

WELCOME TO PENSHURST ANGLICAN CHURCH

September 6, 2020

Nehemiah; “Out of the Ashes!”



Today:
“The Hope and Burden of Perfection”



On-line Preaching Program

Current Sermon Series: **Nehemiah; “Out of the Ashes!”**

What’s the future hold for us? Can we rebuild our world out of the ashes of the Covid-19 pandemic? Can grief be a springboard to greater faith? These are some of the questions we will explore in this 12-week series of sermons.

Sept 6	<i>“The Hope and Burden of Perfection”</i>	Nehemiah 5:1-19
Sept 13	<i>“Potential Division”</i>	Nehemiah 6:15– 7:5
Sept 20	<i>“A New Normal”</i>	Nehemiah 8:1-18

Please note: A shorter version of these sermons will be preached **one week later** in our ‘live’ church services.

New Sunday Services

Starting September 6th, two new church services will be offered:

- ♦ From **9:00am - 10:00am** an *English-only* service will be held which will include 2 hymns, a Bible reading, a short sermon and Holy Communion.
- ♦ From **11:00am - 12:00am**, we will have an entirely *bi-lingual* service with 2 songs, a Bible reading, a short sermon, and prayers. Holy Communion will be served just once a month. For families, there will be a simple *Children’s Program* offered in the hall during the sermon and prayer time.

(Please note: The full English sermon will continue to be offered online.)

Booking your seat: Due to 4m2 rule of social distancing, our church can only hold **50 people**. Therefore, **everyone** (including children), must **‘book’** their seat in advance for the service you choose. (This is the only way to control the numbers at our services and assure that we have all the necessary contact tracing details.) Online reservations will open each Monday at 9am and close 1 1/2 hours before that service begins.

Covid Safety Procedures: As you enter the church, our ushers will:

- ♦ confirm your booking details
- ♦ take your temperature
- ♦ make sure your hands are sanitised, and
- ♦ give you a pre-packaged alcohol wipe to wipe down the immediate area in which you were seated after the service.
- ♦ You are encouraged to bring your own face mask.
- ♦ You will also be dismissed by seating sections so the doorways do not get crowded.

(Please arrive 15 mins before the service session to allow enough time for these check-in procedures.)

PLEASE STAY HOME IF YOU ARE FEELING UNWELL..

If you or someone that you've booked for is, then, unable to come, please email churchadmin@penshurstanglican.org clearly stating **their name(s), phone number(s), date** and **session time** that they are unable to attend.

Please note: There will be no social gathering allowed on the church grounds after the services. Please feel free, however, to head to a café or to someone's home for fellowship.

Encouragement from the Persecuted Church

It's so easy to get fed up with church. For years I got very little out of church. The whole experience of worshipping with other people felt stale and pointless... Going to church in my country was an endurance test. Until I visited a Persecuted Church!

There were fifty of us squeezed into an upstairs room. The singing was hushed. The neighbours were hostile to the fellowship. Then a preacher stood up. An old man, with a wiry frame and wisps of hair springing from a mole on his chin. No sooner had he spoken a sentence than he broke down in tears. He kept saying, "I never thought I would have the privilege of preaching again." Then he would laugh, then cry again, great wails and sobs. Soon everyone was weeping with him.

Afterwards, I met the old man. He was a preacher, ordained in the late 1950's in China. He pastored a church for only six months before it was closed down. He was jailed, spending twenty years in prison. After he got out, he was very ill for a long time, but finally, at age 77, had the strength to speak again. I had witnessed his first sermon in 31 years! No wonder he broke down. I tried to imagine what it must have been like, holding the Word of God inside for 31 years, not knowing whether you would ever again preach. Then suddenly being allowed to do so. How do you preach a sermon after a silence of 31 years? No wonder he was overcome.

He said, "I never thought I would get the privilege of speaking the Word to a gathered group of Christians with their Bibles open ever again. Through the long years of prison I thought that experience would never return. And when it came, as you saw, all I could do was choke out the verse that kept me going: Sing his praises in the assembly of the faithful (Ps149:1b).

I returned home with a transformed attitude. Truly, what a privilege is corporate worship. The Persecuted Church rescued me from bitterness and taught me to count my blessings I had taken for granted.. (Ron Boyd-MacMillan from Open Doors)

RESPONSE– Today I will thank God for the privilege and freedom of corporate worship in my church.

PRAYER– Thank You Lord for the freedom and blessing of praising You in my faith community.

Please pray!

Pray for the selection of a new Rector

Our Nominators tell us that they are proceeding at great speed to find a new rector for our church. Pray as they deliberate on this very important decision and interview the candidates.

Pray for the Mandarin-speaking Congregation

Since the day that Aisen resigned, the Chinese congregation has been without a Minister. Our regional Bishop, Peter Lin, has suggested that we should employ someone temporarily, on a “causal contract” basis (that is, a contract that is reviewed every 3 months). This person would serve only as a locum to cover the interim period until a new Rector is appointed to replace Bart.

Peter added, however, that there is one problem: currently, no Chinese clergy are available to serve as locum, and it may be very difficult to get someone in the middle of the year.

Pray for Synod 2021

Due to Covid-19, the normal October sessions of Synod have been cancelled. Instead, a one-day ordinary session of Synod has been tentatively planned for Tuesday 27 April 2021, at the International Convention Centre in Sydney (ICC), a venue large enough to maintain social distancing.

The dates for *the Election Synod* (for the election of a new Archbishop) have been moved to 3-7 May 2021, also at the ICC.

Pray for our Missionaries

David Lakos, senior chaplain at St. George Public Hospital in Kogarah.

Elizabeth McDougall, Special Religious Education (SRE) teacher at Penshurst Girls High School.

Andrew and Julie (with their two sons) in Indonesia.

Michael Duckett at Macarthur Indigenous Church in Campbelltown.

J_____ and M_____ (and their children) preparing to serve with SIM in Asia.

PAC Online Banking

Since our church services have been cancelled until further notice, please give your offer-tory by direct debit using the banking details below:

Westpac Bank, Mordial

St Johns General Fund

Account BSB: 032167

Account No: 870821