

# *St Paul's and St Luke's*

## *Prayer Collective*

### **Our link to You**



Saved by Jesus Christ  
Growing in Jesus Christ  
Proclaiming Jesus Christ

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*"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move. Always give yourselves to the work of the Lord, because you know your labour in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:58*

Last month I had the opportunity to be part of the Christian Women's Conference, EQUIP at Home. I am very grateful that Liz Parker set it up for our Church to participate and that I was able to share the experience at Marie Eather's home with several other Sisters in Christ for the first session. It was a real blessing, meeting together and sharing fellowship, followed by a light lunch after the first episode. Thankyou Marie.

In fact, after months of being unable to meet with one another, it was this fellowship and getting together as a church family that I was most appreciative of. Sharing with one another and hearing some of our stories was simply wonderful and to be able to do that with people outside our usual bible studies was such a joy. When I saw the long list of churches that gathered together to join the Equip conference from their homes, it struck me too, what a great privilege and a blessing it was to be a part of our wider church family.

The speakers walked us through a study of 1 Corinthians 15 under the theme of Eternity. We were challenged to consider our own resurrection in the light of Jesus' resurrection. They really emphasised that if we don't believe in the resurrection, our hope is in vain for our hope in Jesus has to be a reality both for Him and for us. "For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" 1 Corinth 15:16-17. Eternal life is ours when we put our faith in Jesus, for Jesus has defeated death at the resurrection and the victory will be there for all to see, when he returns at the second coming.

As I reflect once more on my understanding of the resurrection and how I was challenged through the Equip conference I see that eternal life starts now, not just at the resurrection. In this life we are living now, our physical bodies are asleep. Our bodies will be resurrected with Jesus when he comes again and the fact is, we will be with the Lord. How amazing is that? So now is the time for all who have put their hope in Jesus, to live our resurrection life. We are living for eternity NOW.

I have always been encouraged by Psalm 46:1, "God is my refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble" and this has been something I have hung onto throughout life's challenges. Another is this, "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. May you be encouraged by these verses as I am every day.

The speakers encouraged us to share with one another the year that we joined Paul's list of those who witnessed Jesus' resurrection. Growing up in a Christian home there was never a moment for me that I wasn't nurtured in my faith in Jesus, so I don't have a specific year to share, but perhaps you do? Why not post a selfie on facebook with the year you put your hope in Jesus. Send your photo to Bec Innes or Simone Hurst so they can put a collage on our page.

*Yours in Christ, Judy Thornton*

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#### **Prayer Points....**

- Lord, thank you for the glorious picture of eternity that we see in your word. When it is hard to keep waiting, when it's a struggle to keep committing our lives to you, remind us again of the resurrection, the certainty of eternal life and the reality that you rule everything.
- Uphold Victoria at this time, contain the spread of this virus once more and strengthen the faith of our brothers and sisters there. Use this time of uncertainty to draw more people to yourself and bless our leaders with wisdom as they manage the ongoing crisis.
- Pray for our 'Seeing Jesus Clearly' Year of Evangelism in our Diocese, that as restrictions ease, people will continue to be bold in seizing opportunities to be a witness for Jesus. Uphold the parishes of Manilla and Tenterfield, that they can reform, renew and discover ministry practices that are suited to this time.
- Protect those of us who have used these school holidays to visit with loved ones, to refresh and re-energise. We commit Darrell and his family, Isaac, and Mark and Di Young to you and ask for the blessing of energy, wisdom and a growing, active faith.
- Give the staff team at St Paul's and St Luke's a great sense of purpose and unity as they are joined by Carmen Cudmore and Madi Weekes. Grow them in their gifts for your glory in ministry.
- Pray for our church at St Paul's and St Luke's and Fusion Youth group on Friday nights that the return to face to face gathering will be a smooth transition. May those who have found the online platform a challenge, be prompted by the Lord to return to meeting together.
- Those in sickness or trouble: Andrew Alexander, Peter Anderson, Megan Brown, Doris Campbell, Donna Condon, Naomi Danaher, Sophie Doran, Alice Eather, David & Marie Eather, Audrey Fraser, Alan Hartigan, Nick Lynch-Whitten, Diane Mason, Joyce Page, Bev Pitcher, Mary Shave, Becca Simpson, Jenny Simpson, Suzanne Turner & others that we know.

#### **Prayer for our Link Church Colin Taylor – Felsted Parish, UK**

Praise God for the blessing of meeting together at this time and that the church family will remain connected as the impact of Covid continues.

Pray that this crisis would help people, particularly in our highly secular society, to recognise and turn away from their false gods towards our only lasting treasure in the Lord Jesus.

As I reflect on the resurrection and the talks on Eternity last month, I am encouraged anew by the absolute truth of the gospel and the validity of the cross and resurrection when we hear of the witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. Kathy Keller writes on the resurrection that the stone was rolled away from the tomb not to let Jesus out, but to let us in! I wonder if you've reflected on this aspect of the resurrection before? If there were no witnesses to confirm that Jesus' body was truly gone, this would have cast doubt upon Jesus' appearance to the many witnesses after his death on the cross.

As I reflect on how this can shape my Christian life and indeed my prayers, I reflect too on the blindness of his own disciples when he appeared to them on the road to Emmaus. The apostles knew Jesus perhaps more than any other, save his own family, they walked and talked with him, yet failed to see who he really was, until he broke bread with them. Only then, were their eyes opened to recognise Jesus. If the people who knew him best did not recognise him, what hope do we have for ourselves today? I tell you, we have no hope in ourselves to see him. Only Jesus can open our eyes. May this be a reminder to you to be Christ's witnesses in our relationships, but perhaps most importantly, pray for those we know who are yet to put their hope in Jesus, that the Lord will open their eyes.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/our-faith-is-historically-verifiable-or-its-nothing/>