

In the Barn!

Barneys Newsletter



No. 22 – August 21st



by Adam Richards

I went to my longtime hairdressers today at Macarthur Square. As we spoke this morning I asked how busy Macarthur Square had been during the lockdown. She said that during the weekend, things hadn't changed much, but during the week the place is often very quiet. She said that the stores now receive many of their purchases through on-line sales, and then customers will come to the

Expectations in Church

Square to pick them up. She said the salon no longer remains open on a Thursday night much beyond 7pm, often closing at 6 because they have no customers. And then she said, 'The world has changed and I don't think it is going back to normal!' The normal being, what life was like pre-COVID.

Though a lot of the restrictions we now experience as preventative measures to spread infection will ease over the next 6 to 12 months, though hick-ups may occur, yet despite this many of the accommodations to new forms of relating will become far more permanent. I know personally working with university students that many of them only attend campus once a week. Students have re-organised their lives around this new reality. Even when the restrictions ease, for a great many will not return to campus as

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by **Elise Brake**

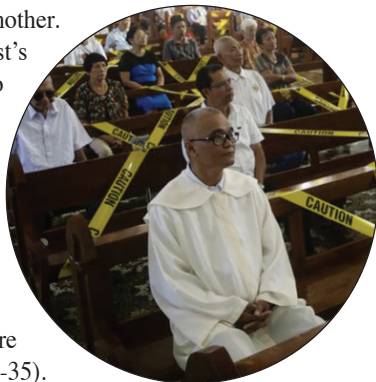
Why Do We Need Church?

Christ” (Eph 4:11-13). As a church family we grow together, as we are faithfully taught from God’s word and mature together in Christ. God has designed Christian community to be corporate, not individual.

its work” (Eph 4:16). The great mark of Christian community is the love that we have for one another.

Maturity as a believer is attained through unity with God’s people. The local church’s value comes through meeting together – whether it be a Sunday, bible studies, ministry groups, praying and reading the bible 1:1, – that we learn and grow as believers. It is through “speaking the truth in love” to one another, pointing each other to Christ and the gospel, that we will be a body that reflects Christ (Eph 4:15). We need other believers (both our ministers and those next to us in the pews) to remind us of the gospel, for our own sin or the sin of others so easily deceives us and prevents us from moving beyond spiritual infancy (Eph 4:14).

In not reflecting Christ’s love, we become no different from the world around us. Jesus called his disciples to love one another, because by their love for one another outsiders would know they were his people (John 13:34-35).



Our love as a family of believers shows the world that we are different – pointing them to Christ, whose love alone can save them.

Our church gatherings are an opportunity to invite non-believers to hear the gospel preached, to see God being worshipped, to witness the love we have for one another, so that they might want to know Christ for themselves. Our presence at church, or bible study, or any gathering of believers, is an opportunity to love and be loved, to grow in maturity together. We need the church, and we are needed by the church. God has given us the great gift of doing life together in Christ – are you thankful for it?

IT'S EASIER NOT TO ATTEND CHURCH

I am sure I’m not alone in having felt at times over last few months, quite isolated and disconnected from our church community. Living through this unprecedented time of restrictions and many unknowns has dramatically shifted the ways we communicate, fellowship and connect as a church family. While I personally have felt a great sense of loss in not meeting face to face for church, it has also helped me to reflect on the great gift of belonging to a community of believers, and the value of gathering together weekly. Here are a few reflections

on why we need to gather as a church:

We are saved through the gospel being preached to us (Rom 10:9-10, 14-15). As a community of saved people, Christ has given us people to speak the truth of God’s word - ‘the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers’ – with a specific goal. That goal is to be equipped to serve God together in order to build up the church – ‘the body of Christ’ – to “all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of

Reflection Questions:

1. What is your current attitude to church? Does it reflect God’s purpose for the church to grow in maturity and unity?
2. How can you be speaking the truth in love and serving your fellow believers in this season of life?

the changes students have made will make it impossible for them.

University life post-COVID will be radically different to what it has been almost since its inception. I write the example above to illustrate the changes that are occurring around us. Life post-COVID will be different.

We began COVID restrictions around mid-March, and thus have not met as a church body for some time. Some have thrived within this new regimen, others have found it incredibly hard and lonely. Wherever we

sit on this spectrum, the easing of restrictions makes it possible for us to meet together again. Given the events of this year, previous expectations and experiences of church will require some changes going forward. And that's ok. But the verse ringing in my head as I write is:

“And let us watch out for one another to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:24–25 CSB17)

Personally, I like the way

the NIV translates this verse better than the CSB. Not that the content or meaning is any different, I'm just use to the way the verse flows of the tongue. And that's my point, our expectations and preferences can get in the way of doing and seeing the important. Whether enjoying church on-line or desperately wanting to meet again, gathering as church will be different from our expectations. But Christianity is not, 'My Bible and me under a tree!' We gather in response to our Father's call. We gather because of what Jesus has done for us. We gather to spur one another on, and all the more as we see the day approaching. Christians gather because that is who we are - the gathering of God's people for the Glory of God!

Find-A-Word - Church

Appropriation	Desperate	Love	Presence
Believe	Disciples	Maturity	Reflections
Christian	Ephesians	Outsiders	Restrictions
Congregation	Gather	Pray	University
Corporate	Holy	Preferences	Witness

S E C N E R E F E R P H N K S
 G Q F V A A D I S C I P L E S
 O A D N U N I V E R S I T Y X
 X H S N O I T C I R T S E R R
 O S S E N T I W Y K V L S C E
 K A E V E I L E B A O E Q O H
 E T A R E P S E D V R X H R T
 S N A I S E H P E B J P R P A
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 N C W L S N O I T C E L F E R
 C H S U O C H R I S T I A N X



ANNOUNCEMENT
Church Returns

Sunday 30th
 August 8am
 At Glenquarie
 Register Online
<https://www.barneysingleburn.com/preregister.html>
 Or Call Adam
 on 0457 775 538
23 Spots Remaining