

**We are called to be evidence of  
God's love breaking into the world**

37-39 Coronation Avenue, Nambour QLD 4560

## **Rev Glenn Ingram - Minister's Message** **FROM EASTER TO PENTECOST AND BEYOND**

It was in the mid 1980's and perhaps something of the excitement of ministry filled me. I was visiting and a man somewhat older than myself confronted me with a question: 'So you're one of those high flyers are you?' I was stunned. What did he mean? No-one had said that to me before. So, I pleaded ignorance and he replied 'One of those blokes with his head in the clouds and feet nowhere near the ground.' I believe I got the message. I felt it didn't describe me but what's the point of arguing with someone who seemed to have his mind made up already. It did make me think though. The weeks leading up to Easter were challenging.

**It began with the call at Jesus' baptism.**

***"You are my Beloved Son with whom I am well pleased."***

**He received that call to be the Servant of the Lord and he often said,**

***"My food is to do the will of Him who sent me."***

**And in the garden, *'Not my will but yours be done.'***

Obedience to that call led to his crucifixion as well as much grief and disillusionment. However, it was the resurrection which took people by surprise. They were 'heady' days. Mary meeting Jesus at the tomb and the disciples meeting Christ in the Upper Room. Two others joined *'the party of the joyful'* in experiencing the Risen Christ as they sat down to eat after a day on the road. They appear weeks of excitement, learning and reflecting. Did they have their heads in the clouds? Were they like 'sky pilots?' I guess you could say they were because, when challenged as Christ ascended, we see them still staring into space. Suddenly however they were brought back to earth and the reality of life. An experience of the risen Christ has been a strong beginning in my walk with the Lord; but I found it only the beginning. Our feet are meant to be planted in life where people are.

What does my experience of Christ mean if I can't share with my neighbour? Or, what's it say to people if my children only see my bitterness and impatience? Mountain top experiences are real blessings but we do not live on mountain tops. We must come down to earth, for 'Faith without works is dead!' One of the possibilities I see ahead is putting in some time with a struggling family out west. The Uniting Church has many requests on their books for retired people to help where life can be very lonely and help is hard to come by. This is not a recruitment drive but something I feel I can perhaps be part of one day.

Opportunities for faith sharing often come but sometimes made more possible when helping a family get fences in order after a flood. Yet needs abound in our community right where we are here and we are some of the people God breathes his Spirit upon to empower us for ministry. or do I say to be servants of our Lord. By the time this is read Easter will be over and Ascension and Pentecost are not far ahead. Maybe it is a good time for all of us to ask, 'How do I see myself at my time in life being involved in the ministry of our Lord?' We know ministry always comes in many shapes and forms but is my food to do the will of Him who sent me?

# Pastor Margaret Niethe - Why Do You Wonder?

Have you ever wondered if the whole world has been affected by COVID -19; **and** the whole world has been! Could it just, might it be, God's way of getting our attention, to get us to try a different way of ministering and worshiping than the way we thought it was normal!.

For the first three Sundays after Easter, our readings in Acts depend on the story of the crippled man healed at the Beautiful Gate. Each reading refers back to this miraculous healing story, but never includes it. It's a story full of amazement, astonishment, and wonder. And yet, amazing as it is, the healing isn't what's important here.

The healing is simply a prompt to get our full attention. The real point of the story is Peter's sermon. Just like the first sermon Peter preached on Pentecost, the purpose of this second sermon is to point people to Jesus. These are people who have been amazed and astonished (2:7) by the events at Pentecost; we are told they were "perplexed" (2:12).

Now, a short time later, the people worshiping at the Temple are "filled with wonder and amazement" (3:10) to watch a crippled man dance. This was someone they'd seen every day for his entire life. He was part of the landscape – perhaps not even a real person in their minds, a part of the landscape. When Peter and John stop and look intently at this man, it might be the first eye contact he's had with anyone in years. His expectations are not very high – neither are the expectations of the people around him.

Do you often wonder why people you know just do the same thing day in and day out! Do you do the same thing day in day out? Do you often wonder why people you know do not seem to have any expectations for their lives?

When we see the same thing day in day out; the same house at the end of the street; the same tree that you walk by every day, we become numb expecting to see the same thing, the same tree or house, our expectations never wavier in fact they wane!

Just like the crippled man in the story of Acts, the man himself was ignored for so long that he had no expectations of any change in his circumstance at all! Until, someone stopped and looked, really looked at him, those that looked had the love of Jesus burning in their hearts and they raised the expectations; they believed! It's not the now walking leaping cripple that our author wants us to notice.

It's what happened next, when Peter *addressed the people*, "You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you....."

Why do miracles surprise us, if we say we believe in Jesus? Shouldn't we be anticipating – even *expecting* miraculous signs with some certainty? When Peter asks the crowd, "Why do you wonder at this?" he's really asking, "Why are you surprised that God is at work here? Did you think *we* had the power to do something like this?" And Peter uses the opportunity to redirect attention away from the crippled man leaping around the courtyard, to get it focused where it belongs: on Jesus, the Son of God.

The people gathered there in the Temple that day, may have been squirming a little at Peter's words. And we should be squirming, too. Because we are just as guilty as the crowds who cried out "Crucify him!"

We are just as responsible for Christ's suffering as those first century Jews who gathered around Peter in the Temple courtyard. Peter knows exactly how we feel. He denied even knowing Jesus three times. If anyone can feel our guilt, Peter can. "We are witnesses to all of this," he says. We know exactly who to blame.

The accusation from Peter is for us all - we have all crucified Christ, we are part of this act when we deny Christ, when we fail to give Jesus the rightful place in our lives, when we ignore the cry of the poor, homeless, sick and hurting.

Where and what are your expectations for our nation, our towns, our communities, our church, our families? What are the expectations for your life? Are you able to live a life in Christ that people notice, with such conviction that as Peter and John; are you ready to step out and find a new and different way of ministering and worshiping our one true God and saviour.

Celebrate with me in prayer:

This is what God has done; God has rescued us from the domain of darkness and brought us away to the kingdom of Christ the Son. And in you, Christ Jesus, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins. You are the beginning, the first-born from the dead, for God wanted all fullness to be found in you, all in heaven and all on earth, making peace through the blood of the cross.

**We praise you now and always, Amen.**

Blessings, Pastor Margaret

# DAILY PRAYERS

**DAY 1** - God of glory, we see you in the beauty of the universe, we meet you in the love of our friends and families, we find you in our joys and in our pain = faithful and true. We see you revealed to us in Scripture, we hear you speaking to us in the silence, we know you in our hearts, and we find you in the person of Jesus. As we look at the events in our world, help us to see where you are at work - in our homes and in our daily lives, help us to notice the glimpses of your glory shining through the ordinary fabric of our lives. *You are the God who comes close to us: Surround us with the light of your presence.*

**DAY 2** - God of glory, we live with so many uncertainties. Today we pray for people whose lives are always uncertain: for people in war torn parts of the world; for all who wonder where their next meal will come from; for people who are jobless or homeless; for all who are fleeing from domestic violence. Help us to make our churches sanctuaries of peace and safety. May we be ready to respond to the need of others and to do what we can to tell the story of the love that will never let us go, the love that can change us and the world. Help us to love one another as you have loved us. *You are the God who comes close to us: Surround us with the light of your presence.*

**DAY 3** - God of glory, we pray for situations in the world that need hope and healing. We ask for words and actions that are full of hope and not hate, of forgiveness and unity and not division. May we all be mindful of the power of our words, and use our speaking to build others up, not to tear them down. When conflict comes may our words be controlled and kind, and may we always shine a light of truth in the darkness of discord and lies. *You are the God who comes close to us Surround us with the light of your presence*

**DAY 4** - God of Glory - We pray for all who work in the media and communications that they would report with honesty and integrity, and that they would use their roles to speak truth to those in power. This week, may we seek to respond to the needs of others with messages, words and actions of hope and comfort. *You are the God who comes close to us: Surround us with the light of your presence.*

**DAY 5** - God of glory, we thank you for the tireless effort of nurses, doctors and consultants, caring for patients, especially those who are suffering from Covid-19. We ask that you would give all medical staff peace as they care for the sick, and peace as many of them wait at the bedside of those who are at the end of life. We pray that the needs of children and young people would also be central to the thinking and planning. We thank you that the ordinary tasks of routine, order and gentleness can bless the boundary between life and death. *You are the God who comes close to us: Surround us with the light of your presence*

**DAY 6** - God of glory, we pray for all who have been kept apart from those they love; for those who have not been able to mourn for friends and family who have died, and we pray especially for relatives of people in care homes – surround them all with your healing presence. We remember people in our own communities who are suffering asking that you would lighten the pain and distress of daily life. *You are the God who comes close to us: Surround us with the light of your presence.*

**DAY 7** - God of glory, open our eyes and open our hearts. Help us to see Jesus. Make us ready to receive and welcome all who come to us, so that they too 'may see Jesus' We give thanks for all the good things in our lives; for times of celebration, when we share our best and give of our best. We thank you for the one who had nothing, who rode into Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey. God of glory, we thank you for giving your all to include us in your love Change us and renew us by your Spirit. Make us more like Jesus *You are the God who comes close to us: Surround us with the light of your presence*

[With thanks to Roots Worship Resources to which our congregation subscribes.]

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF  
FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE**

This land on which we live and worship  
is God's land  
and God's Spirit dwells here.

We acknowledge the Kabi Kabi people,  
traditional custodians under God of the  
Sunshine Coast and its hinterland.

We pay our respects and pray for their  
elders and all their descendants.  
We are thankful that we can share with  
them in our community and nation.

We reaffirm our commitment to care for  
the land and participate in the reconciling  
journey, for God requires this of us.

# AT THE CROSS-ROADS



What is at the heart of our faith?  
What determines how we live out our faith?  
There would be no question that it is the cross.  
And if someone were to ask, what statement  
sums up the meaning of the cross, we could not  
go past John 3:16  
“For God so loved the world that he gave his  
only Son, so that everyone who believes in him  
may not die but have everlasting life.” (GNB)

Let us reflect again on this familiar verse, and  
have a closer look at its context. First, it is set  
in a passage from verse 16 to 21, which speaks  
of light coming into a world of darkness! This is  
a dominant theme which John introduced at the  
very beginning of his Gospel, in chapter 1 (vs 4,  
5 and 9).

The cross represents the eternal struggle between right and wrong, truth and justice, love and hate, retribution and forgiveness, life and death, all that is good with all that is evil; it brings to centre stage the cosmic struggle between what is right with what is wrong!

Second, this most significant verse hinges on the word “crisis” in v 19, sometimes translated as “judgement”. As Eugene Peterson translates, “This is the crisis (Gk *krisis*) we’re in: God-light streamed into the world, but men and women everywhere ran for the darkness. They went for the darkness because they were not really interested in pleasing God.” (The Message)... Like cockroaches in the compost bin, they scurry back into the darkness when exposed to the light!

A *crisis* challenges us to make a choice: which way do I go? The essence of all judgement is a weighing up of the issues, separating truth from falsehood, approval from disapproval, acquittal from condemnation. From this perspective, ***the cross becomes the crisis point***, the place where judgement occurs. And this judgement is critical, for the response will determine how one lives their life in the here-and-now, as well as their future eternal destiny. John makes it clear here that God does not condemn us: we condemn ourselves through our own choices!

So Easter brings us once again to the cross roads: How will *I* respond to this world shattering event? Will I respond with reverent worship and with the Centurion say, “Surely this is the Son of God”, or will we respond with Pilate’s wife, “Have nothing to do with this righteous man!” The cross demands a response!

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Yet, whether we like it or not, our choice will shape our life destiny: we may choose to align ourselves with all that belongs to the God-light which came into the world in Christ, or choose to retreat into the shadows of this world's darkness. Nevertheless, the cross stands in the midst of human history as a landmark between all that is right and good, and all that is diabolical and evil. Its a choice between light and darkness.<sup>1</sup>

When I survey the wondrous cross,  
On which the Prince of Glory died,  
My richest gain, I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride...

*Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all!*

Graham Warne

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To make your offering using DIRECT DEBIT/TRANSFER you will need to go to your bank or **use the internet banking service**. You will need the following information:

Bank: ANZ

BSB: 014010

Account No: 286751378

Thank you all for being generous people.  
May your giving become the power of love in the world.

### **Pastoral Care Ministry**

Rev Graham Warne 5478 9747

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### **Nambour Congregation Chairperson**

Ian Woodward 5441 1069

### **Church Council Officers**

(Ian Woodward) - Chair

Helen Staines - Secretary

Lyn Metelerkamp - Treasurer

Lynn Blackwood-Troyahn

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## **NeXus**

The **NeXus** between our mission and our spiritual power is the gathered congregation. While God comes to us by His Spirit thus transforming us by his grace, we are drawn into precious fellowship with each other. As a congregation gathers for worship, it is being strengthened, then sent out again for a missional purpose.

In times such as these, this copy of **Nambour NeXus** is provided so that you may have resources to assist you in your personal or household worship of God, to assist you in growing your faith, and to encourage your concern and prayers for others.

# DAILY READINGS

## APRIL 2021

Thursday, April 1, 2021:	<b>Maundy Thursday</b> - 1 Corinthians 11:23-36; John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Friday, April 2, 2021:	<b>Good Friday</b> Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18:1 to 19:42
Saturday, April 3, 2021:	<b>Holy Saturday</b> 1 Peter 4:1-8, Matthew 27:57-66
Sunday, April 4, 2021:	<b>Easter Day</b> Mark 16:1-8; Romans 6:3-11
Sunday, April 4, 2021:	<b>Resurrection of the Lord</b> - John 20:1-18; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Sunday, April 4, 2021:	<b>Easter Evening</b> 1 Corinthians 5:6b-8; Luke 24:13-49
Monday, April 5, 2021:	1 Corinthians 15:35-49
Tuesday, April 6, 2021:	1 Corinthians 15:50-58
Wednesday, April 7, 2021:	Mark 16:1-8
Thursday, April 8, 2021:	Acts 2:42-47
Friday, April 9, 2021:	Acts 4:23-31
Saturday, April 10, 2021:	John 12:44-50
Sunday, April 11, 2021:	<b>Second Sunday of Easter</b> John 20:19-31; Acts 4:32-35
Monday, April 12, 2021:	1 John 2:3-11
Tuesday, April 13, 2021:	John 2:12-17
Wednesday, April 14, 2021:	Mark 12:18-27
Thursday, April 15, 2021:	1 John 2:18-25
Friday, April 16, 2021:	1 John 2:26-28
Saturday, April 17, 2021:	Acts 3:1-10; Luke 22:24-30
Sunday, April 18, 2021:	<b>Third Sunday of Easter</b> Luke 24:36b-48; Acts 3:12-19
Monday, April 19, 2021:	1 John 3:10-16
Tuesday, April 20, 2021:	2 John 1:1-6
Wednesday, April 21, 2021:	Mark 16:9-18
Thursday, April 22, 2021:	Acts 3:17-26
Friday, April 23, 2021:	Acts 4:1-4
Saturday, April 24, 2021:	Mark 6:30-34
Sunday, April 25, 2021:	<b>Fourth Sunday of Easter</b> John 10:11-18; Acts 4:4-12
Monday, April 26, 2021:	1 Peter 5:1-5
Tuesday, April 27, 2021:	Revelation 7:13-17
Wednesday, April 28, 2021:	Mark 14:26-31
Thursday, April 29, 2021:	Acts 8:1b-8
Friday, April 30, 2021:	Acts 8:9-25

**CHURCH EMAIL**

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