



Letter # 25

4 September 2020

Wunya! That means 'I greet you in the name of our tribe' – or something very similar to that anyway.

It is Aboriginal language or, perhaps more appropriately, one of the many Aboriginal dialects. And I think it fascinating that it is more than a hello! It's a welcome to our land / home / tribe – and you are free to be as one with us. It's about sharing in their history, seeking to appreciate their present and seeing with them the hope in their destiny. All of that in one word. There is so much one can learn from our own Indigenous culture if we are keen to learn. I remember when I invited some of the local Aboriginal elders from the Southern Gold Coast to come to the school and share with our then Grade 7 kids. They showed us one of their dance routines and after a few minutes demonstrating they paused and said "who wants to have a go"! There were 3 kids that agreed and they actually did a pretty decent job. Then came their second request. "Who from the Staff"? Only one teacher volunteered and as you might appreciate she didn't want to be the only one so she looked at me and pleaded! Being somewhat gullible at times and always in for a dare – I found myself standing barefoot alongside these 'professionals' – thinking I have no idea! I am going to make a big fool of myself in front of all these kids! But there I was and I was stuck with no way out. It was a little embarrassing to start with but I actually found myself enjoying this new experience. Yes – I was more than a little clumsy and wasn't always in step. Nevertheless, it was worthwhile. And I will treasure the words of the senior Elder at the end of that session: "Thank you for accepting our offer – you are now one with us". Those same words – one with us!

I am reminded of Jesus words: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4: 19). Jesus invites us to share in his 'dance routine'. Come alongside me and follow my steps and I will teach you to dance a new rhythm. Put aside your earthly struggles, leave behind that which confines you or binds you or restricts you and I will welcome you to my 'land' where you will be free to be one with me. What a promise! Are you one with Jesus? It can be embarrassing at times, frustrating, hard, anxiety provoking as Jesus way demands repentance and acceptance of His steps. And we can't be dancing different routines. The routine of the world – of self - may be satisfying for a time but it will end in turmoil and spiritual decay. Jesus routine, on the other hand, offers us freedom and life in all its fulness (John 10: 10). Can we be people who are dancing Jesus routine? Can you hear His words of welcome – you are free to be one with us – My family!

COVID-19

Probably the most noticeable change this last week has been in relation to what is called the Movement and Gathering Direction (No. 4). This is the revised (as at 2 September) rules that apply in respect to outdoor gatherings. In restricted areas (mostly in and around Brisbane and Toowoomba including the scenic rim) such gatherings are now limited to 10. In unrestricted areas such as ours currently, that number is 30. And it applies Queensland wide. There are exceptions but for the most part none of them would easily apply to us. If the intended gathering is to be called event - and the space is a public area – eg park, beach etc you need to apply for Council permission and if granted, there is a checklist that must be completed and signed off by the organiser of the event / gathering. That same number also applies to numbers allowed in homes.

Importantly all other safety measures remain in force, like social distancing, wearing masks as appropriate, cleaning etc.

CHURCH

This Sunday we open our doors for the first time in nearly 6 months. If you are planning to come to either of the two services this weekend you need to let Cherylie know so we can be diligent around the maximum number of people (including children) we are allowed to have in the church building. We had asked folk to let us know by Thursday (yesterday) so we can make sure seating is arranged appropriately etc. To date, we have 26 who have registered their intent for the 8am service and 19 for the 10am service. Obviously we have room for more so if you are wanting to come and haven't let Cherylie know yet, can I implore you to do so as quick as you can and before lunch time Friday – that's today??

I need to also let you know that we have a problem with Easy Worship in that 'those words' (Easyworship) are remaining on the screen as a watermark on every slide. I apologise for that now as it is very annoying. However, there seems nothing we can do about that in the time frame between now and Sunday. Given the costs of Easy Worship and the system failures we seem to continually have to contend with – and to make things easier for live streaming etc - we are looking at changing our platform to Pro-Presenter. It is easier (once set up) and cheaper and perhaps the best of all is that a number of other churches are using it and help is a lot closer if need be. More about that later!

Just a reminder that:

- There will be no morning tea for the next few weeks at least.
- Chairs will be plastic to make it easier and safer to clean – the cushioned chairs will be stored under cover for this season. You are welcome to bring your own cushion to sit on.
- Entrance must be by the front door only and exit through the side door – follow the markings!
- You will need to sign beside your name to enter and sign out when you leave.
- Offerings will be by way of two red 'bins' clearly marked. It will not be 'collected'.
- There will only be one count – after the second service.
- Please ensure you take a communion cup and wafer (all in one) on your way in.
- If you are classed as vulnerable – and wish to help in any way – make sure you have completed the appropriate form and have been approved by Leadership Team's delegated personnel. Please contact the office.
- We are meant to limit the amount of paper that is distributed – so we are unclear at this stage when the Vine may re-appear. We will discuss this at the next normal Leadership Team meeting on 22nd September!

Blokes Shed meets next Saturday night 12th September at Edwards Transport Depot. We are currently working on an appropriate Covid Safe Plans to ensure all is OK. Starts at 6,30pm. Come along for a scrumptious burger with the works and a great speaker and fellowship.

This Thursday afternoon at 4pm come and be a part of **Suicide Prevention** remembrance. To be held at the Sands – on the bank of the Mary River - exit off the highway just south of Aldi – note you can't turn right heading south into the car park area. Any questions please contact Ruth Polley on 0400 484 004.

Shoebboxes – Helen Ward (Imbil) has, in this last week or so, reviewed all the donations received to put in the shoeboxes this year. She is hopeful of filling 50 boxes from what you and others have given – thank you! However, to do that we need a few more of some things. We could do with a few items of girl's clothing for 10 to 14 year olds; a few more girls toys eg. skipping ropes, yoyos etc; and some more soft toys - something to love. Most of all now we need **\$10 freight for each box**. I know that some have already contributed towards this and for that we are grateful. Nevertheless, we are short at the moment. So if you are in a position to help in any way (50x \$10 = \$500.00 needed), please leave any donation with Cherylie in the office or place it in the boxes on Sunday and mark it clearly "Shoebbox Appeal". Thank you in advance.

Profile – The Leadership Team is meeting next Tuesday night to begin a process of looking at your Congregation Profile. Ultimately it will need to be approved by the Congregation. Please pray for them as they begin this important work.

GIVING Offerings this week \$3587.20. Thank you.

PERSONAL

As previously mentioned , I may or may not be around too much next week depending on whether I get called up for Jury Service. I will know if I am needed on Monday, for example, tomorrow afternoon after 5pm. Then each day is a phone-in to find out my fate for the following day – for 2 weeks!

SCRIPTURES Genesis 45: 5 ♦ Ecclesiastes 3: 12 ♦ Mark 8: 34 & 35 ♦ 1 Thessalonians 1: 5 & 6

Be Blessed!

Dave

Rev Dave Thomas
15 Red Hill Road Gympie 4570
Church Email office@gruc.org.au

Mobile 0432 304 474
Web gruc.org.au
Phone (07) 5482 2985

Email davet@gruc.org
Facebook facebook.com/guchurch
Fax (07) 5482 2608