



21 FEBRUARY 2021

Please join us for worship on Facebook at 9 am on Sunday morning so we can all worship together.

Lectionary Readings

This Week February 21

Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
Mark 1:9-15
1 Peter 3:18-22

Next Week February 28

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9
Romans 4:13-25

Church Resumption

We are planning to return to worship in person on Sunday 7th March, assuming the Government regulations at the time will allow this. We will need to make some changes to how we worship to comply with the current Covid regulations, details of these changes will be discussed at Church Council this week and will be printed in next week's Grapevine.

World Day of Prayer Service

Each year Christians around the world come together on the first Friday in March to pray for the people of a particular nation and this year that nation is Vanuatu. The World Day of Prayer Service will be held on Friday 5th March at 10am at Merrylands Baptist Church.

The service will be followed by morning tea and the chance to catch up with people from the other churches in Holroyd.

Everyone is invited to come along but we need to pre-book so please let Sue know if you would like to attend so we can register as a church.

Vanuatu



Build on a Strong Foundation

World Day of Prayer 2021

www.worlddayofprayeraustralia.org



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The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus Mark 1:9-15

Our reading from Mark is the familiar story of Jesus' baptism and his temptation in the wilderness. Mark leaves out many of the details that Luke and Matthew have in their Gospels.

But that gives us a chance to dwell on the key concept of this story — the idea that Jesus was baptised and right after his baptism, he was led by the Spirit to be tempted. The baptism of Jesus is recorded in the Gospel Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Jesus' baptism was a crucial first step Jesus took as he began his ministry, an approximately three-year journey that would eventually lead him to the cross.

Baptism is something that has marked the response of people to Jesus for 2000 years. In the New Testament, every time someone started following Jesus, they were baptized.

There are many situations today in which we are asked to prove our Identity. Usually that means looking at our name, or a picture- what are our physical characteristics – our hair colour, eyes, shape of our faces. Going further it might include taking fingerprints, digital eye recognition or our DNA. But is that all we are? Is that our identity? Or is it about what we 'do'? Some people think intelligence is the main feature that identifies us.

Identity can be a bit shaky and at times dangerous because it affects our self-esteem, and it can be easily damaged. It is about physical features and name and family and culture and origins. But there are a lot of people still not sure who they really are and who they matter to despite knowing all the facts about those other things.

At the baptism of Jesus God says: 'You are my son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.' (Mark 1:11) His identity is established in a sentence.

Then we read 'At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert and he was in the desert for forty days, being tempted by Satan'.

Mark does not tell us all the details of what the temptations were. He does not talk about stones and bread and kingdoms of the world and Jesus being tempted to throw himself down and see if God would catch him.

Why would Jesus go right into being tempted right after His baptism?

Well, if Christ's baptism revealed His identity then His temptation would have been about whether Christ would hold onto his identity as belonging to God and God loving him when things were tough.

Grace and Peace- Hani.