

Distant Socialising

A Letter from Rev Andrew

Readings for Sunday 28th June: Pentecost 4

Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6:12-23; and Matthew 10:40-42

Jesus 'sent out' the disciples. This week's Gospel reading is about what happens when they arrive!

What do you expect to happen when you arrive at someone's front door? Will you have to take off your shoes, or wipe them on a mat? Perhaps you have a gift to give the host – how will it be received? How do those various actions make you feel? How do you feel if they don't happen?

Now, with the boot on the other foot, what if you are giving the welcome? If you are the person opening the door – what do you do or say? Do you take their coat, or offer a drink? Does it depend on who is at the door? Who might it be hard to welcome in?

In today's world, we tend to be rather security conscious. In the past, your doors might have been unlocked all the time. Now, our homes increasingly are identified as places of privacy and retreat. Social interactions often happen elsewhere, on neutral ground – perhaps in a café, a restaurant, a bar, in the park. Where do you meet your friends?

Jesus stresses the importance of 'going out', of interacting with others. He refers to 'whoever welcomes you' – and that leaves room for those who don't! In what sense do we 'go in the name of Jesus'? Is Jesus reflected in us, in our words and actions, or do we need specifically to say who we are? A country's new ambassador, meeting the Queen for the first time, will always offer her their 'credentials' – assuring her that she can trust them to speak on behalf of those who sent them. What credentials can we offer to show that we are sent by Jesus?

Are we consciously trying to be the people who welcome, and go, in the name of Jesus?

What does that welcoming look like at Orange Uniting Church?

How can we make it more like the welcome that God offers us all?

COVID 19 Staged Return to Gathered Activities

As I mentioned last week, a small working group has met to consider the return to gathered activities in this environment where we need to be so careful about hygiene and infection control.

This week, the Church Council met to consider the recommendations of this working group and have agreed on the following staged return, subject to each group and location being willing and able to meet the strict requirements that must be met. A church or activity may choose not to regather at this time.

Stage 1 – 25th June 2020

- ⇒ Pastoral Visitation (ongoing)
- ⇒ Hot Meals Outreach (ongoing)
- ⇒ Essential meetings (ongoing)
- ⇒ Funerals (ongoing)
- ⇒ Weddings

Stage 2 – 20th July 2020

- ⇒ Third Party Hirers

Stage 3 – 1st August 2020

- ⇒ Small Study Groups
- ⇒ Fellowship Groups
- ⇒ Playgroups

Stage 4 – 16th August 2020

- ⇒ Country Churches
 - ◇ 16th August – March
 - ◇ 23rd August – Spring Hill and Forest Reefs
 - ◇ 30th August – Byng



Contact Details

Due to the current health situation, the church office is not open to the public.

The care and administration of the church will continue, so if you want to contact us feel free to do so by phone or email.

Church Office

PO Box 70, ORANGE NSW 2800

T: (02) 6362 5788

E: orange@nswact.uca.org.au

Rev Andrew Cunningham

T: (02) 6362 1140

E: andrewc@nswact.uca.org.au

Chairperson—Bob Nash

E: robertn@nswact.uca.org.au

W: orange.uca.org.au

Find us on 

 YouTube

Stage 5 – 6th September

- ⇒ Orange Uniting Church – 2 smaller services of up to 50 people. One ‘traditional’ and one ‘intergenerational’.
 - ◇ 8.45 am??
 - ◇ 10.00 am??
- ⇒ Messy Church may resume

Stage 6 - ?? ?? ????

- ⇒ Mustard Tree Café

At this stage, we invite the leadership in each group and location to consider the way forward in their context. A separate email to guide your thinking and planning will be sent to leaders in the next two weeks, and support will be offered as we work together to seek the best way forward.

You may also be interested to know that the maximum capacity of our churches and rooms using the four square metre rule is below, but please note that the **current maximum capacity permitted by government for any church location is 50 people throughout the whole venue**, and not the combined total of all the rooms.

Maximum per 4m² rule

Anson Street:

Church = 53

Main Hall = 50

Coffee Room = 14

Hall Foyer = 12

Reception = 6

Meeting Room = 4

Admin Office = 3

Minister's Office = 3

Female toilets = 4

Male toilets = 3

Kindergarten Hall = 24

Fusion Community Centre = 13

Fusion Kitchen = 2

Fusion Office = 2

Spring Hill Church = 22

Spring Hill Minster's Room = 4

Spring Hill Kinder Room = 6

Spring Hill Hall = 9

March Church = 17

Forest Reefs Church = 17

Byng Church = 13

Annual Leave and Chairperson's Report

I will be on annual leave next week, and so you will not receive a letter from me, but our chairperson, Bob Nash will write to you to report on the recent meetings of the Resources Team and Church Council.

Expect to hear about **chairs, the audio visual system and the proposed timeframe for the Orange Uniting Church (Anson Street) internal refurbishment**, and other things. There is lots happening as we make the most of our exile from the buildings!

The World of Jesus and Us: Poles Part but Connected at the Core (Poster attached)

with Professor Bill Loader

Five Interactive Lecture Presentations via Zoom

Mondays, 7.30 – 9.00 pm

20th July 2020 The Gospels and Jesus: Reassessing the Context and Content of Jesus' Message in the light of Recent Research

27th July 2020 Faith and the Bible: Companions in Conflict

3rd August 2020 An Evening with Herod the Great: Sex and Power in the World of Jesus

10th August 2020 Church and Community. Love and Legacy: How could "Good news for the poor" survive?

17th August 2020 The Role of the Bible for Christians and Churches: Facing the Practical Questions

Register with the Church Office if you would like to receive the Zoom invitation via email.

Soul Connections (Flyer attached)

We invite you to our new group, Soul Connections, on Fridays from 5.30pm-6.30pm, beginning on the 7th of August.

Please register your interest with the Church Office so that we can accurately plan for social distancing.

Pastor Kate Thornley writes, *"The spiritual journey is not always an easy one in that we need connections to help us in our journey, so that we can discern our life callings. For us as Christians this seeking leads to us seeking relationship with not only ourselves but also with the Divine.*

Soul Connections is going to hold us in a safe space that facilitates spiritual practices that allow us to slow down, pause, reflect and gain a sense of God in our lives. And in the slowing down and Being Still, we will be able to notice what is truly important in our lives.

By pausing with contemplative prayer, meditation and other spiritual exercises we are then able to develop and nourish a greater relationship with our God and in that gain a greater relationship with our true selves or our souls.

By intentionally pausing in our week and Being Still, we will allow our true selves to emerge into this journey we call life and thus be able to live more fully, in this mystery of life.'

Sunday Worship

Worship this Sunday will again be using the YouTube channel and Zoom (using the same Zoom invite as last week, and included again in the email with this letter).

Hopefully see you then.



Giving Direct

Confidential giving via electronic banking can be used for either a regular payment or one-off payment from your bank account to make your offering.

Account Name: Giving Direct – Orange UC

BSB: 634 634

Account Number: 100046973

- all deposits made to this account are taken as offering payments.

- do not use this account for any other church related deposits.