



Covid-19 FBC ANNOUNCEMENT 9.0

29th April 2020

Greetings FBC church family, we're glad to be joining you today, and trust all is well with you. Karyn's going to share a devotional thought with us in a moment, but I just want to say first how much I'm really appreciating our Monday prayer and those who join us faithfully for that, and those who I know are praying faithfully in your own time. Prayer is the engine room of the church. This is an important time to be trusting the Lord in prayer for now and seeking him and leaning on his wisdom for what lays ahead. Be prayerful. I want to encourage you to do something bold. Ask the Lord for one person to pray for, then pray and then let that person know (txt, email, call) that you've been praying. Let's lift one-another up in prayer.

Devotional thought

'We hear that in this time we are all in the same boat. But it's really not like that. We are in the same storm yes, but we are not in the same boat.

For some, lockdown is optimal and full of moments of reflection, of reconnection and peace. Life is easy in bare feet with a glass of wine or a cup of tea in hand.

For others this is a desperate crisis. For others they are facing real loneliness. For some it means peace, rest time and a bit of a holiday. For others this is torture as they wonder how to pay the bills.

So, we are not in the same boat. We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different. And each will emerge, in their own way, from that storm. Some with a tan from their pool. Others with scars on their soul.'

As some of you know one of my favourite Bible's is the Jesus Storybook Bible and I would like to read the Song of the Shepherd for you. You will recognise the passage from Psalm 23.

God is my shepherd and I am his little lamb. He feeds me. He guides me. He looks after me. I have everything I need. Inside, my heart is very quiet. As quiet as lying still in soft green grass. In a meadow, by a little stream. Even when I walk through the dark, scary, lonely places, I won't be afraid because my shepherd knows where I am. He is here with me. He keeps me safe. He rescues me. He makes me strong. And brave. He is getting wonderful things ready for me. Especially for me. Everything I ever dreamed of! He fills my heart so full of happiness I can't hold it all inside. Wherever I go I know God's never stopping, never giving up, unbreaking, always and forever Love will go too.

Prayer

Lord we thank you for the confidence we have in You. We thank you for your wise shepherding of us. We thank you that you keep us safe, you rescue us and you want the best for us. Thank you for making us strong and brave and for being there

with us when we walk in the dark, scary, lonely places. Thank you for all you are doing in our church and our country. We love you Lord and honour you. Amen.

Update

- You will know that we're in Alert level 3 now. This will be for at least 2 weeks. We don't know much beyond that. As soon as the elders have made a decision on when meeting together as normal will be, we'll bring that to you. We remain committed to following the Govt's guidelines for everyone's safety, which means a few more ZOOM meetings yet (which are working great BTW!) and our building – by-and-large, will continue to remain locked down for now.
- Prayer. Want to encourage you to join our ZOOM prayer gatherings on Monday. Let Louise know...And now's a great time to join a home group, let Derek know...
- A couple of weeks ago I made reference to a news article regarding events of Good Friday where Gaylene Burgess delivered Hope Booklets to folk in her immediate neighbourhood. The elders want you the church to know we have engaged with Gaylene through this and are working through a very positive and grace-filled process. Gaylene has offered an apology to the church and the elders have accepted this, offering Gaylene full forgiveness along with encouragement, prayer and mentoring support. We are moving forward. I would ask you church family to be prayerful for Gaylene and Tony please.
- Communications. Have an urgent grocery or pharmacy run – we have a system set up ready to serve you. We're asking that ALL calls please go to Gaylene Morgan through the office phone (07-8555 469).

Karyn and I want to say we're grateful for our church. We're seeing many of you press into God, serve others, adapt to new technology, rise above the challenge of this lockdown. Just marvellous!

And to conclude today, I've got those words of Isaiah rattling around in my brain, "behold I am doing a new thing, now it springs up do you perceive it" Now context is important (read for yourself in Isa. 40) but what could such words mean for us today? Could God be doing a new thing? Are there different things he wants us to be thinking about and praying for? I think God is saying what has been, won't necessarily be what we do. Be ready for anything folks!

*In Christ alone my hope is found, He is my light, my strength, my song
This cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My comforter, my all in all, here in the love of Christ I stand (In Christ Alone – CCLI #3350395)*

Blessings on all
Ross and Karyn

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