

30<sup>th</sup> March 2025

# The VIBE

**Theme:** *What is God like?*

**God is like a Prodigal and Running Father**

**Bible Readings: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11-32**

As Jesus travelled towards Jerusalem and the cross, tax collectors and sinners came to listen to him. We even note that Jesus welcomed them and even shared meals with them. (Some say they were like the younger son in the parable Jesus was about to tell.)

The Pharisees and the scribes grumbled about this inappropriate behaviour by Jesus. (Some say they are like the older son in the parable).

Today we encounter the parable and ask "What is God like?" The father!??

## **Theme**

In his parables and teaching, in his life and his death, Jesus reveals to us the true nature of God. God is the Loving Father, the Prodigal Father, the Running Father, who receives us in our sin and shows mercy upon us, even in our sin.

## **Prayer (by Rev William Willimon)**

Almighty God, we confess that we have held many wrong ideas about you. We believed you to be almighty power, and yet you came to us in mighty love. We thought that you would not receive us in your righteousness, yet you received us in our sinful rags. We deserved your just and harsh punishment for unrighteousness, and you invited us to a joyous party.

We confess that you are not the God we expected. We thought that you desired our fear and respect, only to be surprised that you cherish our love and affection.

Bring us, in these forty days of Lent, to see the fullness of your glory, to acknowledge the depth of your love for us, and to respond to you as you are rather than as we feared you to be. Amen.

David



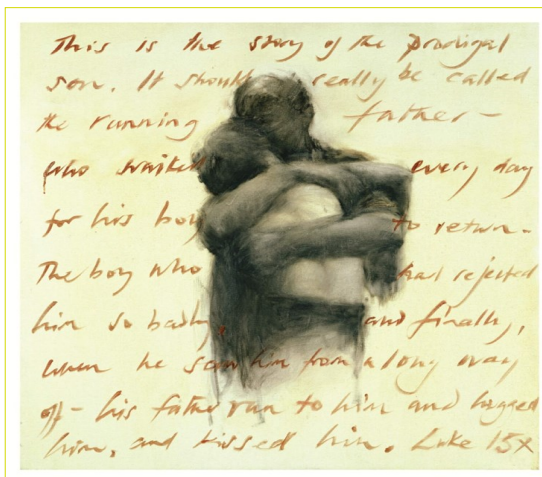
## LENT 4

### Fourth Week on the Mountain

Begin this time of Listening Prayer by picturing again the transfiguration story. (You might like to read the story again. Luke 9:28-36.)

1. Jesus is taking you up the mountain to pray.  
Become conscious of your breathing. In Hebrew “ruach” is the word that means “wind, breath, and/or spirit”.  
So in your breath sense the Presence of Jesus.
2. In the quietness meditate on Jesus being transfigured before the disciples. Believe you are being changed by Jesus as the disciples were by the vision.
3. Hear the voice from the clouds saying -  
*This is my Son, my chosen; listen to Him. Lk 9:35*
4. Read the parable found in the Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32.  
Maybe you have a bible without titles. Good.  
If like mine your does have titles, try not to focus on this title.
5. Read the parable through again slowly. Then read and note, maybe even writing down, the number of times the father is mentioned and the role he plays.
6. There once was **a man** who had two sons. (15:11)
7. The younger son asked for his share of the property. The older son did not. The man (**father**) **divided his property between them.** (15:12)
8. But while he was still far off, his father **saw him** and was **filled with compassion;** he **ran** and **put his arms around him** and **kissed him.** (15:20)
9. Before the son can get his full confession out, the father interrupts him and says to his slaves **Quickly, bring out a robe - the best one - and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found! And they began to celebrate.** (15:22-24)

10. The older brother refused to come into the party. (15:25-28)  
*His father came out and began to plead with him. (15:28).*
11. The older son argued with his father (15:29-31) and his father replied, *Son, you are always with me and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found” (15:32)*
12. What do the words and actions of the father tell us about the nature of God?
13. Look at this drawing and the caption presented by Charlie Mackesy, a British artist, illustrator, and author.



During Lent there is challenge delivered to us all to repent, confess our sins and return to the Father. It may involve prayer, fasting and giving to those need,

This drawing, building on the father running to his son, suggests that God, the father is running towards you with compassion, to throw his arms around you and to kiss you. ((15:20)

How does this make you feel?  
God's extravagant love is for you.

Martin Luther once said:

*Forgiveness is not an occasional art, it is a permanent attitude.*

In Lent we learn again that this is God's permanent attitude.

## A Maundy Thursday Meal Together

Maundy Thursday falls the day before Good Friday ... a day to commemorate Jesus Christ's Last Supper with his disciples and a reminder to us of the importance of humility, selflessness and service to others.

This year, Church Council is making plans to come together for a long table meal on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> April, if enough people can come to the table.

Can you come?

If so, we will start between 5.30 and 6pm.

For this meal to go ahead, we do need to know if you plan to join us. If enough people can come, we require numbers for catering purposes—we don't want you missing out.



➤ Please [RSVP](#) to Joan Burke by [Sunday 13th April](#) so we can make plans.

## Easter Worship Services

**Good Friday** (18<sup>th</sup> April) - 8am at Gympie and Imbil

**Resurrection Sunday** (20<sup>th</sup> April) - 9am at Gympie and Imbil



### Ministry Placement Update

The process continues - the names of two candidates have been referred to the Joint Nominating Committee (JNC) ... but don't get too excited, there's still a way to go yet.

In the meantime, it's imperative that we all continue to pray for the process and the JNC members ... may they have wisdom and listen to God's guidance as they seek to find the one God calls to our church - and pray for that person.

"Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you".  
Jeremiah 29:12

**Worship**  
with us next week

**Gympie:** Rev. Dr. Peter Hall (HC)

**Imbil:** Ken Ward



*It is with great sadness that we share in mourning Greig Nissen's passing on the evening of Sunday, 23rd March, 2025.*

*Thea and family invite you to join them in celebrating Greig's life at a Service of Thanksgiving, this Tuesday, 1st April at 10am in our Gympie Church. Please keep Thea, Sandra, Tim and Kerrie in your prayers.*



### Uniting 4570 Name Badges

We're updating the design of our church name badge to reflect our name 'Uniting 4570' and will be ordering them from a company who supplies other Uniting Churches on the Sunshine Coast.

The badges will cost **\$14-** each (including postage) and are available with either **PIN** or **MAGNET** backs.

If you would like to order one, please let Cherylie know by phone, email or in person (including what type of badge-back you prefer).

**PAYMENT** can be made either in ~~cash~~ (we keep little cash on site, so it would be appreciated if you could bring the correct change) or by ~~bank transfer~~ to our church account with a reference of '**Badge**' and '**your name**'. (Bank account and church office contact details can be found on the back of this newsletter).

We'll lodge our order during the week before Easter and should receive our new badges 2 to 3 weeks later, allowing for public holidays.

### Christmas Shoebox Collections

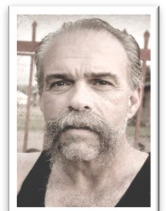


**During April** we're collecting '**Something to Wear**' - Boys and Girls clothing for ages 2 to 14. Only **NEW** clothing such as T-shirts, shorts, skirts, socks, dresses, underwear, caps, beanies, thongs, etc. to fit in a shoebox-size gift pack with lots of other items. Clothing is required to have sleeves or come with a t-shirt to wear underneath.

### The Real Machine Gun Preacher

Want to meet the man behind the movie? Want to hear about God's work? Want to see your friends saved? Then we will see you there!

Sam Childers will be at Neslon Reserve on **Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> April** from 5:30 to 8pm. There'll be live music and food available. BYO Chair / Rug. This is a FREE event ... there will be opportunity to give to Sam's ministry.



Sam has rescued over 1500 Child Soldiers from rebel armies in war torn Eastern Africa ... he's been called to such an incredible ministry, worthy of support.



**UNITING 4570**  
BETTER TOGETHER



**Worship**

**Worship Services...** **Gympie Uniting Church:** 15 Red Hill Road - 9am + Kidz Church  
**Imbil Uniting Church:** 3 Elizabeth Street - 9am

**Live-streaming...** Sunday messages are usually livestreamed to facebook & YouTube; look up 'Gympie Regional Uniting Church'

**Contact Us**

**Church Office...** M: 0493 442 250 P: (07) 5482 2985 E: [cherylie@gruc.org](mailto:cherylie@gruc.org)  
[www.gruc.org.au](http://www.gruc.org.au) F: [www.facebook.com/guchurch](http://www.facebook.com/guchurch)

**Office Hours...** Mon & Wed 8.30am-12pm; Tue 9.30am-3pm; Thu 8.30am-3pm

**Pastoral Care...** Please contact the office by phone or email.

- Need a lift to church? ... Jill 0421 333 538
- Need the services of a Justice of The Peace? ... Glenda 0418 187 698
- Need prayer? ... call the church office 0493 442 250 or join us at 8am of a Tuesday in the CE Room.



**Offering and Attendance Last Week**

Attendance: Adults 80 ♦ Children 10 ♦ Facebook 98

You can give your tithes & offerings by direct transfer into the church's bank account Westpac BSB 034 127 Acct: 29 4101 *(Please identify your bank transaction as either 'Tithe' or 'Offering', 'Shoebboxes', etc. Thank you).*

**Hope Reins has some places available in their 'Brave On Program' for Term 2**

Who: Women who want to build confidence and understanding about who they are.  
What: Small group setting, 2 hours per week for 6 weeks.  
Work with horses to explore topics of identity, fears, strengths, forgiveness and love, motivation and self-care.  
(No riding involved and no horse experience required).

When: Thursdays during the day, commencing 24<sup>th</sup> April.

Contact: Jo at [admin@hopereins.org.au](mailto:admin@hopereins.org.au) or on 0428 084 673.

