

PRESBYTERY PORT PHILLIP WEST



Worship without Walls

Rev. Linley Liersch

We are experiencing a liminal space (in-between space) in many churches at the moment. While some of the smaller rural congregations have recommenced worship. Many other congregations are taking their time to make the decisions about how to safely go back to worship. Some waiting until after Christmas.

The delightful dilemma that may be stalling us is: 'how do we keep on-line worship and start up face to face worship'? All of us appreciated the extra people attending worship on-line. How else do we reach out them? The odds are that these people attending worship on-line will never cross the church doorstep. So I am encouraging you to think about outside worship.

What if this December and January you plan a series of outside worship. The numbers you are able to gather outside are larger. More COVID regulations friendly (in some places restricting outside worship to the grounds of the church). I wonder if people attending on-line might be more likely to accept an invitation to attend outside worship? So you are creating a further intentional liminal space with the purpose of making contact with people who attended worship on-line.

The problem with this idea is that if we ask the 'church goers' if they want to meet outside, they may think of all the reasons it is a bad idea eg. Weather, ability to hear, seating etc. It is hard for me not to agree with you one hundred percent there are hurdles to outside worship. But there are many great reasons for outside worship too.

1. An opportunity to engage with God in the great outdoors can be a powerful and moving experience in your life and you will remember it a life time.
2. Trying to make contact with people from on-line worship.
3. Engage more actively in taking the life of the congregation into the broader community.
4. Celebrate the, COVID experience, of 'life as a congregation without a building'.
5. Intentionally focussing on different worship styles.
6. Begin to understand what our use of the buildings mean to us; the role they have in shaping us, enabling us or restricting our congregational life.

This year we have understood that worship without walls can be a God send! (See page 4 Ideas)



Outdoor Worship

Try outdoor worship this Christmas....



Divide your nativity set up into 3 scenes, put around the carpark to tell the Christmas story...




Face painting in the church carpark.

Get your wood workers and artists together to make the face boards. Three kings on one side. Mary Joseph and the baby on the other side. Use story books for inspiration.



Regenerating the Church: Worship Outdoors

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| Date | Bible Reading | Theme | Outdoor Worship Ideas (Nature & Carpark Ideas) |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Nov 29th | Mark 13:24-37 | The Son of Man The Fig Tree | Sun rise worship—speak about the symbols of night, sun and clouds from the reading. Carpark: Buy a fig tree and plant it somewhere in the church garden. |
| Dec 6th | Mark 1:1-8 | The Preaching of John the Baptist | Down by the river side or Lake. Carpark: Create a river with 10m blue tarp. |
| Dec 13th | John 1:6-8, 19-28 | The Message of John the Baptist | Down by the River side or Lake Carpark: talk about the best and worst message you got during COVID. |
| Dec 20th | Luke 1:26-38 | The Annunciation & Magnificat | Have a Social Justice Expo. Based on themes in Magnificat. Create a large map of the world talk about places in need. |
| Dec 25th | Luke 2:1-10 | The Nativity and Shepherds | Worship in a sheep field / football oval. Carpark: Put large nativity scene in pea straw bales (Mulch the church garden). |
| Dec 27th | Luke 2:21-40 | Jesus presented in the Temple | In front of your own church or a town Hall building. Story tell the Bible reading. |
| Jan 3rd Jan 6th | Matt 2:1-11 Arrival of the Magi |  | Barn / Park Worship OR animal farm. Carpark: Bring your pet to Church day. OR Advent Labyrinths on following the stars that point to God. Put Manger and baby in the middle. |
| Jan 10th | Mark 1:4-11 | I baptise with water | Down by the river side or Lake. Carpark: Fire pit and Water bowl. |
| Jan 17th | John 1:43-51 | Call of Phillip and Nathanael. | Plan a progressive worship. Booklet might act as a tour guide book. With worship stops, prayers, questions and a chorus. |
| Jan 24th | Mark 1: 14-20 | Call of 4 Fishermen Assembly National Day of Mourning resources. | Pier or beach. Watch the fisherman, What does it teach you about the bible reading. Carpark: Everyone fish with rods and magnet lures and fish with paperclips. |
| Jan 31st | Mark 1:21-28 | Healing of man in Temple | Worship in Café /Carpark. Faith in public spaces, does it make us uncomfortable? |