



Bible Readings for September 13, 2020

Exodus 14:19-31
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

Reflection From Ray

Peter in today's passage is just starting to learn about how being in the company of Jesus is going to change things; expand his horizon and stretch his capacity to be loving and forgiving. So Peter jumps in and asks Jesus how often he has to forgive, having just been taught about dealing with conflict – (what we read last week.) And Peter, suspecting Jesus is going to do another one of those unexpected (but by now suspected) boundary breaking acts gets in first and ups the ante. He takes the 3 times forgiving that was the accepted principle, and he not only doubles it, but then adds another time – giving a total of a whopping 7 times. Phew!

Jesus (I can see in my mind), looks at Peter with a wry smile, acknowledging Peter is beginning to catch something of the radical, life transforming power of the Spirit in this new reign of God... he look at him with love and says, "7 you think? ...77 times I say".

Peter asks Jesus for a *number*. Give me a number. Let me know the limit of my obligations.
cont. page 3

By now many people will have received the email I sent earlier today letting the congregation know that I have accepted a call to move to another church next year. I really regret having to inform people through emails or The Harvest and under normal circumstances this sort of announcement would be made at the conclusion of a worship service while we are together. Just another impact of the Lockdown. So I will be minister at Sunshine for another three and a half months, and have another Christmas with you all, but I sense the time has come for me to be on the move and for another minister to come and lead the congregation into its next phase.

And so i have accepted a call to become the minister at Carlton Uniting - also known as Church of All Nations.

In the meantime we move ahead with getting the new audio visual equipment purchased and installed in the church space. Two large TV's have been bought so will no longer, when we are back at face to face worship, be using the current projector screen. TV's will give a much clearer and brighter picture for words of songs and any videos we are showing in worship. Something we were doing a bit of in the 10.00am worship service prior to Lockdown. We are also talking with a cabinet maker to get the sound desk installed from where all this new equipment will be operated. That should happen soon also.

Sadly we have another person from the previous years of our church pass away. Joyce Billington will be remembered by those who used to attend the Deer Park church before it merged with Sunshine. Barbara Arnold used to pick her up and drop her home again. Joyce had moved to a nursing home in Vermont and died a few months ago but Barbara has only found out recently. She reached her rooth birthday and died just four days later. Go well faithful servant of the Lord and enter into the rest reserved for you.



Do**Yourself****A****Favour**

A more modern artist today.

Another tortured soul who is a member of the tragic "27 Club". Amy Winehouse was an exceptional talent whose wild and too brief career was cut short on July 23, 2011. The soul singer died of alcohol poisoning.

Turning to alcohol in the wake of the success of Back to Black, Amy Winehouse was often too drunk to perform and was again booed off the stage in Belgrade in June 2011 before canceling her Europe tour. A month later she died of alcohol poisoning. The singer with the unique jazz-soul voice, who was also mercilessly targeted by the paparazzi, seemed destined to die young.

Growing up, Amy Winehouse wanted only one thing: to perform. The daughter of a taxi driver and a pharmacist who was raised in the London suburb of Southgate, Winehouse was bored at school and rebelled against her teachers because she was only interested in one subject: music. At the age of 12, Amy competed confidently at the prestigious Sylvia Young Theater School. In her application, she wrote: "I would say that my school life and school reports are filled with 'could do better's' and 'does not work to her full potential.' I want to go somewhere where I am stretched right to my limits and perhaps even beyond.

cont on page 4



Continuing on with our hugely popular feature "Faces From Lockdown"

And this week our mystery member of the congregation has just a slit of their eyes showing. we should start a competition to guess their identity... but we will put you out of your misery. None other than Rennice Stanley! And with a Bulldog facemark. Thanks Rennice

I've been thinking about the way, when you walk down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs to let you by. Or how strangers still say "bless you" when someone sneezes, a leftover from the Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying. And sometimes, when you spill lemons from your grocery bag, someone else will help you pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other. We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot, and to say thank you to the person handing it. To smile at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress to call us honey when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder, and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass. We have so little of each other, now. So far from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange. What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these fleeting temples we make together when we say, "Here, have my seat," "Go ahead - you first," "I like your hat."

Danusha Laméris

The above piece was submitted by John Gibbins. Thanks John and a good reminder that we are always on the look out for interesting photos, recipes, reviews of book or films. Any little bits and pieces that help to make our weekly newsletter more interesting.



Mental Health Matters by Fiona Botcher

We are “a pilgrim people, always on the way towards a promised goal” (Basis of Union), yearning for the kind of inclusive diversity that defines the body of Christ, for: “There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body. It is the same with Christ.” (1Corinthians 12:12).

In the mental health wards, I’ve been greatly inspired by the work of Social Workers and Peer Support Workers. I’ve witnessed their incredible capacity to bring out the best in patients by genuinely empowering them within a system that too easily robs them of control.

Relinquishing power creates space for a patients’ own experience, wisdom and authority to be honoured and incorporated into their treatment and recovery. This kind of inclusion requires compromise and, sometimes, sacrifice. In systems with strong cultural biases, a genuine power shift is critical for authentic inclusion to be possible.

For our prayers and longings for inclusion to be realised, we need to call out imbalances of power and have the courage to sacrifice our own power and control. Without this genuine invitation, we cannot truly be formed into the image of Christ, one body with many parts.

Reflection From Ray cont from page 1

What is Peter asking?! The point I can reach when I can stop having to be loving or forgiving, and just revert to being myself! He wants to know just how much will be expected of him, how much is reasonable, how much is required. And so he suggests what by all accounts is a more-than-sufficient amount of forgiveness. Jesus, however, turns Peter’s question on his head by replying with a ridiculous, even impossible, reply. “You want to play the numbers game?” Jesus more or less asks, “okay, how about this one?” It’s not that Jesus wants Peter to increase his forgiveness quota, you see, it’s that he wants him to stop counting altogether simply because forgiveness, like love, is inherently and intimately relational rather than legal and therefore cannot be counted. Had Peter asked Jesus how many times he should love his neighbor, we’d perceive his misunderstanding: love can’t be quantified or counted. But he asks about forgiveness and we miss his mistake.... Someone once said that the scariest word in the entire New Testament is that tiny little word “as” in the Lord’s Prayer: “Forgive us our sins **as** we forgive those who sin against us.” That vital connection between God’s abiding forgiveness of us and of our in turn forgiving others tells us that we must forgive. It’s the family style for the family of God and it starts with the Father and goes on down from there. This is not some weird demand on God’s part, however. This is not some hoop we must jump through to earn our salvation or to perform like some trained dog just because God enjoys watching us do tricks. No, the reason for the connection between God’s forgiving us and our forgiving others is because of the sheer *power* of God’s forgiveness. It is so great that it simply *must and will* change us. Let’s avoid the error of the rigid religious legalist who can never be open to growing as a person

So focussed upon doctrinal purity that they forgot to love

So threatened by difference they neglected to welcome

So believing the last letter of the bible they did not see the person standing in front of them.

Do Yourself a Favour cont.

To sing in lessons without being told to shut up ... But mostly I have this dream to be very famous. To work on stage. It's a lifelong ambition. I want people to hear my voice and just...forget their troubles for five minutes." (cont page 4) Amy Winehouse was only 19 when she signed her first record deal. A year later, her debut album "Frank" was released in 2004 and immediately reached number 3 on the British charts. Not only did Amy sing, she also wrote about her life. On Frank she processed the relationship with her ex-boyfriend.

Amy was a white woman with a black soul voice, the critics enthused. She herself was inspired by the 1960s, calling Sarah Vaughan, Dinah Washington and Ella Fitzgerald her role models. The idiosyncratic singer also adapted a sixties fashion aesthetic with trademark beehive hairstyle and thick eyeliner.

But her mega success was coupled with increasing discomfort on stage and a fear of performing in front of large audiences. Perhaps to compensate, she began to roam the clubs and bars after concerts and drowned the pressure to perform in alcohol.

On one of her pub crawls, Amy met the heroin-addicted Blake Fielder-Civil and instantly fell for him. With her new lover she plunged more and more often into drug and alcohol excesses. When he left her after a few months, Winehouse was devastated and sang about their tumultuous relationship on the album Back To Black. The album earned her five Grammy awards and finally made her a world star.

But it was the song "Rehab" — about the unsuccessful attempt by her father and her manager to put Winehouse in a rehabilitation clinic — that dominated the charts.

She wrote the song in a couple of hours and it an anthem for a generation of young tortured Eighteen months after the split, Blake Fielder-knocked on Winehouse's door again. The two but the relationship was fraught. They divorced two years later in 2009.

Winehouse's career was concurrently stalling, often staggered drunk and her once powerful sounded weak and Audiences booed Concerts were and whole tours canceled — for reasons," said her management. But everyone knew that Winehouse had a alcohol problem.

On July 23, 2011, her bodyguard found her her London apartment. The death was alcohol poisoning.

"She could bring life like no other," an English journalist death. "But she was to live her own life."



Listen to Rehab by clicking [here](#) (should gone after all?!)

Season of Creation Prayer by UCA President Dr Deidre Palmer

Creator God, you move across our world, bringing light, new life and hope.

We give you thanks for the beauty of your creation, the intricate and interconnected web of life.

We give you thanks for the sacred earth, the air and water,
for the oceans that teem with life,
the rain that refreshes and sustains life,
the water that we drink that maintains life.

Christ Jesus, you come to bring renewal and reconciliation to the whole of creation.

We pray for all those places, creatures, and plants, that are suffering,
as humans exploit your Earth and its resources.

Forgive us for the destruction we have caused.

Guide us into the way of respect and care for the Earth and all living things.

We pray that you will renew our resolve to participate with you in the healing and renewal of our earth.