A Beautiful Dream

Mary, the mother of Jesus, reminds us of the importance of hopelessly idealistic beautiful dreams. This may sound like a contradiction but bear with me. First, have a look at what the pregnant Mary sings when she meets her aged relative Elizabeth who is carrying John the Baptist:

"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me, holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. Luke 1 (NIV)

Mary’s song sings from a point of view far in the future after the beautiful dream has come about. God has filled the hungry with good things, he has lifted up the humble and brought down the rulers who humiliated them. You might want to hear a verse about how God did all this but you will not get your wish. It is not that sort of song. Instead, it is a dreaming song - a song of future victory.

Sometimes we lose all hope when we cannot figure out how to achieve these hopelessly naïve dreams. The how and the method eludes us and the presence of so many obstacles in others and in ourselves makes us despair.

In a world where change is difficult it is only hope that gives us strength to carry on. And it is the simple naïve dream that feeds that hope. The naïve dream knows what must happen and yearns for that sort of world. The naïve dream is fed by heartfelt desires for a more loving world, a more just community, a world at peace with itself and God.

It is this hope inspired person who is able to muddle their way through all the obstacles and make the world a little bit better. It is true that the naïve dream will not be fulfilled in that lifetime but it is one step closer. In this way, Christians have worked for hundreds of years trying to heal the sick, provide literacy for the whole world, and treat every person with dignity. And guess what? All of those hopeless idealists have made a significant measurable difference in the quality of life on this planet over the last thousand years. Hopeless naïve dreams make a difference.

One of the tragedies of life is that many teenagers have great ideals but are eventually worn down by their elders telling them not to be naïve. Many people think that teenagers are self-centred. While this may be true with some, my experience is that there is a whole lot more who are keen to see the world become a better place.

Years ago people used to joke about how yesterday’s hippies became today’s business executives. It was dark humour because it was mocking people’s loss of high ideals in the face of hard economic realities. There is nothing a cynic loves to see more than idealists lose their hope. I just think it is a tragedy, because a world without idealists quickly descends into "looking out for number one" in a hard competitive world.

I am not ashamed to be a naïve idealist because I believe the "how to get there" can be worked out with enough clever motivated people. This has happened in the past over and over again.

So what is your hopelessly naïve dream for this world? Name it. Cherish it. Let no-one tell you that there are too many obstacles. Instead, do what Mary did; turn it into a song and hum it to yourself throughout the day. Who knows what may happen next?

Graeme
God of hope
be with us
in our Advent journey
to the stable and beyond,
be with us
in our meeting and
in our travelling together,
be with us in our worship
and our praying together,
be with us
in our Advent journey
to the stable and beyond,
our God of hope.

This Advent-time we
remember Mary and
Joseph, giving thanks for their
faithfulness, courage and
obedience, stepping out into the
unknown in the strength of
your Spirit,
playing their part in the
fulfilment of your plan
to bring your prodigal
people home again.
We pray that their
example might be
the pattern of our lives,
that when your gentle
whisper breaks through the
clamour of this world
and into our small corner,
we might be ready to
listen, and having
listened, to act.

Isaiah 35: 1-10

JOY OF THE REDEEMED

The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like
the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice
greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon
will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and
Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the
splendour of our God.

Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees
that give way; say to those with fearful hearts,
‘Be strong, do not fear; your God will come,
he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution
he will come to save you.’

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and
the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the
lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue
shout for joy.

Water will gush forth in the wilderness and
streams in the desert. The burning sand
will become a pool, the thirsty ground
will become a spring, the dry land
will become a stream of water;
the desert will become a pool,
and the dry land a water spring.
The high ways will become waterways;
the dry, thirsty ground will become a water spring.
Mary’s Song

And Mary said: My soul glorifies the Lord and
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has
been mindful of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me
blessed, for the Mighty One has done great
things for me, holy is his name. His mercy
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proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought
down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up
the humble. He has filled the hungry with good
things but has sent the rich away empty. He
has helped his servant Israel, remembering to
be merciful to Abraham and his descendants for
ever, just as he promised our ancestors.'

Ref: New International Version - UK (NIVUK)
Summer Programme

On Sunday we read the story of John the Baptist, a man who followed the call of God out into the wilderness where he lived on bugs and dressed in rags. He later followed God back to Jerusalem where he encouraged people to repent their sins and be made clean again. We talked about listening to God and leaving your mistakes with him. I hope your own reading of Chapter 1 is going well for you. Next week we will read about Jesus and why people wanted to spend time with him.

Week 2: A hole in the roof
Short Stuff: Mark 2:1-12
Reading: Mark 2&3
If you are into arts and craft, maybe you could make a diorama of the story. That would be cool to see.
I pray God blesses your family this week. It would be great to find out how the Spirit has been moving in your life and how you plan to respond to that.

Alistair

Church Life is here!

All the waiting in anticipation has come down to this: Please “Take it home, Read and Enjoy!”
(Or at least look at the pictures!)

As always, we need you to pick up your copy of Church Life, but also to take any for friends/neighbours/fellow LFC folk, that you may be able to deliver.
That way, they won’t just sit on that table unread over Christmas and January.

Jacob

KIDS HOPE AUS.

“WELL, WHAT A LADY!”

That’s how one of our Kids Hope students described Nola on Wednesday evening during our annual Kids Hope dinner which celebrated our 10 years of our partnership with our local primary school! Sincere thanks to Tucker Club for providing a scrumptious meal for 40 grateful people. Irene once again excelled herself with her creative skills in decorating the tables. Santa (alias Bruce) was once again a hit. Graeme and Kathy’s message of God’s love with a Star Wars theme was well received.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SHORTBREAD MAKERS – OUR KIDS HOPE FAMILIES LOVE TO RECEIVE THEIR PLATE OF SHORTBREAD AS A GIFT FROM OUR CHURCH.

Thank you to all our faithful mentors: Nola, Margaret, Joy, Liz, Janet, Ros, Graham, Stewart, and Bill.

Special mention to Nola, Stewart and Graham, who have each clocked up 10 years of faithful service and are not ready to retire yet!

Thank you to YOU, for your continued prayerful support!

KIDS HOPE AUS builds caring relationships:
one child, one hour, one Church, one school

Robyn

Congratulations to GRAE ME HARRISON, who celebrates 30 years since his Ordination on 14th December 1986.

Leith Park Roster

Would you like to be on the Leith Park roster to give Beverley a lift to and from church each Sunday?

Please contact Kay if you would like to be included.

Kay

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Kay

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Please contact Kay if you would like to be included.

Kay
NEWS FROM THE MARCHERS

Marching finished for this year with a very good attendance. After our session, we had a lovely morning tea together, and some of our past Marchers were also able to be with us. It was great to be all together again.

We have had a good year and I thank all the Marching Group for their support during the year. We will consider resuming again on the 7th February 2017. Thank you for the gift voucher for deja vu and your best wishes.

I will enjoy buying myself something special. I hope you all have a peaceful, blessed and joyous Christmas.

Janette

CONTACTS AT LIVING FAITH CHURCH

We acknowledge, with respect, the heritage of the Wurundjeri people, in this place.

Website:

Phone: 9435-8797
Street Address: 37 Grimshaw Street,
Greensborough 3088
Postal Address: PO Box 291,
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MINISTERS

Graeme Harrison:
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Mob: 0422 490 323
E-mail:
graeme.harrison@livingfaithchurch.org.au

Glen Coleman:
Mob: 0414 524 536
E-mail:
glen.coleman@livingfaithchurch.org.au

SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES

10:00am - All-age Worship service
5:00pm - Worship @ 5

ARTICLES FOR GETTING CONNECTED

Articles or information for publishing in Getting Connected, should be sent to Getting Connected by 6:00pm on Thursday evening.

Email:
gettingconnected@livingfaithchurch.org.au

SUNDAY 10:00 AM SERVICE

If you have trouble seeing words on the overhead screen, copies of the songs are available from the steward’s table as you come in to worship. The sermon is also recorded each week. If you want a copy for someone who cannot attend church, please speak to the person managing the sound system.

Childrens’ Ministries:
Creche: For under 4’s in the Playgroup Room. The Parent/Carer needs to sign children in/out. If you require this service please talk to a Steward.

POND: For 4 year olds to Grade 6 on the stage area at the back of the Hall. Children will be supervised until collected by Parents/Carers.

THUNDER: Secondary aged children in the Youth Room.
Children will leave to go to their ministry areas as directed during the worship service.

If you are going on holiday or need to communicate a concern or prayer request, please speak to the Elder-in-charge.
Living Faith Church

Christmas Caroling
Living Faith Church (us) will be having their annual Christmas Carols on Sun, 18th Dec at 6:00pm
Mark it in your diary, plan to bring family and friends. Let Helen or Anita know if you have a song/musical item/poem/recitation/joke/choral extravaganza to share. We would LOVE to hear from you!!
Anita

Give Seeds of Hope This Christmas
Your gift to the Christmas Bowl can help a Zimbabwean family facing severe hunger to always have enough to eat. Farmers like Jessina are now facing one of the worst droughts ever seen in Zimbabwe and their crops have failed. Your gift today can give families like Jessina the seeds, training and tools they need to grow enough food to feed their family. Through conservation farming, families can double the amount of food they grow, providing enough to feed their families and an extra source of income so they can send their children to school and give them a brighter future.

GIVE SEEDS OF HOPE THIS CHRISTMAS

Rosters News
2017: Feb-Jul
Church rosters have been completed and have been emailed to people. A copy has been posted on the noticeboard.
Jane Roster Preparer

Saturday, 10th December - Family Film Night: “A Muppet Carol”
c10:00am - Music Group 2
5:30pm - Family Movie Night, Sausage Sizzle and Icecream - “The Muppet Carol” - Contact: Glen

Sunday, 11th December - Advent 3
10:00am - All-Age Worship - “God THROUGH Us”
5:00pm - Sunday @ 5 - Mary and Jesus - Contact: Glen

Monday, 12th December
7:00pm - Primary Club
7:45pm - Monday Night Bible Study Life Group - Contact: Bryan

Tuesday, 13th December
10:00am - Tuesday Playgroup - Contact: Bill
7:30pm - Kingdom Prayers - Contact: Graeme/Glen
8:00pm - Church Council Executive meeting - Contact: Joan

Wednesday, 14th December
10:30am - Social Justice Ministry Group Meeting
1:00pm - Wednesday Life Group - Contact: George/Lesley
2:00pm - Caregivers and Friends meet - Group 2 - “Rozzi’s Café” - Contact: Janet or Jacob
7:30pm - Wednesday Evening Bible Study Life Group (WEBS) - Meal together at Lower Plenty Hotel - Contact: Jacob
8:00pm - Manse Life Group - Contact: Graeme

Thursday, 15th December
8:00pm - Thursday Night Life Group - Contact: Jeremy

Friday, 16th December

Saturday, 17th December
c10:00am - Music Group 3

Sunday, 18th December - Advent 4
10:00am - All-Age Worship - “God With Us ALWAYS”
6:00pm - BYO Picnic with families on Grass at church front - Contact: Anita
7:00pm - Carols and Special Items on Grass at Church front - Contact: Anita or Helen