



## Crookwell Uniting Church

### “To Know Christ and Make Christ Known”



*Witnessing to God’s love for the world  
From the main street to the paddock.*

November 2023

### Preaching as Primary Theology

As many of you know, I recently began a PhD through Charles Sturt University. The focus of my thesis is how the sacramental theology of the Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann might influence how we preach today in our Secular Age.

This project was born out of my ministry in Crookwell. The task of finding a word to bring to the congregation each week has challenged me over the years for reasons I struggled to explain – until I read a book by Andrew Root called *The Pastor in the Secular Age*. Root explains that what makes the life of

the Church so difficult today is that we live in a disenchanted world where even church-going folks struggle to believe that God actually *does* anything in our lives. We might believe in God – but we tend to relegate God to Heaven, and get on with things ourselves in the meantime.

As such, a lot of preaching today has been reduced to either lectures (trying to teach us interesting information) or to lessons in morality (telling us how we must live). But this is not the point of preaching at all. As Schmemmann writes, “the homily

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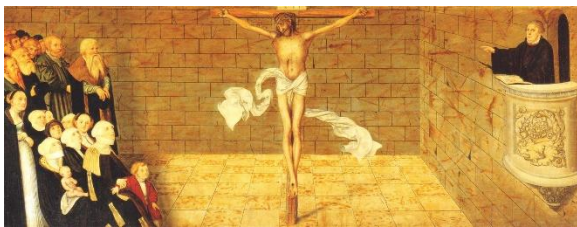
### Contact Us

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[sermon] can be, and often is even today, intelligent, interesting, instructive and comforting, but these are not the criteria by which we can distinguish a 'good' homily from a 'bad' one – these are not its real essence. Its essence lies in its living link to the gospel that was read in the church assembly.”

Instead, preaching is what we might call 'primary theology'. It is one of those places that, even today, we actually get to meet God; where God shows up and speaks to his people; and, where the Spirit transforms us into the promise of God. Take this famous painting of Martin Luther preaching, for example: the preacher points to the cross of Christ which is present whenever we worship together, so that we can see the Kingdom among us.



But today, it is hard to believe that this is possible. How often do you turn up at Church genuinely expecting God to show up?

How often do sermons truly help you to see the presence of Christ?

That is what my thesis hopes to achieve – to set out a theory of preaching that can help the Church rediscover the point and purpose of preaching, *especially* in our Secular Age.

As such, I see an important link between my studies and the ministry you and I are living out each day in Crookwell. After all, we have said that our mission is to *witness to God's love to the world from the Main Street to the Paddock*. But to witness something, we must first have our eyes open to see it. May Christ continue to meet us in our worship then, and open our eyes to the good news that *Christ has died; Christ is risen; and Christ will come again*.

### What's On This Month

On Sunday, November 5 at 9:30am, we will join worship with our Anglican siblings at St Bartholomew's Church on Denison Street. All are welcome.

In February, we will share in the Baptism of Lucy and Jack Tyrrell. Please keep them in your prayers as

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they prepare to enter into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.

I will be on leave from 13-26 November. Advent this year begins on December 3, and you will receive devotional resources for Advent with your next newsletter.

Yours in Christ,

Daniel

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## Presbytery Elections

The Annual General Meeting of Canberra Region Presbytery is on Sunday, November 18, and will hold elections for Presbytery Office Bearers, Committees, and other positions. This meeting will be held online via Zoom, with more information to come.

RSVP is via email to [office@cruc.org.au](mailto:office@cruc.org.au) by Monday, November 6. The agenda, papers and zoom link will be sent closer to the date of the meeting.

For further information, please call the Presbytery Team on 6248 9311.

## Worship & Readings

### Sunday 5 November

9:30am St Bartholomew's

Readings: Joshua 3:7-17; Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37; 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13; Matthew 23:1-12

### Sunday 12 November

9:30am Crookwell and  
crookwelluniting.org  
2:00 Jerrara

Readings: Joshua 24:1-3; Psalm 78:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

### Sunday 19 November

9:30am Crookwell and  
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

### Sunday 26 November

9:30 Crookwell and  
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: Deuteronomy 8:7-18; Psalm 65; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Luke 17:11-19

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## Christmas Bowl

Through the Christmas Bowl our church will help provide practical care so refugees and people who have been displaced can live in safety and dignity and know that they are loved and not forgotten.

If you would like to donate online, please visit [mycb.link/45883](https://mycb.link/45883).

Thank you for continuing to take part in this important tradition and helping to create a world where uprooted people have a safe place to belong.

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## November Roster

Please find below the roster for November services. If you would like to volunteer for future services, please contact Daniel.

SEPTEMBER 2023	WORSHIP LEADER	ELDER/PRAYERS	BIBLE READER	STEWARDS
3/09/2023	Daniel	Margaret	Barry	John & Jan
10/09/2023	Daniel	Phyllis	Nikki	Louise
17/09/2023	TBA	Barry	Ron	Margaret & Reta
24/09/2023	Daniel	Barbara	Heather	Allan & Gill

## Meeting the Uniting Church Again for the First Time

Rev. Mark Faulkner is the Director of Rural and Remote Ministries for the Uniting Church, and is a key driver of the Saltbush Community, which seeks to connect Christian communities.

Recently, Faulkner spoke of the importance of small Christian communities, and their connection to the early days of Christianity. "I imagine in my head that Jesus was thoroughly rural, and after he visited any of the large towns...was pleased to be on the road out," Faulkner stated, citing Nazareth as a town so small that everyone came together to raise livestock, share resources, farm crops and care for the community.

Faulkner describes Saltbush as "reaffirming the place of diverse, smaller gatherings of Christians exploring life and faith together." Faulkner also noted that the future of the Church in our modern secular society will rely more on traditional communities rather than "large corporate models, economic prioritization, and monochrome socialization." Perhaps the future lies with simply gathering, and sharing our faith in the wider community.

More information on Saltbush is available at <https://www.nswact.uca.org.au/about-us/future-directions/rural-and-remote-ministry/>

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