



Letter #30

8 October 2020

Hi there! Do you ski? That is snow skiing? Have you ever tried it? I have, and I know that I am no ski expert. Everyone told me that snow skiing is far easier than water skiing because you have total control. In a sense I guess that's right. In the water, being towed behind a boat, you put your trust not only in the equipment but more so in the boat driver. Do they know the waterways? Are they experienced at towing a skier? You know the drill? But on the snow, there's no-one pushing or pulling! It's just you and the skis and the snow – and in most cases a hill! The success or otherwise of that descent is all about one person and no-one else! I think they are both hard – different yes but both difficult. And maybe because of that learning – the group of school students that accompanied me to Thredbo one winter were only allowed to toboggan. Well – we figured it was easier to watch them and they could go in pairs. It must be safer! Skye was one of those students. She had never seen snow let-alone done anything on it! This day we escorted them to the top of the hill and there they were to hold onto a wire while they positioned their toboggan. When they were ready – normally one would sit at the front while the other held onto the wire to safeguard the toboggan from taking off with no rider. The front person would then dig their feet into the snow and hold the toboggan in place until the rear person sat and then they were off. It was a whole lot of fun! There were some spills but laughter aplenty. It was just as I was enjoying watching the antics that I noticed Skye – not leaving the safety of the wire. She refused to go. She was scared. I walked up beside her and asked what was wrong. "I can't do it", she retorted. "It's too steep – and too fast. I can't". Dialogue followed and at the end of that I found myself agreeing to go with her. I told her she just had to hang on to my arm and we'd be fine. I assured her that she could master this.

What happened next is a little embarrassing. How it happened neither of us really know, but what I recall is that Skye went down that hill all the way to the bottom on the toboggan hanging onto me who accompanied her with no toboggan – ie on my backside mainly. I was bruised and battered but she had found a new freedom. She was off to do it all again leaving me to watch in pain.

Nevertheless, somehow it was all worth it. I was so thrilled to see her now enjoying herself – not being scared, and letting go, facing her fears. It took some time after that experience before I realised that we are often like Skye as we live our life! We like our comforts – sometimes too much! Skye was dressed for the occasion, ready to go but not letting go of the wire that was her security! And just when we feel we are defeated and too scared to move, Jesus comes and says to us as His child, "Don't be afraid, hang onto me and we'll go together." And if we trust Him and let go off our inhibitions and traditions that hold us back, we go – and we enjoy the ride – and at the end – we discover that Jesus has taken the bumps and bruises for us, while we find a freedom that we never thought possible. "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light". (Matthew 11: 28 -30 NASB)

### COVID-19

Just when we hoped that things might start to become less restrictive, we have received a revised Industry Safe Plan for Worship Spaces. This is somewhat perplexing as from what I understand no church denomination has been privy to the changes, let-alone consulted. While it may not impact us greatly here, it will have huge implications for some of our smaller church communities. The biggest change is that, effective immediately, the only way for any face to face gathering of worship to continue to meet is by way of complying with the Industry Safe Plan for Worship Spaces.

Previously congregations could choose to follow this plan or opt for the Health Directives guidelines. Not now! There is no choice!

The other change is that, from now, any house that is opened for the use of 'worship' activities – which includes bible study, home groups, life groups etc, the owner of the house is totally responsible to ensure compliance with the same standard that applies to any 'church' space. This includes signage, space, distancing etc. The compliance checklist needs to be visible and ticked off and the Statement of Compliance needs to be on the front door or window close the front door or where people enter and be clearly visible and remain there. At least, that's the interpretation we have now!

There has been no change to numbers allowed inside, eating requirements, or the need to clean and sanitise, to which most of us are now accustomed.

## **CHURCH**

This Sunday we are privileged to have Simon and Allison Rattray from 'Project One: Fourteen' – sharing with us in our Gympie Services. They have both been with us before and Simon is a strong advocate for the suffering, persecuted church both Nationally and Internationally. Based on Philippians 1: 14, their ministry includes:

- Supporting Church Communities in restricted countries
- Assisting with trauma care and pastoral support and vulnerable believers
- Equipping and encouraging frontline "Paul's" of today
- Providing biblical training to help struggling churches be self-sustainable
- Bringing back to the Australian Church 'their' courage, resilience and faithfulness in order to help us share Jesus more boldly.

Allison will have some of her art with her and will share briefly as well. Let's fill our numbers to capacity across both opportunities this Sunday.

## AGM

Please note the changed date for our AGM – now Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm in the Gympie Church. **Nomination forms** are available for the election of our Leadership into 2021, as part of that meeting. Please prayerfully consider who you might approach for such a task. These must be completed and in at the office by Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October.

## UCCCA

Please note that we have had to change the date of the **AGM** for the Uniting Church Child Care Association. It has been moved to **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm** again in the Gympie Church. This was unavoidable owing to staff holidays and delays in getting our audits completed – a COVID related issue.

## PROFILE

The Congregation Profile was approved at the Presbytery PRC meeting last Thursday. It now goes to Placements in Brisbane for their deliberations going forward. Thank you to all who were involved in the process of completing this document.

## JNC

As previously advised, it is now necessary and important that a JNC – Joint Nominating Committee – be elected to assist in the discernment of a new Minister to help lead you into your future. To this end, the Leadership Team has been busy talking to folk and they are now ready to seek the wisdom of the congregation. Accordingly, a **Special Congregational meeting has been called for Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October at 1.30pm in order to elect this group of people.** The election of the JNC will be the only matter of business but we do urge all to come and participate in this important process in the life of the Church. JNC's are limited under normal circumstances to six (6) and as at the date of writing this I understand that there are eight (8) persons who have indicated their willingness to serve.

### 10AM WORSHIPPING CREW

We enjoyed a great time last Sunday at the park where numbers were encouraging. This week we will meet in the Church (as Simon is with us). However, there are likely to be some changes to the style and format of future gatherings. Stay tuned as we continue to seek God's leading for His pathway going forward.

### SYNOD

Just a reminder that Synod convenes via online technology commencing with the Induction of the new Moderator on Thursday evening 22<sup>nd</sup> October and concluding on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October around 4pm. I will be involved (in front of a screen) for much of that time. (Prayers please).

### SHOEBOXES

Packing happens this Tuesday at the Imbil Church. Thank you to all who have donated items, contributed financially or in other ways to this great ministry initiative. And a special acknowledgement of the efforts of Helen Ward as she continues to champion this on our behalf. Thank you, Helen!

### TREASURER

Mike Timperon has confirmed his resignation as Treasurer as from the AGM in November. Accordingly, we will need someone to accept the challenge and opportunity to be our new Treasurer for the next few years (hopefully). If you are interested in finding out more about the role or have some questions, please contact Mike or the office. We commend this to all our prayers. The Treasurer is an important part of the Leadership of the Church! The accounting package used is Xero!

### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

Our Friendship Circle will be meeting at the end of October for the first time in many months. **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October at 9am** in our **Gympie Church**. Ruth & Helen have asked if you could bring your own mug from home.

### **GIVING**

Offerings for this week total \$4156.00. Thank you for the way you are all responding through this current season. We have much to be thankful for.

### **PERSONAL**

It's becoming surreal now! 12 Sundays before Sandy and I depart for some leave and then onto Brisbane (Oxley). Photos have been taken and the place will go live on the net from this weekend we think. So, it begins – the process of open houses etc! Yee hah – not!

**SCRIPTURES**    Genesis 12: 1 – 3   ♦   Isaiah 55: 1 & 2   ♦   Mark 10: 43 – 45   ♦   2 Cor. 4: 18

*Be Blessed!*

*Dave*

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