The Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta

Christ Church Tallangatta
&
The Mission District of St John's Thurgoona

The Reverend Canon Maryann Leonard

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Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
4th October 2026



We are a community of Christian Faith and Worship.

We are welcoming of all: and are inclusive of all. We offer fellowship and support in our Parish and the wider community
By the grace of God, we seek to increase our spiritual awareness, love of others and foster Christian values by example.

Introduction
The issue of legalism of prioritising law over love may be thought as a "spiritual" problem only. However, as we allow this week's Lectionary to speak, we discover that the way the law is used in both so-called "sacred" and "secular" contexts can be equally life-giving and/or equally destructive. The challenge is to allow the law its proper place, and use it to lead us to life, while ensuring that the same gift of life is available to all. May our worship lead us beyond legalism into a life that clearly demonstrates the power of the law of love.

Sentence
Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, let us press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3.13b–14

Collect
Let us pray. Almighty God, your Son Jesus was the stone rejected by the builders,
and, by your doing, he has been made the chief cornerstone: grant that, by the power of his Spirit working in us, we may become living stones built up into your dwelling place, a temple holy and acceptable to you; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Exodus 20.1-4, 7-9, 12-20

(God speaks God's commandments to the people of Israel who are terrified by the thunder, lightning, smoke and trumpet sounds. They ask Moses to speak to God on their behalf, because of their fear, but Moses reassures them that God is simply keeping the people in awe so they don't sin.)

And God spoke all these words: 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. 'You shall have no other gods before me. 'You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 'You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. 'Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, 'Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you. 'You shall not murder. 'You shall not commit adultery. 'You shall not steal. 'You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour. 'You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.' When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, 'Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not let God speak to us or we will die.' Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that

the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.' *Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.* **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 19
(A psalm celebrating creation which proclaims God's glory, and God's law which enlightens brings reward to those who keep it.)

The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament proclaims his handiwork;

One day tells it to another: and night to night communicates knowledge.

There is no speech or language: nor are their voices heard;

Yet their sound has gone out through all the world: and their words to the ends of the earth.

There he has pitched a tent for the sun: which comes out as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run his course.

Its rising is at one end of the heavens, and its circuit to their farthest bound: and nothing is hidden from its heat.

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul: the command of the Lord is true, and makes wise the simple.

The precepts of the Lord are right, and rejoice the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, and gives light to the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is clean, and endures for ever: the judgements of the Lord are unchanging, and righteous every one.

More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold: sweeter also than honey, than the honey that drips from the comb.

Moreover, by them is your servant taught: and in keeping them there is great reward.

Who can know their own unwitting sins?: O cleanse me from my secret faults.

Keep your servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the mastery over me:
so I shall be clean, and innocent of great offence.

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight: O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Second Reading: **Philippians 3**

(Paul, who has good reason for confidence under the law because of his upbringing and observance, values only the righteousness which he has received through Christ, and through which he knows the power of Christ's resurrection and participates in Christ's sufferings.)

Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh – though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ – yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus. All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. *Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.* **Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia. **Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia**
When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them. **Alleluia Alleluia Alleluia**

Gospel: **Matthew 21.33-46**

(*Jesus tells a story about a farmer who cultivates a vineyard and then rents it to tenant farmers, who, instead of giving the farmer his share of the fruit when its due, kills his servants and then the farmer's son. In this way, he explains, God's reign is being given to those who will produce fruit*.)

A Reading from the Holy Gospel According to Matthew
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

'Listen to another parable: there was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall round it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. 'The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them in the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. "They will respect my son," he said. 'But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, "This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance." So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. 'Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' 'He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,' they replied, 'and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures : '"The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone ; the Lord has done this , and it is marvellous in our eyes"? 'Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.' When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet. *This is the Gospel of the Lord,* **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ**



Prayers of the Faithful

Praise the Lord for He is good. Sing to God with thanksgiving.

Lord of the vineyard, rooted and grafted in you, your church bears fruit to your glory. Nourish and strengthen it for the task you purpose. Tend the vine you have planted. in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Lord of the vineyard, you expect nations coproduce the wine of justice. Raise up leaders who will promote condition in which all may flourish. We give thanks for Clarence our Bishop,

Michelle, Maryann, John and our own parish family. Defend the poor and week, the vulnerable and those easily overlooked. in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

The Lord of the vineyard, you give all people the ability to choose between right and wrong. Guide us in all our moral dilemmas and the new challenges we face. Keep us from evil intent and sliding into destructive ways. in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Lord of the vineyard, you prepare wholesome fruit to refresh and revive us. Quench our thirst for wholeness and healing. For all carers and families we pray for restoration of mind body and soul. We hold those who have requested prayer. *Alan(P), Natalie, Alison, Wendy and Olga.* Restore us in your mercy and bring us to declare your glory. in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Lord of the vineyard, you hold before us the cup of salvation. Raise up all have died in October, *Leonard Peters, Marnie Woodham and Gottfried Walkham* ……Bring us to share in the new wine of your kingdom. in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God our companion on the way, you walk behind, beside, beyond; you catch us unawares; break through the disillusionment and despair that can cloud our vision; hear us as we pray for ourselves .....; so that with wide-eyed wonder, we too may find our way and journey on as messengers of your good news. Let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us. **Our Father in heaven.....**



This week is a challenging follow on from last week, and may, in some ways, appear to contradict it. Where last week's emphasis was on inclusivity, and the Living Water of God that flows into every nook and cranny, this week the central image is the Law, and on how some are excluded from God's life because they have allowed the Law to become stagnant, repressive and legalistic. In the Exodus reading, the Moses journey continues, with the Israelites receiving God's Law. But, because of their fear, they choose a lifeless Law, passed on to them second-hand through Moses, over a relationship to which the Law is simply a doorway. Here the Law ends up being an end in itself, rather than a means to an end – intimacy with God. In the Isaiah reading, which connects with the Gospel, the Song of the Vineyard demonstrates what happens when God's people fail to live out the life that the Law is supposed to bring, and fail to find real relationship with God and one another. The fruit they produce, in this case, is rotten, rather than good and life-giving. In Philippians Paul, who could celebrate his righteousness under the law, express his disregard for legalistic purity, and embraces, rather, the life of Christ – both his resurrection and his suffering – for it is in Christ that he knows true life, and true connection with God and others. In Jesus' parable, it is the people of the law – the

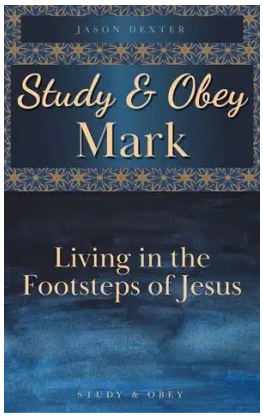
religious leaders, who are represented by the wicked tenants. Their inability to recognise their place as custodians of God's vineyard, and their unwillingness to receive the "farmer's son" reveals how their devotion to the law has robbed them and others of life, and has led them into a destructive legalism. In response to this, the Psalm offer us two songs that are helpful expressions of our longing for God, and our desire to keep God's law in its rightful place. In Psalm 19 God's law, like creation, is shown to be simply a way that God is revealed, and is a gift that brings life – which is as it should be. In Psalm 80 the response of grief and prayer for the vulnerable vineyard that has failed to produce fruit guides us away from judgement and into intercession for those (including ourselves) who make of the law an idol and end up producing fruit that is contrary to God's life and God's reign. So, here at last, we recognise that this week is not a contradiction of last week, but a development of it. The only ones who end up excluded are those who use the law to exclude others. The result is less a judgement than a consequence. When Christ seeks to include all, those who insist on excluding some, end up only excluding themselves. What a tragedy that the Law, which is designed to bring life, should become such a destructive idol for some – and what a warning against any tendency to legalism we might find in ourselves.

GLOBAL APPLICATION: The issue of legalism may, at first glance, seem to be a purely religious one, with little relevance to wider society where the rule of law is usually held up as the only basis for organising society. However, on closer inspection some fascinating insights may emerge. To begin with the law, whether "secular" or "sacred" is never intended to be an end in itself. It is always only meant to be a way to a life of justice, peace, equity and community. When the law does its work well, people are encouraged to live considerately and respectfully, and to abide by principles that seek the common good. However, the law is too easily recruited to the very agendas that it is supposed to protect us against. One example might be the aggressive way that copyright law is being enforced in the face of changing ways of consuming media and the arts. In a system where wealthy executives control intellectual property and make a lot of money out of it, there is little will to change to embrace new realities with the result that ordinary citizens are viewed as criminals, and even artists are prevented from benefiting from their own work when it has come under the control of powerful corporations. In similar ways, political lobby groups in industries as diverse as power, food production, pharmaceuticals and international trade ensure that lawmakers become their allies in the accumulation of wealth and the criminalising of anyone who would get in the way of their quest for profit. Again, lists upon lists of examples could be given, but you need look no further than the political influence exerted by petroleum companies, or the laws that control the use of patented seeds. The net result is that the law, which should have brought life, equity, justice and the common good, has been manipulated to favour the powerful, to pamper the rich and to keep the poor and unconnected in check. The vineyard is now truly producing rotten fruit, and those who point this out are often mocked, persecuted or even arrested. And this reality

exists in so-called "developed" and "civilised" countries as much as those that are considered to be under the control of "tyrants". In the face of this, followers of Christ are called to speak the truth, to uphold the values of life, peace and justice, and stand against the law when it becomes the servant of evil and oppression. Such was the prophetic task of the Church in apartheid South Africa. Such remains the prophetic task of the Church in a world of fossil fuel dependence, widespread poverty, AIDS, war and globalisation.

LOCAL APPLICATION: The legalistic application of law is a destructive influence in relationships from families to faith communities. The parable of the vineyard is a powerful description of what this looks like. Legalistic people, who believe they control the "vineyard" (which can be truth, a particular community, a particular ministry, a family or a person), impose strict regulations on it, sucking all the "fruit" (energy, love, connection, wisdom, giftedness etc.) out of it and leave it in the position that it is only able to produce fruit that is rotten. Or, alternatively, they leave the "vineyard" in a situation where its fruit is available only for them. And, when others try to bring insight, healing or correction into this situation, the legalists react aggressively, using the law (or their version of it) as a club with which to beat all opponents. Such abuse is all too common in our churches and in the homes of those who claim to follow "the Bible". It's another situation in which the law (or the Bible) which is intended as a doorway to life, ends up becoming an end in itself, and robs life. It is this abusive use of the law that leads husbands to force their wives to "submit" or parents to force their children into terrified adherence. It is this abusive use of the law that leads pastors to control their congregations through threats and self-righteous judgements. And it is this abusive use of the law that leads Christians to judge and condemn those with whom they disagree – even those whom they should consider to be their brothers and sisters in Christ. Whenever law becomes the focus of any relationship or community, people end up lifeless and battered. Ultimately the only "righteousness" that has value is that which Paul speaks about – the righteousness which is given to us as a gift in Christ, and which draws us into the life and joy of Christ's resurrection, even as it leads us to serve and love others with cross-embracing self-giving. From another perspective, the temptation is always there for us to choose law over the unpredictable, scary journey into intimacy with God. Like the Israelites, we may find dealing with God too difficult or frightening, and so we may settle for rituals or traditions which lose their ability to point us to God because we make them idols to replace God. Ultimately, the truth we must face this week is that whenever we choose law over relationship – with God or with one another – we lose life, and we become destructive, like vineyards that produce only rotten fruit. https://sacredise.com/proper-22a/

Announcements & Upcoming Events



1pm Wednesdays @ the Cottage. All resources are supplied. This group is informal and we also share fellowship.

Next Year in our Anglican Cycle, we will be in Year B, the Year of Mark. Get some of the background of the author and the scripture that we will journey with in 2027.



Alter Servers/ Eucharistic Assistants

I am hoping a day in school holidays for ALL who serve, will be able to come together for a learning session, followed by Morning or Afternoon Tea. This will constitute a group called a 'Server's Guild'. This is a very exciting time. Thank you to those who have offered to serve.

This session will include not only how to set up and clear after the Eucharist, but we will learn the different vestments, seasons of the church and yes how to wash & iron linen correctly.



We are an Anglo- catholic Diocese. We can call it a Mass or Eucharist. I am proposing a Mid-Week Service. Now this may not suit everyone. But I will take suggestions for one week only!

Messy Church is NOT only for kids!!!!! It is Multigenerational. After the success of our first Messy Church in Thurgoona, our next one will be the **25th October 4-6pm**

We are learning about Abraham. Abraham is the foundational patriarch in the Bible whose faith and obedience to God established the covenant and lineage leading to the nation of Israel and Jesus Christ.

Free Meal: Patriarchal Parma Chicken, Messy Mash Potato, Three Nation Carrots, Mystical Peas, Tribal Cauliflower & Cheese, Wild Chocolate Self Saucing Pudding.

Some pics of Messy Church last Sunday. The lion was very scary indeed, his mouth was waiting to eat it's prey. We just had to put a sock in it! We had very faithful and prayerful Daniels! Thank you to the Messy Church Team.















Both Thurgoona and Tallangatta Playgroups are taking a break over the school holidays.

Tallangatta resume 8th of October & Thurgoona resume on the 16th October.

Both of these outreaches have become very popular with locals. We are under the auspice of the 'Christian Playgroup Network'. This term both playgroups will be making use of the Spring sunshine and there will be many activities outside.

Anglican Parish of Thurgoona Bunnings Cake Stall Friday 9th October. 8:30-12noon approximately.

All hands on deck if you can bend down that far lol.

We need baked goods of all kinds. Please see Rev'd Maryann if you can help. Put your Baking Number on a sticker & list all ingredients and when baked. If you don't have a number please see R'd,M. You can drop off theses goods to the Cottage or bring down to Bunnings East Albury.

It is still school holidays in NSW and this stall is usually very profitable. We also have great fun and use it as an outreach to show the wider community what projects we are working on and to give information about our church if asked.

After the Stall, we may need to go shopping for our Parish Playgroup & Community Garden supplies.



Parish Annual Meeting Thurgoona. Sunday 8th November after our Eucharist. It will be held in the church. Followed by a delicious luncheon in the Cottage. Please set aside this date. Arrange all friends and family to visit after. lol 😜 This is an important meeting. We will also be revealing our Mission & Action Plan.



Gillian Baker and David Mitchell Memorial Diocesan Environment and Sustainability Trust Award 2026

"It is with pleasure that I write to you on behalf of the Trustees of the Gillian Baker and David Mitchell Memorial Diocesan Environment and Sustainability Trust Award, to thank you for your application for the 2026 award and to inform you that the Trustees have selected your application for the winning award for this year.

Your application demonstrated the elements for eligibility through generating environmental and sustainability awareness, Parish and community engagement, investment applicability and of a scale that could be expanded and replicated. It was also impressive as it aimed to include children and young people, which gives them a meaningful role in the parish, and supports succession planning.

An announcement of your success will be made on 3 October 2026 at a special event being organised by the Bishop, to address several Diocesan items, including creation issues. We ask that you keep this announcement confidential until the announcement is made. At the presentation you will be awarded a **cheque for $2000** and a certificate of achievement"

I would like to thank you once again, on behalf of the Trustees, for you applications (both in 2025 and 2026) and congratulate you on making this successful second application which now makes you the winner of the 2026 award.

Yours sincerely

Suzie Don Leonard

Suzie Don Leonard
GB&DM award administrator.

Jill Aplin and Rev'd Maryann were meticulous in their submission application for this wonderful award. It is more heartening to know that one of the Trustees is our beloved Glenda and we acknowledge the contribution of David in his lifetime of service to environmental and sustainable lifestyles and outcomes.

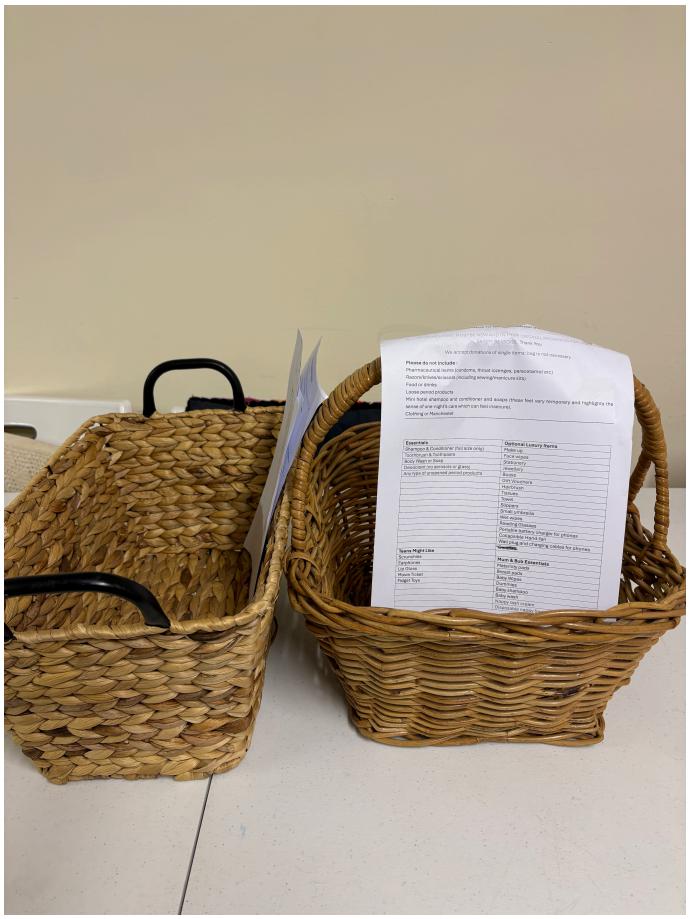
Thank you to Thurgoona Parish Council for supporting this application. This garden will be for ALL parish members and our Little Wildlings' Playgroup family. Jill will take her seat on the board of Trustees for this award for 2027.
Watch our space.....Literally.

ANGLICAN
MOTHERS UNION
AUSTRALIA

'16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence'

The 16 Days is an annual international campaign that begins on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day. The World Wide Mothers Union have supported this campaign for many years. There will be more about these 16 days in upcoming Pew Sheets.

In the lead up to this event, our parish AMUA, would like to support our local Centre Against Violence. At the front of the church on the seats where John sits, there will be two baskets. There will be a list of items you are able to donate for 'Care Bags' prepared by the Centre Against Violence. There is also a list of what NOT to donate. Please put your items in the baskets and once they are full we will donate. We will be doing this until the 10th December. Hoping for your support.





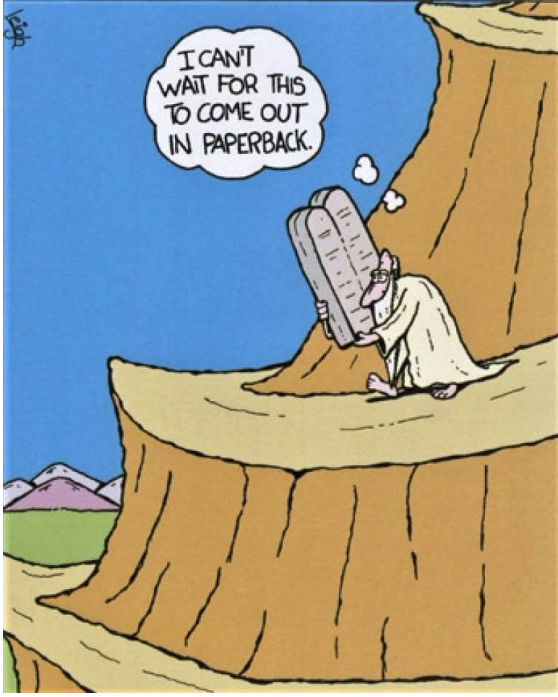
In the Foyer of the church there are flyers available for you to take home and read. There will be more awareness information in the coming weeks. We are also hoping to have a couple of guest speakers. Thank you Karen for the pamphlets.

This project is not only for MU members to participate in. It is for everyone. For more comprehensive information about MU please go to their website.
Google: *Anglican Mothers Union Australia*

You can tell this photo is fake because the road has no potholes..



SOME CALL IT "SPRING"





I PREFER "HUNTING SEASON"



THIS WEEK



"What's it like having a toddler?"

It's very simple actually, it's like having a blender without a lid

MORGAN ELLIS

Traditional Christian Hymns
Word Search

S U R V E Y P D K F Y U K P L
H C Z K G H N I O W L P B I P
N E S I R E N U L F O R V B F
B D B A I G N I U A H E E G E
G A E R I D K F F I S D C X R
A T F S A G L A Y T P L M H M
K Y G T S L Q Y O H L O R Y P
Y W I M E E W R J F N F W V S
S O A W L Z L X Q U M N J E D
N J V X I Q Q B R L T V G V R
G T Q R G N G G G N S A Z K C
E S H K Q O F V R E L Z E I M
P X P O S R F F A S P Q Q R F
S S E R T R O F C S B I W Z G
U G Z M Z U F K E Q R B N P I

A Mighty FORTRESS Is Our God
All Hail the POWER of Jesus' Name
Amazing GRACE
Because He LIVES
BLESSED Assurance
Christ the Lord Is RISEN Today
Great Is Thy FAITHFULNESS
How GREAT Thou Art
HOLY, Holy, Holy
How Firm a FOUNDATION
It Is WELL with My Soul
JOYFUL, Joyful, We Adore Thee
What a FRIEND We Have in Jesus
When I SURVEY the Wondrous Cross

Instructions:
Find and circle the words in ALL CAPS listed above. Words may be forward, backward, vertical, or diagonal within the puzzle.

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You may copy & distribute this word search without restriction as long as this copyright notice remains in place.

THIS WEEK

Monday 5th:	Small Green Shed Refurbishment
Tuesday 6th:	10:00am Safe Church Zoom. *Rev'd Maryann* 11:00am Towong Early Childhood Management Site Meeting @ Tallangatta. *Rev'd Maryann* 1:00pm Bingo Tallangatta 6:00pm *Rev'd Maryann Uni*
Wednesday 7th:	10:00am Craft @ The Cottage 1:00pm Bible Study @ The Cottage
Thursday 8th:	10:30am Playgroup Tallangatta resumes T 4. 6:00pm R*ev'd Maryann Uni* 7:30pm Safe Church Zoom. *Rev'd Maryann*
Friday 9th:	8:30am -12noon Bunnings Cake Stall. 2:00pm Playgroup Planning & Thurgoona Website Planning.
Saturday 10th:	Sunday Preparations 1:00pm Bingo Thurgoona.

Date	Welcomer	Reader 1	Reader 2	Prayers	Morning Tea	Sacristy Eucharist Assistance	Flowers	Cleaners
04/10/2026	Karen	Jill	Greg	Glenda	Greg	John	Jill	Leonard's
11/10/2026	Elaine	Wendy	Lyn	Glenda	Greg	David	Jill	Narell

Anglican Parish of Tallangatta BSB 803070 (WAW) Acc No: 100151216

Anglican Parish of Thurgoona: BSB: 640 000 (Hume) Acc No:1113-34891