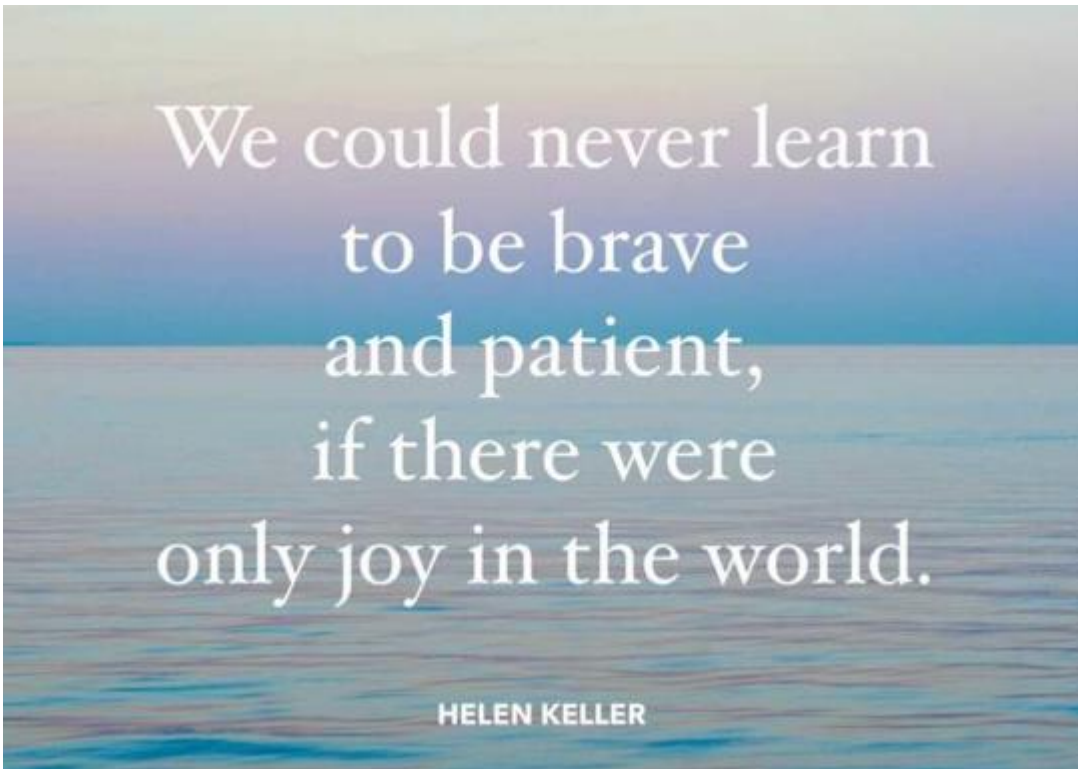


Dear Beloved,

This week's gospel reading is the parable of the 'wheat and weeds' but really it's about patience. Helen Keller was blind and deaf and had no idea what patience was until her wonderful nurse arrived and by patiently waiting and teaching little by little taught her how to communicate. Later in life she said:



Blessings

Wendy

'Art Warming' in our hall Sunday 30th July 2 pm

Steve Clark will do his next session on Saturday 5th August at 2.30 pm and then 2nd September

--

Wendy's last Sunday in the Parish 24th September

--

Morning Tea after the Service every 2nd and 4th Sunday please volunteer for the roster.

--

Midweek Services every Wednesday at 9.30 all Welcome

--

Please volunteer for the church roster, well in advance.

--

Prayer and Praise

Wendy

Catherine

Edith and Colin Mayhew

--

Glenn Fletcher

Alan Hood

our wardens and Parish Councillors

--

Bernie and Gayle

Scott's wife Jennie.

--

Beryl Lucas, Mary Mitchell's sister, in Palliative Care (Cancer)

Beattie Russell and Jenni Roberts in Yallambie.

--

Liz Pirie

Leanne Lowery

Mary Mitchell

--

Peter & Julie Harris from Bredbo

all congregations in Jerangle

--

The Catholic priest Father Mark Croker as he ministers from Bombala  
through to the mountains

--

for each other that we may be salt and light in this community

--

People everywhere who are living through war or disasters of every kind

HYMN TIS 626 Lord of Creation

**GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

**Sentence of Scripture**

You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Psalm 86.15

**PRAYER OF PREPARATION**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen

**Two Great Commandments**

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

**Lord, have mercy on us: and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Saving God, in Jesus Christ you opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and constant wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**Genesis 28.10–19a**

<sup>10</sup> Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran. <sup>11</sup> When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. <sup>12</sup> He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. <sup>13</sup> There above it stood the Lord, and he said: 'I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. <sup>14</sup> Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. <sup>15</sup> I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.' <sup>16</sup> When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it.' <sup>17</sup> He was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.' <sup>18</sup> Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. <sup>19</sup> He called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.

**Psalm 139.1–11;23–24**

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, you have searched me out and known me: you know when I sit or when I stand, you comprehend my thoughts long before.

<sup>2</sup> You discern my path and the places where I rest: you are acquainted with all my ways.

<sup>3</sup> For there is not a word on my tongue: but you, Lord, know it altogether.

<sup>4</sup> You have encompassed me behind and before: and have laid your hand upon me.

<sup>5</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: so high that I cannot endure it.

<sup>6</sup> Where shall I go from your spirit: or where shall I flee from your presence?

<sup>7</sup> If I ascend into heaven you are there: if I make my bed in the grave you are there also.

<sup>8</sup> If I spread out my wings towards the morning: or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

<sup>9</sup> Even there your hand shall lead me: and your right hand shall hold me.

<sup>10</sup> If I say 'Surely the darkness will cover me: and the night will enclose me',

<sup>11</sup> The darkness is no darkness with you, but the night is as clear as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike. <sup>23</sup> Search me out, O God, and know my heart: put me to the proof and know my thoughts.

<sup>24</sup> Look well lest there be any way of wickedness in me: and lead me in the way that is everlasting.

## Romans 8.12–25

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation – but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. <sup>15</sup> The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. <sup>17</sup> Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. <sup>18</sup> I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. <sup>23</sup> Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

## Matthew 13.24–30, 36–43

<sup>24</sup> Jesus told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. <sup>25</sup> But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. <sup>26</sup> When the wheat sprouted and formed ears, then the weeds also appeared. <sup>27</sup> ‘The owner’s servants came to him and said, “Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?” <sup>28</sup> “An enemy did this,” he replied. ‘The servants asked him, “Do you want us to go and pull them up?” <sup>29</sup> “No,” he answered, “because while you are pulling up the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: first collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.”’ <sup>36</sup> Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, ‘Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.’ <sup>37</sup> He answered, ‘The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, <sup>39</sup> and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. <sup>40</sup> As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. <sup>42</sup> They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

## Sermon

### The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## THE PRAYERS

Let us pray for all people, and for the Church throughout the world.

Eternal God, in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we pray

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

## PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER

### Exhortation

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we who would come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ must consider how St Paul exhorts us to examine ourselves before presuming to eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

For the benefit is great, if with a penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament. We then spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; we dwell in Christ and he in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us. Yet also the danger is great if we receive the bread and cup unworthily. Judge yourselves therefore, that you be not judged of the Lord.

Repent truly of your sins, having a steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour. Amend your lives and love your neighbour. Above all, give hearty thanks to God for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, truly God and truly human, who humbled himself to death on the cross for us sinners, that he might make us children of God, and raise us to eternal life.

You who truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to strengthen and comfort you. But first, let us make a humble confession of our sins to almighty God.

### Invitation to Confession

You who truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to strengthen and comfort you. But first, let us make a humble confession of our sins to almighty God.

### Confession

**Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all people, we acknowledge with shame the sins we have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against your divine majesty, provoking most justly your wrath and indignation against us.**

**We earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for all our misdoings.**

**Have mercy on us, most merciful Father. For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please you in newness of life, to the honour and glory of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### Absolution.

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all who with hearty repentance and true faith turn to him: have mercy on you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**  
Hear the words of assurance for those who truly turn to Christ.

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I Tim 1:15

Hymn TIS 402 Come Gracious Spirit

### Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom **Blessed be God for ever**

## THE LORD'S SUPPER

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us.

By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Through him, you have revealed to us your glory in the community of your love, three persons, one God, ever to be worshipped and adored.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Glory to you, O Lord most high.**

**We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.**

**But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.**

**Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

All glory to you, our heavenly Father, for in your tender mercy you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death on the cross for our redemption: who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray, and grant that we who receive these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine, according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given you thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' Likewise, after supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' **Amen**

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life; take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving. The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life; drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

## **AFTER COMMUNION**

Almighty and everliving God, we heartily thank you that you graciously feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and thus assure us of your favour and goodness towards us and that we are true members of the mystical body of your Son, the blessed company of all faithful people, and are also heirs, through hope, of your eternal kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of your dear Son.

And we humbly beseech you, heavenly Father, so to assist us with your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as you have prepared for us to walk in, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, world without end. **Amen.**

## **Hymn TIS 569 Guide me, o thou great redeemer**

### **Blessing**

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.



Patience! What an difficult virtue. All the other virtues or fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control, are somehow easier, more within our reach, even meekness and self-control we feel we should be able to do but patience, keeps eluding us. Things are going along nicely, and we think, 'yes I'm doing OK' then we see something coming in the future, or we can't even see it but we want it. And when do we want it? We want it now! Patience is the prickly one.

The house I am building is almost at Lockup. Last week I went around with the builder, and we agreed where all the power points and other minor things are going to go. It was such fun, actually walking around in my house, seeing how big the cupboards really are and how the spaces work but for several nights afterwards I couldn't sleep because I was deciding what goes where in all the cupboards. I keep telling myself that it is 5 months yet and when I move in will be plenty of time to make all those decisions but I'm impatient, I want it now.



What is going to happen to this parish after I'm gone, especially what is the model that the powers that be, are going to suggest, will it enable there to be a full-time priest living in the rectory but shared with other churches, or another part-time priest or something completely different. Why don't they actually decide and tell us? We want to know, and we want to know now. What does God want to do here? Why doesn't he do something? Yes? Isn't that life. In everything we want to know, and we want to know now. The patient human is a rarity.

The people in Jesus' day were just the same: when will God rescue us; when will his promises come true; is the kingdom coming now; is Jesus the promised messiah, is evil and the Romans going to be defeated etc etc. They wanted to know, and they wanted to know now.



This parable of the weeds and the wheat is in part an answer to all those questions. It is not a direct answer but perhaps there is never a direct answer to the big questions in life. Like the growth of a plant, the big answers take time, they are often slow and reveal themselves gradually and quietly in our lives, but this story is showing us that although it takes time, God is in control.

From time-to-time tragedies occur, in the world and in our lives, there are fires, and pandemics, people we love are hurt or die and we think 'God, why did you allow that?' But God works things for good for those who live according to his purpose. Even Covid brought some blessings, we have learnt to use technology to be together when we can't be together, we have learnt to practise better hygiene so that we don't share so many minor infections.



Phil died and I miss him but I am learning to rely more directly on the Lord and that living alone is not all bad. Yes, God is God, and he could have prevented Covid and Cancer but if God, the Lord, the sovereign of the world, stepped in and prevented every evil in the world and our lives, it wouldn't be quite as straightforward as people sometimes imagine. If God were to rule the world directly and immediately, and stopped every evil impulse before it became an action, how could we live? There would be no free will.

If we expect/ask God to act on special occasions, do we really suppose that he would do that when we want him to, and then back off again for the rest of the time. If you could control God, could you ask him to prevent fires in our area, or our state, or our country and not worry about horrendous disasters in other countries; could you ask God to prevent disease in your loved one, or your family or among those you know and let everyone else suffer? The point is we cannot control God because he is God. Yes, we need to pray, and he answers prayer, but we need to trust him: he is in control and his timing although seeming slow is always right.



The parable of the wheat and the weeds is about waiting, and waiting is what we find difficult. The farmer waits for harvest time, watching in frustration as the weeds grow alongside the wheat. The dog waits for his beloved human to come home, watching all the other people walking past but none is his adored. Not only the farmer, but the birds, wait for the seed to grow into a large bush. A baker making bread must wait for the yeast to work its way through the whole dough before they can bake it. And that is what God's kingdom is like.

Jesus followers, of course, didn't want to wait. If the kingdom was present wherever Jesus was, coming to birth in what he was doing, then they wanted the whole thing at once. They were not interested in God's timetable. They, like us, had one of their own, and expected God to confirm to it.



Notice in particular, what the servants say about the weeds. They want to go straight into the field and root out the weeds. The farmer restrains them because life is never that simple. In their zeal to rid the fields of weeds they are very likely to pull up some wheat as well. There is a weed in the middle east which looks very like wheat until the seeds ripen.

We would like to rid the world of evil, we would love to get rid of everything we see that offends us. We would love especially to get rid of everything and everyone that claims to be part of the church and yet by their fruit we consider them to be weeds. Not everything is as it seems, only God can truly tell the weeds from the wheat, and he will do that on the last day.





In Jesus' day there were many people, including some of the Pharisees, who were eager to fight against pagans on the one hand and against compromised Jews on the other. They have intended to do God's will. They were longing for God to act and were prepared to help him by acting themselves. But part of everything that Jesus was saying is that the true kingdom of God doesn't come like that, because God himself isn't like that.

At the heart of the parable of the weeds and wheat is the note of patience—not just the patience of the servants who have to watch and wait, but the patience of God himself. God didn't and doesn't enjoy the sight of a field with weeds all over the place. But neither does he relish the thought of declaring harvest time too soon and destroying wheat along with weeds.



No matter at what time the weeds are removed, when the seeds are just germinated, when they are young plants or nearly mature the risk of mistaken identity and that the roots are intertwined remains. The only safe time to separate the good from the bad is at the end when each can be gathered and dealt with appropriately.

Jesus spoke on this repeatedly and was also often echoed by Paul. Jesus wanted/wants his followers to live with the tension of believing that his kingdom is indeed arriving in and through his work and that his kingdom would fully arrive, not in a bang but through a process like the slow growth of a plant. This tension is part of our own lives as well, so often we can know that God wills something wonderful in our lives, but we live waiting, waiting, and waiting.



Waiting for the full realisation of the kingdom sometimes seems like a cop out, both for us and for the first disciples. Saying that God is delaying his final judgment can look to some people as if God is inactive or uncaring. But when we look at Jesus, what he did in his earthly life and what he still does for us each day it is impossible to say he doesn't care. Jesus has always been active, deeply compassionate and defeating evil and still promising that the final is yet to come.

We wait with patience, not like people in the dark, wondering if anyone will come with a candle, but like people who have seen the dawn and are now waiting for the full brightness of midday. We wait for the kingdom, we wait for God's renewal in this parish, and we wait for God to act in our lives, knowing that the seeds are planted, and the day will come when we see the glory, in hope that the



creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.<sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.