

None of us live “at ground level”, simply navigating life according to reason and evidence. We don’t treat one another like a clever ape or a moist robot. We don’t treat the world like an insignificant rock hurtling through a meaningless universe. We don’t treat life like a cosmic accident. And whether we profess certain religious views or not, we don’t treat others as biological survival machines. In nearly every waking moment of our lives we take attitudes to life, the world and each other that are profoundly value-laden. We treat each other (or at least we *ought* to treat each other) as profoundly significant moral beings—as bearers of a dignity that cannot be proved or earned. And we take all of this on faith.

Every day we wager on the moral equality of humans. In other words, we step out into the world on the basis of prior beliefs about ourselves and others. And it’s a gamble because maybe I’ll treat the other person as supremely valuable, and maybe they’ll treat me like a mischievous ape in return. Nevertheless, I make the wager. I live by faith. And so do you.

Glen Scrivener has recently written *The Air We Breathe*. The book explores the kinds of beliefs that everyone holds, even the people who claim they are not “believers”. In particular, he draws attention to seven values that are all-pervasive in our world: Equality; Compassion; Consent; Enlightenment; Science; Freedom; and Progress. We tend to think of these values as natural, universal and obvious but they are nothing of the sort. They are the fruits of a very particular historical development—Christianity. *The Air We Breathe* is a history of the world from Genesis to George Floyd and it shows how the moral assumptions and intuitions we hold derive from Christ and not from any supposed “secular foundations”.

Which means that all of us are believers. No-one needs to take a “leap of faith”. Our culture has already taken an almighty leap. We are 6 miles high, inhabiting a castle of unproven and unprovable assumptions. The modern world is made of these beliefs and would be unrecognizable without them. And yet none of these beliefs make sense without their Christian foundations. We don’t need to take a leap of faith. Our greatest need is to stand. And the solid ground beneath our feet can only ever be Jesus Christ.

Collect

Lord God, the unfailing helper and guide of those whom you bring up in your steadfast fear and love, keep us we pray under the protection of your good providence, and give us a continual reverence and love for your holy name: through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



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The Lord is the strength of his people, he is the saving refuge of his anointed. O save your people, and bless your heritage; be their shepherd and carry them forever.

[Psalm 28:8-9]

19th June, 2022 – Ordinary 12

<u>Today</u>		<u>26th June</u>
1 Kings 22:1-28	(p 565)	1 Kings 22:41-53
Psalm 2	(p 844)	
1 Kings 22:29-40	(p 567)	
Mark 8:31-38	(p 1567)	

A Leap of Faith or a Place to Stand

“Faith is believing things you know ain’t so.” Mark Twain’s definition rings true for many today. It’s common to think of faith as pretending to certainties you couldn’t possibly be sure of. So then, how does anyone manage to have faith? Well, the folk wisdom is that you need to take a leap.

Picture it now. There is Indiana Jones in the Last Crusade. The intrepid archaeologist must cross a deep chasm and simply trust that an invisible pathway bridges it. Though he cannot see the bridge, he decides to step out. He summons up superhuman willpower in order to quiet the rational part of his brain—the part screaming at him to be sensible. Instead, he decides to ignore evidence and reason. He opts for “faith”. He chooses to believe in an invisible saviour and so, stepping out onto the apparent nothingness... thud... his foot lands on something solid. The bridge exists. The leap is rewarded. Brave old Indy!

Is this what faith is? In the popular imagination, yes. And in many Christians’ imaginations too. Such a belief would make Christians the Indiana Joneses of spirituality - an exceptional breed of humans (called “believers”) who choose to ignore the rational path while reasonable people look on with envy, pity or disdain. The whole way of thinking is nonsense from beginning to end.

A guide for our prayers during the week

Monday

Our diocese and the gospel

- Bishop - Rod
- Other parishes
- Another Year of evangelism

Tuesday

Our church and the gospel

- Children and youth
- Families
- Seniors

Wednesday

Our community and the gospel

- Covid19
- SRE
- Youth Group

Thursday

Our nation and the gospel

- Prime minister
- State and local government
- Religious Freedom legislation

Friday

God's world and the gospel

- Islamisation
- War and poverty
- Barnabas Aid & Open Doors
- Compassion - Lillian

Saturday

Ministry and the gospel

- Link missionaries – James & Steph
- Link parish – St Anne's Ryde
- Wardens and Parish Council
- Vicar

Dates to Remember

Today	Parish Council meeting
25 June	Youth Group from 6 pm
26 June	Bereen at 11.30 am
18 July	Hans Kuneen visit to Barraba
23 July	Lighter Fuel, Armidale
5-6 August	CMS Mission Encounter
3 September	New Life Conference

	Today	26 June
Greet	Lee	Greg
Lead	Peter	Daniel
Read	Peter, Dale, Pam	Daniel, Greg, Lee
Prayers	Hugh	Dean
Counting	Steve & Lee	Dean & Hamilton
Sunday Club	Penny & Will	Jenni & Dale
Morning Tea	Dale & Debbie	Alison & Jenni
Church Cleaning		Jenni
Mowing		Dean & Daniel

Join us for **CMS Mission Encounter**, August 5-6 in Tamworth to learn more about God's saving work in the world and how you can be involved. This year's speaker will be Stuart Coulton:

Stuart worked as a lawyer prior to ordination as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. After more than 15 years in pastoral ministry he joined Sydney Missionary and Bible College (SMBC) full time in 2002. He lectured in Church History, Spiritual Formation and Pastoral Theology, and was appointed Principal in 2012 – a role he served until his retirement in 2020. Stuart is the author of *Hitting the Holy Road* (IVP, 2011) as well as a contributor to the recently published *10 dead guys you should know* (ed. I. Maddock, Christian Focus, 2021). He and his wife Pauline have three adult children & six grandchildren. In retirement Stuart and Pauline help care for their 6 grandchildren and Stuart also preaches and mentors several pastors.

<https://www.cms.org.au/qnsw/missionencounter2022/>

Direct Debit Giving Information

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