Anger is evil. "He was an angry man." If you were to start a funeral tribute like that, there might be raised eyebrows! We naturally associate anger with a bad temper, malice, hitting out at others, and with raised voices and swinging fists. We live in an angry world, and most of it is obviously destructive. It breaks families, fractures societies, and threatens peace. But anger is not intrinsically evil, essentially evil, or necessarily evil. There is such a thing as pure anger, good anger, necessary anger, holy anger. Most of the Bible's teaching about anger focuses on the wrath, or settled anger, of God, both in the Old Testament and equally in the New (for we must not be fooled by the nonsense that the angry God of the Old Testament is different from the loving God of the New).

The anger of God is settled, consistent, aroused purely by evil, utterly fair, clearly forewarned, with good as its consistent goal. It is based upon perfect knowledge, not only of actions and words but of the depths of the heart. It is a necessary outworking of his holy love for the world he has made. It finds its most dramatic expression on earth in the righteous anger of Jesus Christ who raged against hardness of heart (Mark 3:1–5), against hypocrisy (Matt. 23), against sin and death which spoils a good world (John 11:33, 38) and when his Father's honour is insulted (John 2:13–17). In the anger of Jesus we see what human anger could be a spotless, white-hot virtue of hatred for all that is evil.

This myth is nearly true, for our human anger is always mixed with sin and often filled with selfishness and malice. But our anger is a distortion—as sin characteristically is—of something that in essence is good and true. The psalmist knew this (Ps. 119:53); John the Baptist showed it (Matt. 3:7); and Jesus fulfilled it.

Myth #2: Anger is harmless as long as I don't act on it. Surely, says someone, it doesn't matter if I feel angry—and I am speaking of wrong anger here. We all feel angry from time to time. If I don't hit out with actions, surely no harm is done. Is it? Well, it is, and we have Jesus against us if we say this. But this is a subtle mistake, and I want to unpack why it's wrong. Sure, there is a difference between feeling angry, speaking angrily, and acting in anger. In one very obvious sense murder is worse than angrily wishing somebody dead; in the one case they end up dead, in the other they don't. The outcome is different! So when Jesus, expounding on the sixth commandment, says, "everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment" (Matt. 5:22) he is, presumably, not denying that. His point—which is the same as what he says about lust and adultery (Matt. 5:28)—is that my heart is the seedbed for my words and actions. An angry heart can never be confined to an angry heart; always, one way or another, at one time or another, it overflows into words and deeds (as does a lustful heart or a greedy heart). Our actions and words spring from within us (Mark 7:14–23); they shape our character and our lives; and therefore, our hearts render us guilty before God. To say that sin in the heart doesn't matter is disastrous.

May God grant us to be angry and not sin.

In Him, Mark Smith

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Wiradjuri people.

On this land they taught their children their beliefs, knowledge and culture and we pay our respect to them as we seek to do the same for our children. As we gather on these ancestral lands, we also acknowledge our God and heavenly Father who made the heavens and the earth, and to whom we are responsible for the current stewardship of this land that has been entrusted to us.



Sermon notes:

Genesis 2v4-25 & Ephesians 5v25-33

Responding to God's Word in Practice:

1. HEAD: What did you learn?
2. HEART: What did God say to you?
3. HANDS: What will you do?

Keeping in Contact

Ministry contacts:

Senior Minister

Mark Smith 0430 393 414
mark.smith@lpachurch.org.au
Not Available Thursdays

Children's & Youth Minister

John Young 0418 610 655
john.young@lpachurch.org.au
Not Available Saturdays

Community Pastor (P/T)

James Barnes 0424 825 369
james.barnes@lpachurch.org.au
Not Available Saturdays

Wardens

Robert Hookham 0403 506 693
John Stevens 0438 473 862
Eric Young 0429 664 436

Parish Council

Sue Engeler 0431 101 476
Nick McKinney 0450 098 973
David Moffitt 0409 047 111
Bronwyn Webb 0416 189 960

Pastoral contacts

(Growth Group leaders)

Peter Avery 6352 3059
Julie Barnett 6352 2553
James Barnes 0424 825 369
Erica Debeuzeville 0466 994 741
Andrew Doran 0466 734 110
Ralph Fairbairn 0400 302 901
Jill Hookham 0403 502 181
Philippe Reyter 6352 1803
Garry Roberts 0400 075 761
Julie Roberts 0429 911 643
Anna Smith 0424 340 687
Declan Smith 0474 231 223
John Stevens 0438 473 862

Ministry Teams & Leaders

Blessing Relationships (Julie Roberts): Seeking to strengthen relationships in our community (in church & beyond)

Mercy Ministry (George Auld): seeking to serve spiritual needs by meeting physical & emotional difficulties.

Reaching Out (James Barnes): Seeking to make disciples of Jesus from this town & the world.

Youth & Children's (John Young): seeking to make youth & children in our town & church disciples of Jesus

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St. Paul's: Railway Parade, Lithgow • St Thomas': Commens St, Wallerawang • St. Stephen's: Williwa St, Portland

Word of encouragement: Youth & Children's ministry

Term 3 launch (John Young)

I hope and pray that the school holidays have been a blessing to you all and that you are looking forward to growing closer to our saviour Jesus in the days, weeks, months ahead. Please be praying for our ministry as a church to young people. I know that is a poor sentence but the intent is; 'praying' - as in, continually and ongoing. 'Our ministry as a church' - as in, this is not just specific programs that run but the way we **all** minister, pray for, talk to, love, protect and, most importantly, share Jesus with young people. Sharing the good news of Jesus with young people is of vital importance. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Therefore, young people (well, all people really), need Jesus. So let's as a church do all we can to share Jesus with them. For Term 3 we plan to run the following programs with the purpose of sharing Jesus with young people. But my hope and prayer is that these programs are just the tip of the iceberg in our church's ministry to young people. Please do keep these programs and leaders in your prayers.

Sunday Ministries

KFJs Our leaders are: Geoff Ogg, Matilda Smith, Adelaide Smith. KFJs is for children for ~3years old through to yr2 at school. KFJs is great fun with songs, videos, games, craft, memory verses and all sorts of age specific ways of sharing Jesus. We use a curriculum called 'The Gospel Project' which is a great resource and works through the whole bible in about a 3 year cycle.

Tic Tacs Our Leaders are: Jill Hookham, Lauren Hookham, John Young. Tic Tacs is aimed at children in yr3 to yr6. Tic Tacs is full of enthusiasm and loads of fun. We love getting to know each other better and getting to know Jesus better. We enjoy praying together, reading the Bible together and acting out stories from the Bible. We've also developed a love for playing dodge ball - but truth be told I think KFJs have beaten us more often this year.

Portland Kid's Church Our Leaders are; Julie Roberts, Katie Barnes, James Barnes, Toni Dean, Sharyn Hewitt, John Young.

What can I say about Portland Kid's Church? Well, it's in Portland, it's for kids and runs during our 3pm church service. We use the same CEP curriculum that Tic Tacs uses to guide our study of the Bible but utilise the various gifts and personalities of the leaders who serve on a rotating roster. We've enjoyed all sorts of games, cooking, craft, music, drama, all sorts of things to grow closer to Jesus.

In 2021 all of our Sunday programs have been blessed to have new people come along. Please pray that they'd keep coming because we love having them with us. But please pray even more importantly that each child and their families would know Jesus and how wonderful He is.

SRE (School Scripture)

We are blessed to be able to share Jesus with so many young people every week in their various schools. We are blessed to have wonderful teachers who've trained up and got accredited to teach SRE in 6 of our local primary schools. All our teachers teach the CEP material that has been approved by our diocese and the department of education. The schools and teachers are as follows;

Cullen Bullen – Janet Baker

Portland Infants and Primary – Janet Baker, Katie Barnes

Wallerawang Public School – Janet Baker (3x years 3-4), John Young (2x years 5-6)

Cooerwull Public School – Peter Avery (years 3-4), John Young (years 1-2 & 5-6)

Lithgow Public – Gaye Avery (kindy), Toni Dean (years 1-2), Peter Avery (years 3-4), Janet Baker (year 6)

Zig Zag Public School – Jill Hookham (primary)

Glow (Kids club for K-6) Our leaders are; Sophie Young, Sam Doran, Tracy Staines, Andrew Doran, Scott and Tiarne Hookham, John Young. Glow runs on a Friday evening for children in K-6. It's a great place for young people to come along, bring their friends for loads of fun and an opportunity to hear about Jesus. With a great mix of children, some familiar with church and some not so much, Glow provides an easy invite and an awesome opportunity.

One (Youth Group yr6 – yr 12 ages) Our leaders are; Matt Dickson, Laura Dickson, Lauren Hookham, Lise Hodgkinson, Mel Hatte, John Young. One is our joint Baptist and Anglican youth group.

Personally 'One' is one of my highlights of the week and I'm told many of the youth feel the same. With a great group of young people who love Jesus, care about each other and have so much fun being together, it is hard not to enjoy it. At One we love playing games, laughing, getting to know Jesus through the Bible, praying together and building each other up as disciples of Jesus.

Please do pray for those involved in the above programs: children, youth and the leaders. But pray too for the many young people in our area who as yet don't know Jesus. Pray that we (as a church) will be able to share Jesus with them. For you, maybe that is befriending the family in your street, or helping out a sporting team, maybe it's reading the Bible with your grandchildren, it could even be as simple as inviting someone you know to attend one of the above programs.

OUR VALUES



GROWING AS CHRIST'S
DISCIPLE-MAKING
DISCIPLES



DEVOTION TO
PRAYER & STUDYING
THE BIBLE



INVESTING DEEPLY
IN CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP



SEEKING JUSTICE
THROUGH LOVING
SERVICE

Prayer Points

Sunday - Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things, graft in our hearts the love of your Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and so by your mercy keep us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Monday - Praise God for His skill, power & creativity in creation. Praise Him that His New Creation will be even more glorious.

Tuesday - Confess your sins to the Lord, knowing nothing can exhaust His love for you. Confess both the sin you've done & the good you've failed to do.

Wednesday - Remember those in leadership positions – especially in this time of COVID. Give thanks for their willingness to serve by taking responsibility. Pray that God might grant them wisdom & grace.

Thursday - Give thanks for our church family. Pray that this complex time wouldn't diminish our desire to know, serve & proclaim Jesus.

Friday - Reflect on what the value 'Growing as Christ's disciple-making disciple' means for you. Let your reflection lead you to gratitude & prayer.

Saturday - Intercede for those you know in difficulty: physically, emotionally & (especially) spiritually. Remember those who are wandering from the Lord & pray the Good Shepherd would bring them back.

Sunday - Almighty God, whose never-failing providence governs all things in heaven and earth: we humbly ask you to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us whatever may be profitable for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Notices

Extension of the latest COVID restrictions. We continue to adjust, week to week, with the recent COVID restrictions. It's realistic to expect the tighter limits to continue for a few weeks more. For us it means:

- *No singing whatsoever.*
- *Mandatory wearing of masks inside the church building.* If you haven't brought your own, disposable masks are available at the entrance.
- *Limited seating.* At Lithgow our capacity is 60, & Portland is 27. We are again required to sit in front of place-cards. Because sitting in pairs puts the distancing 'out' with those in the surrounding rows, we ask for your grace to sit 'alone'. It's an act of grace to come early, fill from the front & let the ushers guide you to a seat.

Pray for swift relief & that we might bear with one another in love throughout this.

'Split Church' & Children's ministry. Consider the restrictions above, we sadly had to turn folk away from church last Sunday. To do so is painful – the opposite of Jesus, who says 'come to me'. As such we are returning to Sunday children's ministry entirely in the hall (no longer having time where we are all together in the church building at 10am & 3pm). Parents are invited to take their children to the hall for KFJs, TicTacs & Portland Kids Church – before coming into church themselves. Our expectation is this will create space for more to meet 'in-person'.

Youth & Children's ministry. All youth & Children's ministry are returning from Sunday 18th July (KFJs, Tic Tacs & Portland Kids church) & Friday 23rd (Glow & ONE). Pray for God to work powerfully amongst these ministries - & SRE (returning when school resumes)

Spiritual Care Series. The Spiritual Care Series is designed to empower Christians for aged care ministry, helping people as they confront life's key questions. At every point it reflects the Bible's truth, as well as God's love and concern for older people.

When you complete the course, you'll be equipped with a range of skills designed to help older people ponder their personal spiritual journey and assist them in discovering pathways to meaningful ageing. There will be opportunities for participants to volunteer with HammondCare at Home or Uniting.

6:30pm – 8:30pm starting 20th September 2021 for eight weeks

Cost \$50 includes 180 page workbook, postage and handling

St Pauls Anglican Church: Railway Parade and Roy Street Lithgow

For more details contact: Suzanne Kissell on 0458 297 160 or

skissell@hammond.com.au

Newsletter availability. With many keeping from gathering, feel free to take extra newsletters & drop them to those housebound. Boxes on the church doors also have newsletters with a service outline & script of the sermon.

Direct Giving details

Account Name: ANGLICAN PARISH of LITHGOW DIRECT GIVING

BSB - 062591 Account No. – 10085204

At the bank - Use the above details to make a deposit at the bank (CBA)

Cheque - Send to PO Box 192 Lithgow, NSW, 2790

In person – COVID safety prevents us passing the offertory bag, but you are welcome to put your giving in the box at the back of church each Sunday.

Groups that we are able to pass your giving on to:

Some choose to give through us to others (by marking their giving). We can do this for the following groups: AFES; Anglican Aid; Anglicare; Arise; BCA; CAP; CMS (Newbys); Fresh Food; LCEA; Open Doors; MAF (Hadfields); Pioneers (Blair); Winter Appeal; Nungalinga College