



Letter #34

5 November 2020

Greetings! I trust you are keeping as well as can be and finding favour with God and your fellow travellers on the road of Life. Well – in case you weren't aware, this last week has seen the running of the Melbourne Cup, the re-election of the Premier and a Labor State Government, the USA Election, the defeat of the Wallabies (yet again) and the first of three State of Origin Matches. Some may argue that it has been a memorable week in the arenas of politics and sport at least. Speaking of sport and the first Origin match specifically, I didn't get the chance on Wednesday night to watch it live as I normally would being was otherwise occupied. And although I had taped the game so I could watch it later – and I was desperate not to know the score until I had watched it – guess what! The inevitable happened and I was told the outcome of the game before I got home! Not happy! So, I had a choice. Would I just forget about it – after all I knew who won – or would I watch it anyway? Contrary to what I suspect many would do, I watched it.

And I discovered something. Despite knowing the ending, I had no idea of how the game was played. I didn't know when tries were scored or how. I had no idea if there were injuries, how many times the bunker was used, who played well or who didn't. Indeed, there was so much about the game I learnt by watching how it was played! It didn't matter that I knew the score. If anything, it was a help rather than a hindrance!

I suggest to you all that it is the same with living our life. As Christians we know the outcome of our life's journey. Eternity with Jesus! WOW! How exciting? Yet just because we may know the result doesn't mean we know how the game is played! And that is what our earthly life is – the how of the game! And it's critical! Jesus himself said that we need to be on the alert at all times - to be ready - for we do not know the time when he returns (Matt. 24: 42 – 44). Paul echoes the same message later urging us to be 'alert and sober' (I Thess. 5: 6). How are we living? As others have said before me – 'we are born, we die. What's important to God and those we love and those with whom we share, is what happens between those two dates?' Let's make sure that we don't let our Lord, ourselves or others down by the way we play the game of life we are privileged to play.

COVID-19

Last Friday (30th October), the Queensland Premier announced easing of border restrictions which allows residents of NSW, except those in the [32 NSW LGAs](#) which have been declared as COVID-19 hotspots in Greater Sydney, to enter Queensland. All parts of Victoria are still considered COVID-19 hotspots.

There was great joy a few days back when it was noted that there were no new cases of this hideous virus across all of Australia! It went viral. Unfortunately, it didn't last but it did lift the spirits of many albeit temporarily. Nevertheless, as we have been reminded by our State Church folk, there is a resurgence of COVID-19 in the northern hemisphere. The numbers that are reported in the United States of America on a daily basis are staggering, and the United Kingdom has recently entered into a one-month lockdown period in order to prevent a second wave. There are some who contend that a further wave in parts of Australia is not totally beyond possibility.

Spare a thought for our loved folk at Coinda and Grevillea! At Coinda, residents are still restricted to movement only within their own precinct or building! And visitors are still limited severely in terms of how many residents they can visit on any one day! They need our prayers!

CHURCH

Our **8am service** is almost at our peak number with 43 last Sunday. What a great problem to confront? I know I sound like a broken record but please indicate to Cheryl if you are coming from week to week. I know this is easily forgotten but it does save time prior to the start of the service.

Consistent with our trial of a different approach for our **second service** – this Sunday is (for want of better term) – Kid Sunday! I am excited about what is planned and I trust that all who come will be equally excited, challenged and inspired as we worship with our kids. Please come and join us. Why not invite other families – particularly if they have kids to pop along – they may just love it! And for those in the early service or our Imbil friends, please pray for us as we try something new. It's not about finding the problems – it's about finding the freshness and to be somewhat colloquial – giving it a crack!

Don't forget the **AGM is this Sunday at 2pm** in the Gympie Church! The Annual Report was available last week and I hope you got your copy! Please ensure you read it before Sunday and come with any questions or comments to share with all. We will be assuming you have read it! Also details of the people who have heard the call to join the Leadership Team for the next 12 months will be available this weekend. The election will happen as a part of the AGM. At this stage we have no Secretary or Treasurer as both Joan and Mike are standing down after faithful service. Please be at prayer! We also are in need of folk to step up re: Presbytery representation, Synod representation, Congregational Chair and Secretary. Is God tapping any of you on the shoulder for any of these significant roles in the life of the church?

Presbytery meets at Pialba Christian Conference Centre (Hervey Bay) next weekend! Four of us will be attending – Jim, Gaynor and I will be there for the whole weekend while Judy will join us for the Saturday.

Just some reminders – some for noting and some for your diaries:

- **Big Hearts** for Christmas was launched last weekend. Appropriate baskets are in the foyer of the church and we ask that over the weeks leading up to Christmas you might buy some shortbread or appropriate Christmas goodies to give away to those deserving of some assistance in what has been a very difficult year.
- **Blokes' Shed** meets Saturday 21st November.
- **Uniting World** will be with us for our 8am service on Sunday 22nd November.
- **Soul Sisters** Christmas get-together 24th November.
- **Friendship Circle** meets Thursday 26th November.
- **Imbil** will be having their **Christmas Carols** on 11th December, and have agreed that they will not meet on Sunday 27th December!
- Sandy and my '**Closing Service**' on **Sunday 13th December at 1pm**. It will be held at the Church and be live streamed to both the Presbytery You Tube channel and our face book page. We will have overflow seating outside with a TV hooked up for better visuals.
- **Carols on the Lawn** ~ *Gympie* (weather permitting) on **Saturday 19th December starting at 6pm**.
- **MAF** is at Imbil on Sunday 20th December.
- **Sunday the 20th December at 12.30pm** the whole GRUC Family are invited to a Park - yet to be confirmed - for a barbeque Lunch and farewell for Sandy and I. Stay tuned for more information!
- Gympie will be having both a Christmas Eve contemporary service and a Christmas Morning family service – the latter being my final service with you! Imbil will be having an 8am Christmas morning service.

Some other news!

- The JNC meets on 12th November. Please be at prayer for the 6 of our folk – Rachel, Mitchell, Keith, Chantelle, Thea and Ken with the 2 Presbytery folk – Chris and Phil!
- Mary Christmas is on again this year having recently received Council support with appropriate COVID restrictions etc in place. This will be in Mary Street from 5pm – 9pm on each of Wednesday evening the 16th and 23rd December. The Combined churches will have the lit up Nativity Scene again and we have been asked to decorate a tree again as well. If any are interested in helping with the latter please contact Dave.

Bible Society

The Gympie Branch will have their final meeting for 2020 in the CE Room on Wednesday 18 November at 9:30 am. All welcome.

Bible Tree

I need to clarify what for some may have been a little confusing in the presentation and appeal for financial assistance to assist with Bibles! This is a mission of the Bible League and is not in any way affiliated with the Bible Society of Australia. They are two very different organisations who share some similarities but also some differences. Of course, you are free to assist in this endeavour if you wish by donating the \$10 asked for but we need you to know, out of respect to both organisations, exactly who you are supporting. Many of you will know that, as a congregation, we have always openly and proudly been advocates for, and ambassadors of, the Bible Society and for this reason we won't be promoting this any further. However, we will make sure that any funds donated already will be directed to the appropriate recipient unless you advise us otherwise. Please accept our sincere apology for any confusion that may have arisen.

GIVING

Thank you for your offerings ~ \$4133.50 this week.

PERSONAL

As I write this weeks letter, I am praying for our son and daughter-in-law (Luke and Janine). Sandy received a please help SOS call last Friday night as Janine – 8 months pregnant – had hurt her back quite badly and was struggling to walk without a lot of pain. Bub is Ok, but with three kids at home and with Luke needing to go to day Hospital to get a Skin Cancer removed from his face and being told that he can't lift or drive or do much for a week – they were stressed. Sandy went down early Monday morning and at this stage I am uncertain for how long!

Due Date - 4th December (I think – not good with such details) so there is a sense of excitement but also pain at the moment.

Consequently we wrote to the Courthouse and Sandy has been given an exemption from attending Jury Duty.

Next Wednesday is Remembrance Day! I have been invited by the RSL Sub-Branch to be involved in the official Memorial Park service at 10.30am. I am looking forward to this Community event as we remember the sacrifice and mateship of those gone before us.

SCRIPTURES Psalm 78: 3 & 4 ♦ Ruth 1: 16 & 17 ♦ Mark 12: 17 ♦ Colossians 2: 2 - 4

Be Blessed!

Dave

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