

DAILY PRAYER POINTS

SUNDAY – There is a reason the Lord has brought you to this new week. Pray that He will shine brightly through you so that everyone that comes across you this week may know His presence in you and be blessed by your words and actions.

MONDAY – Thank God for the strength and ability to serve Him each day through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit. Pray that we'll all know God's blessing and strength in serving the Lord with joy and thankfulness.

TUESDAY – Thank God that we have '*redemption through his blood*', '*the forgiveness of sins*' (Eph.1:7); '*the promised Holy Spirit... guaranteeing our inheritance*' (Eph.1:13); And '*access to the Father*'. (Eph.2:8)

WEDNESDAY – Ask God to help Session and the Committee of Management as we prayerfully plan for the future of St Andrew's during an uncertain time within the PCQ and Australia, as a whole.

THURSDAY – Pray for Ennam and Linda Ukor & David Valintine

FRIDAY – Continue to pray for those in need of God's healing and comforting hand: Belinda Birch, Edith Collins, John Donnell, Jane Kippin, Kevin Petrofski Jr and Margaret Petrofski, and Dawn Robinson. **Pray also for blessings on those who can't get to church:** Audrey Armstrong, Del Finn, Carol Gillett, Joey Kelly, Gladys Marnock, Millie McCarthy, Heather McGaw, Marie McKee, Mavis Smith, and David Valintine.

SATURDAY – Give thanks that in all circumstances our Heavenly Father knows our needs and supplies them richly to us in His Son and His Spirit.

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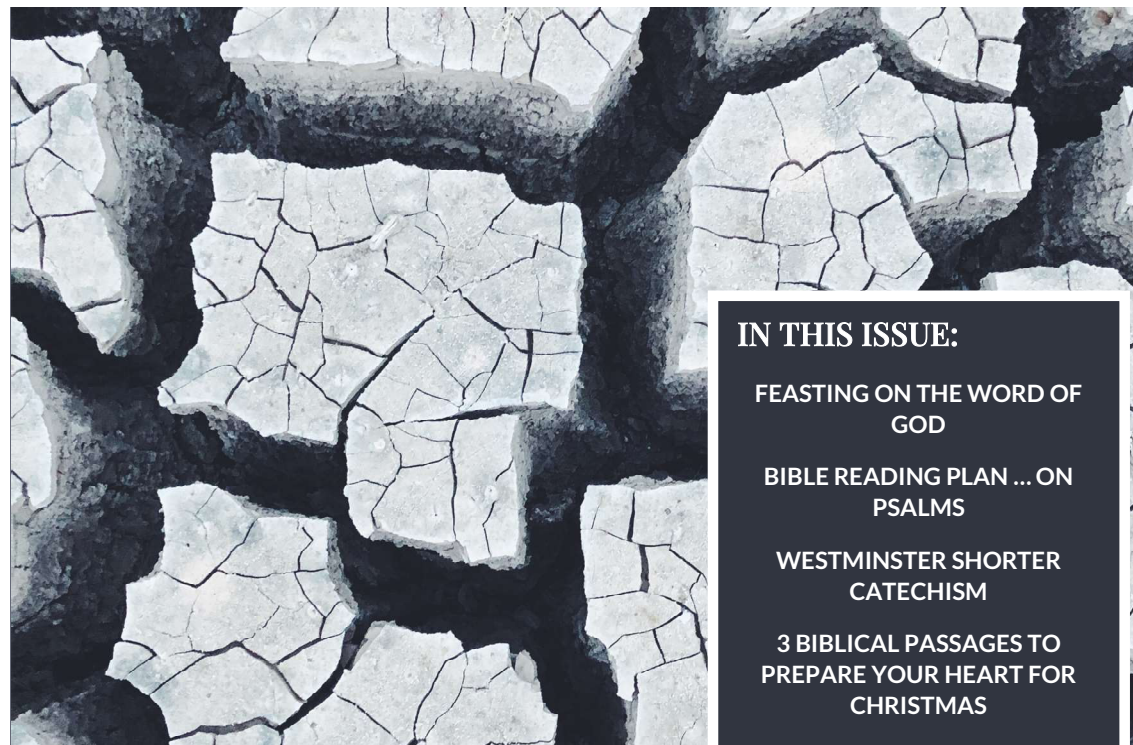
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THE ANCHOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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DAILY PRAYER POINTS

FEASTING ON THE WORD OF GOD

BY PETER BARNES

OFTEN WE FIND THAT WORKS ON HISTORY MANAGE TO INCORPORATE THE WORD 'CRISIS' INTO THEIR TITLES. One does not have to read many such books before it seems that all of human history has been a series of crises – only the names have changed, and some details, but that is all. In the eighth century B.C. the prophet Amos saw a crisis was imminent: 'Behold, the days are coming,' declares the Lord God, 'when I will send a famine on the land – not a famine of bread, nor a



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thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it' (Amos 8:11-12). His near-contemporary, Hosea, sounded the same alarm: 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me, and since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children' (Hos.4:6).

The crisis of the eighth century B.C. looks rather like the crisis of the twenty-first century. It is not uncommon for people who are not sure how many genders there are to

mock the Bible as the fountainhead of all superstition. Those who think the universe somehow created itself regard this as science while the evidence of design and creation is dismissed as not worthy of investigation. People will seriously suggest that the fact that there are so many translations means that the Bible must have been radically changed over the centuries – as if translators only translated from previous translations. Youngsters who cannot spell 'New Testament' are sure that it can be safely dismissed, or even that Jesus never existed as an historical figure.

This is a famine of the Word in modern Australia – indeed across the whole Western world. In Elijah's day – a century before the days of Hosea and Amos – the situation was not quite as bad as Elijah himself believed (1 Kings 19:14-18). The stance of the jeremiads may be overdone, but at times there is a strong case for regarding them as wildly optimistic.

While the experts on Q&A reject the Bible, even more disturbing is the prevalence of distortion and evasion within the professing Church. Self-proclaimed evangelicals can identify an apostate theology as suitable for a certain section of the wildly diverse body of Christ. In that way we can relate

BEHOLD YOUR KING! By CALVIN J. TUININGA

*"... one like a son of man ... the hairs of his head were white like wool...his eyes were like a flame of fire...from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength."
– Revelation 1:13ff*

Jesus first reveals Himself to John, and to us, so that we may know Him Who works in all things for the good of those who love Him. John turns to see Jesus. He sees a sight that sends him to his knees! Jesus, the son of man, is robed in royal apparel. He is God Almighty! His face is an explosion of blinding light and glory. His eyes are like blazing fire, penetrating everywhere, all seeing, and filled with wrath against all that is unholy. From His mouth comes a double-edged sword, one that pierces heart and soul and leaves no sinner standing. His feet, before which we kneel, are burnished bronze, used to cleanse the world of sin and wickedness. His voice demands attention, like the ever-rolling sea demands our respect.

Here He stands, victorious and supreme in glory. In His hands are seven stars, which are the messengers to the churches. He is standing among candlesticks, representing the churches of Jesus Christ.

What a glorious comfort this is. This King, once humbled before Pilate, His face smeared with blood, strength failing, of Whom the governor said, "Behold the Man!" and Who was then crucified, we here see risen, governing His churches, caring for them and His messengers. While we may be afraid of His appearance, hear His words of comfort, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive forevermore!" Behold your King!

Pray that the Lord God, would reveal Himself to us that we might know Him in all His glory, and be comforted by His sovereign power and merciful presence in the church.



knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. - ROMANS 5:1-5

Peace and hope are hijacked at Christmas, morphing into elusive concepts found beside crackling fires with steaming cups of hot cocoa in hand. Don't mistake me—I love the Christmas ambience as much as the next girl, but how much more precious are these momentary glimpses of peace and hope when we recognize the ultimate reality to which they point? Christ, the Prince of Peace, came to earth to make peace between God and man. And that peace is the only source of hope that won't ultimately leave us ashamed. Even as we rejoice in Christmas gifts and goodies, we look beyond these earthly joys to the true happiness that awaits. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

"Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." - MATTHEW 11:28

Whether it's the frenetic pace of the season, the expectation pile-up, or the pressure surrounding family gatherings, gift-giving, and end-of-year deadlines, this month that's meant to be merry and bright is often weighty and wearying. But that's the point, really. The weary world can rejoice: To a people weighed down by their efforts, inabilities, sin, and shame, this gentle and lowly Savior comes, offering a yoke that is easy and light. May you find your rest in him this Christmas.



to one another in a winsome way. Bishops who cannot affirm that marriage is for one man and one woman perform contortions to demonstrate how this fits in with Jesus' loving approach to all humanity.

Christians need to be assured that the Bible as the Word of God is sufficient (e.g. Prov.30:5-6), and does not require the latest sociological research to correct it. Furthermore, this Word is clear, like a lamp shining in a dark place (2 Pet.1:19). Zephaniah may be a struggle, and we may well understand why, after Calvin's death in 1564, his fellow pastor, Nicolas Colladon, let it out that Calvin never preached on the book of Revelation because he did not understand everything in it. Yet essentially the message of the Bible is as clear as any bright morning sun: we are sinners who cannot save ourselves from sin and death, but the God-man, Jesus Christ, has come to defeat sin and death for us. This word is not a timid suggestion but a powerful proclamation. Indeed, God's word shall not return to Him empty, but shall accomplish all that God has purposed for it (Isa.55:10-11). Many preach an anaemic reflection of the wisdom of the world, and tag some biblical references to it. They have their reward.

We are to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Deut.8:3; Matt.4:4). A complacent world and a compliant Church may be struggling with a famine of the word, but this need not be the case. God invites all to come and buy wine and milk without money and without price. We are to eat what is good, and delight ourselves in rich food (Isa.55:1-2). God is no niggardly host; He has provided far more than we need, and it is free to every sinner.

In commenting on Isaiah 26:6-9 on the glorious feast of the gospel, Richard Sibbes set himself a wonderful task: 'Now I will shew why Christ, with his benefits, prerogatives, graces and comforts, is



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compared to a feast'. The world offers spiritual malnutrition, and the compromising Church offers nothing different. Christ offers spiritual nourishment for life everlasting. Let us all feed on His word.



MONTH OF PSALMS

BIBLE READING PLAN

The psalms are the beautiful songs of the Hebrew people. Whether you're searching for a little sliver of peace amidst uncertainty or strength during a trying time you can find it in the Psalms.

WEEK 2 | ☐ Day 8 **Glory of God** Psalm 19, 24, 29 ☐ Day 9 **God Is a Helper** Psalm 54, 115, 119:169–176 ☐ Day 10 **Identity** Psalm 8, 139 ☐ Day 11 **Justice of God** Psalm 7, 26, 82 ☐ Day 12 **Meditation** Psalm 119:9–16, 41–48 ☐ Day 13 **Mercy** Psalm 13, 28, 86 ☐ Day 14 **Music** Psalm 6, 149, 150.

WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

The Westminster catechisms begin with the language of glorifying and enjoying God. *These Standards exist to explain in doctrinal terms how Scripture directs us to glorify and enjoy God in all we think, do, and say.* - Burk Parsons

QUESTION 106.

What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

A. In the sixth petition, which is, “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,*” we pray that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support us and deliver us when we are tempted.

QUESTION 107.

What does the conclusion of the Lord's prayer teach us?

A. The conclusion of the Lord's prayer, which is, “*For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*” teaches us to take our encouragement in prayer only from God, and in our prayers

to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power and glory to him. And in testimony of our desire and our assurance of being heard, we say *Amen*.

3 BIBLICAL PASSAGES TO PREPARE YOUR HEART FOR CHRISTMAS.

BY KENDRA DAHL

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.” - ISAIAH 9:6-7

This common Christmastime passage was written hundreds of years before the birth it foretold. While there are riches here to meditate on—the hope of Christ's peace and power, justice and righteousness—there is also great comfort in pondering its timing. Consider our faithful God, who made this promise and kept it: “When the fullness of time had come, [he] sent forth his Son ... to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons” (Gal. 4:4–5). As we look back at God's faithfulness to keep his promises, it enables us to look forward in hope. The one who didn't spare his own Son will graciously give us everything we need (Rom. 8:31).



Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings,