

## "PARADISE LOST" (Numbers 11-20)

Israel have packed their bags (Chs 1-10) and are now heading into the wilderness and toward the Promised Land.

### Israel's Rebellion

**1st rebellion:** Rejecting God's Provision: Longing for the Past (ch.11)

**2nd rebellion:** Rejecting God's Plan: Fearing for the Future (chs.13-14)

### God's Response

**Judgement**

**Grace**

### Jesus in the Wilderness

**Luke 4:1-13:** Jesus tempted for 40 days, one day for every year Israel was in the wilderness.

We must be like Jesus and not unbelieving Israel (Heb 3:12)

### Conclusion

Are you committed to the promises of God?

If you're caught in sin, seek God's forgiveness while there is still time.

Are you anxious about the future. Trust God and stay with his covenant people.



St Stephen's – Tamworth

"Enabling faith—Knowing the truth—Pursuing godliness"

## CHURCH MATTERS

22 September 2019

### PASTORAL STAFF

#### Minister

Rev Mark Armstrong  
0431 664 307

#### Pastoral Assistant

Mr Dale Martin  
0414 818 201

### SESSION CLERK

Mr Dale Martin

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

Crown & Mathews Street,  
Tamworth  
Sunday at 9:30am

### CHURCH OFFICE

Open Friday mornings  
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Dear friends,

Welcome to church, especially if you are new or visiting as a guest. We are glad that you are here to share this morning with us.

I'm sure you've noticed that we live in an unstable world. I think less stable than anything I've seen in my life time. What comes to mind is the volatile Middle East, the American political landscape, Hong Kong, climate change, refugees and gender ideology. Our country has been through a number of Prime Ministers in recent years. The abortion debate currently before the NSW Parliament is not covering our politicians or society in glory.

Our society has become tribal with different factions waging war among one another. The church is caught in the cross-fire and has at times contributed to its own demise. Try saying anything remotely Christian on social media and be prepared for aggressive responses. Our humanistic, destructive, post-Christian culture makes it hard for Christians to speak and be listened too. It makes us shy to share the gospel and invite people to church.

Mark Sayers is the senior pastor of Red Church in Melbourne and is well known for speaking about the intersection of faith and culture. He sheds light on the story which drives our society. "The story of secularism is a story which says that as the world moves away from faith and belief in God that the world will inevitably become a better place ... I think what post-Christianity is, and its belief in progress, is a desire for the Kingdom without the King".

As important as church is, a Sunday morning of church .....

.... once a week is never enough to sustain the Christian life. The background chatter of society is seductive and compelling. With its music ringing in our ears we find ourselves dancing to tunes not of our own making. Church is an alternative community with an alternative Ruler to the rulers of this world. Like Israel in the desert, we have left behind a life a slavery, now we experience the harshness of this vacuous world, and we live with a great hope for the restoration of the world.

Our church vision is designed to orientate us and give us a sense of purpose. The words, "Enabling faith" remind us that the gospel is to be shared. We have a whole neighbourhood around us and we need to be thinking about their needs. How can we be salt and light in our community? We need to be developing relationships by building bridges which people are willing to cross. The words, "Knowing the truth" are more about ourselves and our understanding of the gospel. Be curious, be willing to learn, come to the Scriptures with a deep desire to mature and grow. Understand what it means to be holy. Hence the last part of our vision statement, "Pursuing holiness". The Christian life is a relational life. We are redeemed and purified which enables fellowship with God and one another.

These maybe challenging times but our sovereign God is fully in control. The story he gives his people is one which spans from creation to new creation and it validates itself through the historical and verifiable resurrection of the Lord Jesus. So we persevere and give all the glory to our Lord and Saviour.

Mark Armstrong

## Leadership Matters

Last Friday your Committee of Management met and discussed and/or resolved the following matters:

- i. the sale of the Mathews Street land is in the hands of the church's law agent and we await advice from them.
- ii. Resolved to make funds available in order to stream the St Stephen's service to churches without a minister and other people who will benefit from this service.
- iii. Approved Mel Robertson (singer/song writer) to use the church hall during the music Festival subject to public liability insurance and a donation to cover costs.
- iv. Approved Minister's Fraternal prayer meeting in the church hall subject to availability of the hall.
- v. Write to Preschool Management Committee expressing thanks and support as they carry out the review of the Resolve report as well as the ordinary matters of the preschool.

## Prayer Matters

- i. Pray that **God sends rain**. We entrust ourselves to the Lord, who in His timing, will cause it to rain.
- ii. Continue to pray for Nigel Seaton who's had a rough time after his stem cell transplant. Pray for others who are unwell, including Laurie Henry, Janelle Chaffey, and Margaret Dart. Remember also Margaret Menzies and Anne Thrift in Nursing Homes.
- iii. Pray for our **farmers in drought** throughout NSW and QLD, remembering Wayne and Janelle Chaffey, Jamie and Michelle Drury, Angus and Tiffney Faulks.



## "What's On" Matters

- i. **Ladies Fellowship** and **Session** will take place on Wednesday at 10.00am.
- ii. Personal details are being updated in preparation for the new **Church Directory**. The list of names is next to the coffee machine.
- iii. **Ministry Muster** is tomorrow morning at 10.30am in the church hall. No need to bring anything other than yourselves and an experience to share. See Mark for more information.
- iv. Forum 6 Cinema. September 22 (today) at 2.30pm. **The movie is Pilgrim's Progress** which is an epic animated journey, faithfully adapted to modern day.
- v. **Christian Book Sale**. September 28 from 8am to 4pm at Calrossy Anglican School. Funds raised will help with the development of the Canon Ndimbirwe Bible College Library in Uganda. Too good to miss!

### CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday 29 September 2019 shortly after church to consider the sale of the Moonbi property

### CHURCH LUNCH

Following the congregational meeting  
Let's pray together, eat together, and encourage one another ... together