



# The Messenger

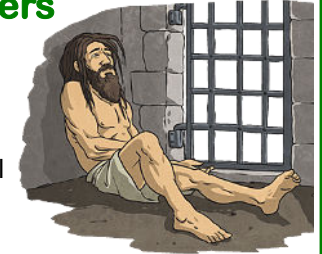
South Mandurah Uniting Church's Weekly Newsletter

Welcome to our Sunday Service of worship,  
commencing at **9-30am** every Sunday



## We Cannot Not Be Sinners

Most people are loathe to admit that they are just generally bent toward the bad, inclined to do it wrong. So when the Christian tradition declares to any and all, "You are a sinner," most people these days reply, "What did I do?" If sin exists at all, it is merely episodic, an occasional (and inexplicable) "lapse" from our better nature, which is at bottom "pretty good."



How foreign is the notion articulated by Emil Brunner (1889 - 1966), a renowned twentieth century theologian from Switzerland. Brunner once noted that we can, in principle, avoid any particular sin, and we often do. Few if any people give in to every dark impulse. The average man, whether or not he is particularly religious, resists many temptations that come his way on the average day. He does not slip the Snickers bar into his coat instead of paying for it, does not exceed the speed limit, does not shove aside the person ahead of him to get onto the train, and does not grab or grope at the co-worker in the attractive dress.

Brunner noted that in principle the sinner can, and often does, avoid any particular sin, but what we cannot do is avoid every sin. We cannot not be sinners. We cannot claim that we have never done it wrong. We cannot promise that we will never do another wrong thing, speak another cross word, or think another angry thought in the future. Even if the alcoholic promises never to take another drink or the addicted gambler promises to never make another bet --and even if they keep those promises--what they cannot promise is that in addition to staying sober or refraining from gambling, they will also remain absolutely sinless.

Evil is everywhere and often comes in the most banal, ordinary of trappings. Mark 6:14-29 reminds us of this, too. John the Baptist was killed not because of the machinations of world-class evil or the titanic doings of horrifying figures of towering, marrow-chilling stature. No, John was killed because somebody said something silly in a boozy moment of untoward sexual bravado. It's not quite the end we imagined for God's chosen servant John! So John was killed because of his commitment to his faith and his death was the culmination of the actions by the two sinners, King Herod and his wife Herodias. John the Baptist will be forever remembered as a heroic martyr and King Herod as a fool and villain.

Scott Hoezee, Comments and Observations on Mark 6:14-29 (Edited)

## Pentecost 8 14 July 2024



Welcome: Keith & Jaren Picking  
Flowers: Flowers kindly donated  
Coffee/Tea: Cynthia & David Clive  
Reader: Racquel Gunter  
Kids Church: Anita Alberastine  
Church Rep: Rev. Mike Fawcett  
Worship Leader: Yoy Alberastine  
Speaker: Rev. Mike Fawcett  
(Communion)

## Pentecost 9 21 July 2024

Welcome: John & Sue Lawrence  
Flowers: Sue Lawrence  
Coffee/Tea: Cynthia Falconer & Pauline Terblanche  
Reader: Jaren Picking  
Kids Church: Kerry Lawson  
Church Rep: Kerry Lawson  
Worship Leader: Andrew Telfer  
Speaker: Piet Speyers



## Readings from the Lectionary

2 Sm 6:1-5, 12b-19

Ps 24

Eph 1:3-14

Mk 6:14-29

2 Sm 7:1-14a

Ps 89:20-37

Eph 2:11-22

Mk 6:30-34, 53-56



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### Halls Head Bendigo Bank details for electronic transfers:

A/C Name: Uniting Church in Australia-South Mandurah Congregation

BSB: 633-000 A/C No: 117072207

It is optional whether you include your name as a reference for the payment.



*Our Vision: "United in Christ we reach out to build loving relationships that deepen faith and enrich lives."*

## A Prayer for Today

Dear Lord,

It is such a privilege that we get to commune with You each day. Thank You for Your Spirit that has made us alive to the things that are above. Once we were dead in our trespasses and sins, but You have made us alive together with Christ. Thank You for giving us Your Holy Spirit as our guide and as a seal of Your promises to us.

In this season of Pentecost, we reflect on the work of Your Spirit. He has been at work from the beginning and continues to work mightily within us. Please help us to be aware of Your Spirit's guidance throughout our days. Keep us from suppressing Your Spirit's guidance, and help us to be attentive to His leading.

Help us to grow in the knowledge of Your Word so that we might be able to discern when You are speaking to us. Help us to be sensitive to Your Spirit, and keep us from grieving Your Holy Spirit. Help us to live according to Your Spirit and to put to death the desires of the flesh.

In Jesus' name, amen.

<https://theprayerpocket.com/pentecost-prayers/> (Edited)



The LORD is my strength and song.

## A Christian Understanding of Worth

When we attempt to live a life worthy of the Gospel it is because our understanding of "worth" is far different from the world's.

John the Baptist was not beheaded because he went along with the status quo. John gave his life because of his commitment to truth as he understood it, much like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his struggles with Nazism and Hitler. Being a pastor in the German Lutheran Church, Bonhoeffer was forced to choose between his loyalty to God or to an insane ruler. He was executed in 1945 for the opposition he voiced to the satanic rule of Hitler.

As G.K. Chesterton so concisely wrote: "It is not that Christianity has been tried and found wanting, but tried and found difficult." Life has many roads to travel. However, we choose the road on which the shadow of the cross falls. It always leads to freedom and to victory when the final lap of the race is run. Some 2000 years later, we speak of the reigns of the Herods and Caesars with pity and disdain, but the names of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ live on as those for whom life was lived with devotion and courage.

Eric S. Ritz, Faith in Conflict



*A very warm welcome is extended to any visitors. We trust that you will be blessed during this time of worship and invite you to fellowship with us*



## Do You Serve the Real King?

If you play the game of chess, you are familiar with the pieces on the board – from the lowly pawn to the all-important king.

If one of your pawns gets "captured" – it's not that big a deal. But if your king gets captured – the game is over. Pawns have little power – are usually used to set up other pieces or sacrificed to help clear the way for the other, more important pieces – like the rook, knight, bishop, or queen. Kings, however, while their movement is somewhat limited when compared to the other pieces – are the one piece you want to protect at all cost.

That's the way it is in life, also – isn't it?

People will strive to be a king – but nobody wants to be a pawn. The truth, however, is that even kings can end up being pawns (like Herod Antipas did in today's Gospel account) – and we have to be careful that we live our lives following and serving the real King – God – instead of being someone else's pawn.

Do you serve the real King - God - or are you someone else's pawn?

Bill Hayes, Kings and Pawns, ChristianGlobe Networks, Inc.



## Sunday Prayer Group



Members of the congregation and visitors are reminded that there is an informal prayer group meeting held at the church on Sunday mornings from 9-00am to 9-15am. All are welcome.



**Blessings & Congratulations To:**

**Brian & Barbara Smith**

**Celebrating their 59<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

**David Jessup** Thursday 18 July  
**God Bless and warm wishes**  
**To you upon your birthday**

## Pastoral Care

For pastoral care or spiritual guidance please contact:

**Rev. Mike Fawcett**

M: 0412 243 677

E: [fawcettmichael176@gmail.com](mailto:fawcettmichael176@gmail.com)

**OR** Any member of the leadership team (their names are overleaf)



## Your Messenger

If you are not receiving this Newsletter by email and wish to do so, please contact Peter at: [prpunch@lasar.net.au](mailto:prpunch@lasar.net.au)

Any articles, notices or prayer requests for the Messenger should be emailed to Peter no later than

**5pm Wednesdays**

**Thank you**

