

26th February Gn 2:15-17; 3:1-7 Ps 32 Rom 5:12-19 Mt 4:1-11	March 5 Gn 12:1-4a Ps 121 Rom 4:1-5, 13-17 Jn 3:1-17 or Mt 17: 1-9
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- Sun 26th Feb** 8:30am Ms. Meg Johnson
- Sat 25th Feb** Indoor Bowls with Wilf and Mavis
- Fri 3rd March** World Day of Prayer
- Sun 5th March** 8:30 am Rev Jan Rossow (Communion)

Please join us for morning tea, after the service.

This year's World Day of Prayer is this Friday, 3rd March at St Peter's Anglican Church, Maroochydore.

Moderator's Prayer for February:

Father God we are your pilgrim people, and we give thanks that you are with us as we travel - in every circumstance, in the light and in the shadow.

We pray for those who have been impacted by the tragic earthquakes in Syria and Turkey - the people who have died, their families and loved ones, emergency responders who are doing all they can in unimaginable difficulty, those who have survived and will need to grieve and rebuild and find a way forward.

We pray for leaders and aid agencies across the globe that they work with these communities to find the best ways to help and support.

Jesus, guide us today to do what we can - may we journey humbly and obediently and trust the path you place before us.

Who is our neighbour? In many of Jesus' stories, he uses excellent illustrations to point out who and how we are called to be God's people.

In the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus is put on the spot by a lawyer who, after finding out what he must do to inherit eternal life, that is, to love God and love our neighbour. Asks, well, who is my neighbour?

Of course, in this story, Jesus goes to great lengths to point out that the Samaritan man is the very opposite of who they thought their neighbour might be. He is the outsider, the unclean. He is the one that they'd never associate with. And yet, he is the neighbour. The good neighbour is the one who reaches out to someone in need, who doesn't just stand by hoping that someone else will offer help, but in fact comes to his aid by providing for him the things he requires to be fully healed, medicine for his wounds and a roof over his head while he recovers. This man is the neighbour.

This leads us to the question in our current times Who is our neighbour? It's interesting in a world where we very much still operate in our own spheres, our own tribes if you like that, we are called to reach out to the person who is *different* to us. The person who is outside our sphere. As Jesus says elsewhere, it's very easy to love those close to us, our family of friends, but how can we begin to love those people that we have no connection with? How is it that we should reach out to those people who are very much outside of those spheres we operate in?

When we think about our current tensions right across our world, it's easy to think about that person in a remote country whose beliefs might be different from our own. People are in war-torn places on the other side of the world. Maybe we could give money to an appeal or raise our concerns with our own government.

These things are important, but what about those people closest to us? Maybe the neighbour is the young person who commits crimes in our local neighbourhoods. Maybe the neighbour is the person addicted to heroin. Maybe the neighbour is someone who seems to have very different values from you. These are precisely the people that Jesus calls us to be the good neighbour to, to care for in love, to tend to their physical needs, to bind those things that harm them, and to bring them back to wholeness.

If we take this incredibly tough lesson from Jesus seriously, then we need to go beyond our comfortable group of companions and go out of our way to recognise our neighbour and to meet their needs, for Christ calls each of us to love our neighbour just as we love our God.

Rev Andrew Gunton – Moderator Uniting News 21st February