



# Peel Valley Congregation

Gowrie, Hallsville & West Tamworth

14 July 2024

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## Mark 6:14-29 (NLT)

### John the Baptist Beheaded

<sup>14</sup> King Herod heard about this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

<sup>15</sup> Others said, "He is Elijah."

And still others claimed, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago."

<sup>16</sup> But when Herod heard this, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!"

<sup>17</sup> For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married.

<sup>18</sup> For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

<sup>19</sup> So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, <sup>20</sup> because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.

<sup>21</sup> Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee.

<sup>22</sup> When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you."

<sup>23</sup> And he promised her with an oath, "Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom."

.....continued

## Mark 6:26-29 (NLT)

<sup>24</sup> She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?"

"The head of John the Baptist," she answered.

<sup>25</sup> At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

<sup>26</sup> The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her.

<sup>27</sup> So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison,

<sup>28</sup> and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother.

<sup>29</sup> On hearing of this, John's disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Do not look for luxury in watches or bracelets, do not look for luxury in forks or sails.

"Luxury is laughter and friends, luxury is rain on your face, luxury is hugs and kisses. Don't look for luxury in shops, don't look for it in gifts, don't look for it at parties, don't look for it at events.

Luxury is being loved by people, luxury is being respected, luxury is having parents alive,

luxury is being able to play with your grandchildren, luxury is what money cannot buy. ~ Clint Eastwood.

We must learn to live together as brothers or we will perish together as fools. ~ Martin Luther King



### IN OUR PRAYERS

- We pray for Beulah, who has undergone hip surgery after having a fall.
- We pray for Glenda who has severe hip and leg pain at the moment.
- We pray for the people of Ukraine who have been under such relentless attack.
- We also pray for the people of the Middle East, where political instability and military aggression are impacting the lives of millions of people.
- We thank God for His power in getting us through difficult situations.

### Meg's Musings

This week I watched a program in which Maggie Beer began tackling changes to the menu in an aged care home in Perth.

Whilst the food provided was nutritionally "adequate", it was unappealing, and residents often left large amounts on their plates.

There were discussions with residents about what they would enjoy - more flavour!

They also said that they would like more input - to be able to serve themselves, or even to make a batch of scones to share.

The outdoor areas were also less than inspiring, so residents remained indoors.

The chef was willing to adapt to new ideas. The major change was to rely less on commercial packets, and to begin from scratch, with fewer additives, fresh herbs, and an updated menu.

The point was that everyone needs to have things to look forward to - time with loved ones, tasty meals, spending time in a garden.

We, as Christians, also have something to look forward to. When our earthly life has ended, we'll get time in God's presence - free of pain and the powers of sin.

*Blessings from Meg*



No one tells the oceans or the trees or the mountains that they're too old. They talk of how powerful, how grounded, how awesome they are...imagine if we thought the same way about ourselves as we got older. Maybe then we'd realize how spectacular we are! ~ anon



### Words from Rev Geoff

#### God Chooses us in Christ

Paul's Letter to the Ephesians is a wonderful book for any Christian to spend their devotional time with. It is just six chapters long. It can easily be read in one sitting. And it is filled with important insights on our Christian faith in broad terms, but also very specific teachings on how we are to live out our Christian faith. This Sunday our church lectionary begins a 7-week series on Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. So I thought it would be good to look at this opening passage from Ephesians today. Ephesians 1:3-14 is on long sentence in which Paul utters a wonderful blessing for all that God has done for us.

In fourteen verses Paul manages to include every significant topic of Christian theology. The Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Divine election. Redemption through Jesus' blood. The baptismal seal of the Holy Spirit. Salvation by grace alone. The doctrines of creation and providence. Eschatology. Faith. Sanctification. The proclamation of the gospel. It's all there.

And there is one more thing to notice. Throughout this list of theological topics, we human beings are all-but completely passive. God is the chief actor and is the subject of every active verb. What's more, those verbs are, in the original Greek, all in the past perfect tense, letting you know that these things are settled, done, accomplished once and for all.

Blessed be God because "God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world." Isn't that amazing? Even before the world was formed, God knew you. God had already planned to create you, and decided to have this amazing relationship with you. You and I have been chosen to be part of God's family. If we truly believe this then even when our plans for this life don't work out, we can fall back on this knowledge – that God has chosen us, and no choice of ours takes this away.

It is an amazing, freeing, truth, when we really embrace it.

Blessed be the God who has blessed us in Christ and chosen us to be a blessing to our world. Amen.

*Rev Geoff*



Years from now, after I'm gone, someone will listen to what I've done and know I was here. They may not know or care who I was, but they'll hear my guitars speaking for me." ~ Chet Atkins

## Ephesians 1:3-14 (NLT)

### Spiritual Blessings

<sup>3</sup> All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ.

<sup>4</sup> Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes.

<sup>5</sup> God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

<sup>6</sup> So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son.

<sup>7</sup> He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

<sup>8</sup> He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

<sup>9</sup> God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan.

<sup>10</sup> And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth.

<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.

<sup>12</sup> God's purpose was that we Jews who were the first to trust in Christ would bring praise and glory to God.

<sup>13</sup> And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago.

<sup>14</sup> The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.

### Other Lectionary Readings:

2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19 Psalm 24



## UCA Assembly

The 17th Assembly is the triennial decision-making meeting of the national council of the Uniting Church in Australia. Members worship together, form community, and discern where God's spirit is calling the Church.

The meeting runs from 11-16 July 2024 at Novotel Paramatta on Burrumattagal land in Western Sydney. It will feature the Installation of Rev Charissa Suli as President of the Uniting Church in Australia.

Proposals to be considered include:

- Affirmation for Transgender, Intersex and Non-binary People.
- Reception of The Confession of Belhar, Laudato si', and The Joint Declaration on the -
  - Doctrine of Justification as documents in the category of "Continuing Witness", which has
  - its roots in Paragraph 11 of the Basis of Union and its relationship to the historical
  - documents listed in Paragraph 10 of the Basis of Union.
- Establishment of a Covenant Revival Working Group.
- Net zero emissions.

You can keep up to date with the decisions of the assembly at <https://uniting.church/17thassembly>

## CHURCH SERVICES

21 July 8:30am **Gowrie** ~ Meg Mangan

21 July 11:00am **West** ~ Meg Mangan

28 July 11:00am **West** ~ Graham Barwick



## Singing Group - West Tamworth

2nd & 4th Monday 10am

Followed by a cuppa and a chat.....



## Fabulous Finds Op Shop @ Hallsville

Open 9:30 to 1:00pm

Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays.

Cuppa & chat always available.



## PEEL VALLEY CONGREGATION

Our goal: "To be transformed communities, experiencing, enjoying & sharing the gift of the friendship of Jesus."

Mission: "Called to be Free, Gifted to Serve."

Minister: **Rev Geoff Flynn 0421 338 202**

Pastoral Care: **Meg Mangan 0476 375 989**

Elders: Margaret Crowell Darvl Lush

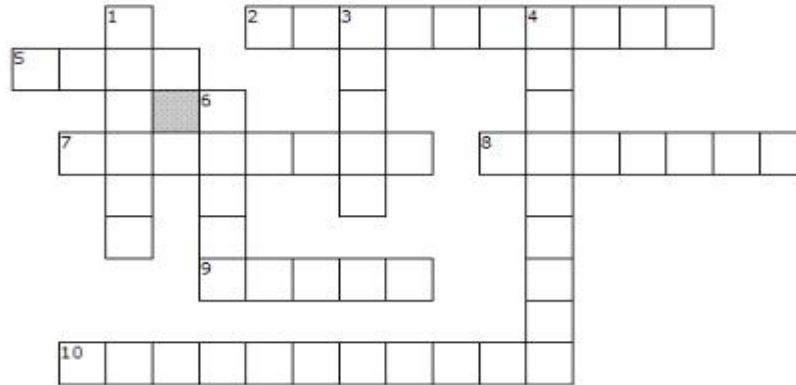


..... enjoy & share the gift of the friendship of Jesus

# He Has Chosen Us

His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure. Ephesians 1:5 (NLT)

Based on Ephesians 1:3-14 (NIV)



## ACROSS

2. Remaining the same
5. A proposed course of action
7. A considerate and thoughtful act
8. The ability to go wherever one chooses without restriction
9. To have confidence in someone or something; to depend on
10. Money or property left to children by their parents

## DOWN

1. A group of persons consisting of one or two parents and their children
3. To have selected something from several possibilities
4. Assurance that something will be done as promised; to make certain
6. To take into one's family and raise as one's own child

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

BELIEVE	SECRET	PLAN	PLEASURE	BLESSED
PRAISE	FAMILY	TRUST	SPIRITUAL	GUARANTEE
PURCHASED	PROMISED	CHOSE	INHERITANCE	KINDNESS
BELONG	ADOPT	FREEDOM	WISDOM	HEAVENLY