

## Next Week's Bible Talks

### 8:30am Bexley

Jason Veitch on "Faith Under Fire"  
(Jeremiah 34-36)

### 9:00am Carlton

Phil Colgan on "Faith Under Fire"  
(Jeremiah 34-36)

### 10:30am Carlton

Phil Colgan on "Faith Under Fire"  
(Jeremiah 34-36)

### 10:30am Bexley North

Jason Veitch on "Faith Under Fire"  
(Jeremiah 34-36)

### 4.30pm Bexley North

Jason Veitch on "Faith Under Fire"  
(Jeremiah 34-36)

### 6.30pm Church

Phil Colgan on "Faith Under Fire"  
(Jeremiah 34-36)

## Partnership in the Gospel

Praise God for the generosity of his people.

Our work can only happen through the generous support of our church members.

Please prayerfully consider your giving so that we are able to do the things under God we have planned to do.

For those wishing to give electronically the church's bank account details are:

Bank: Westpac  
A/C Name: Parish of St George North General A/C  
BSB: 032 158  
Account No.: 268126

## Contact Us

### General Enquiries

☎ 9553 1840 ✉ office@snac.org.au  
<http://www.snac.org.au>

### Phil Colgan (Senior Minister)

☎ 9553 1840 ✉ phil@snac.org.au

### Jason Veitch (Associate Minister)

☎ 9502 1946 ✉ jason@snac.org.au

### Kevin Stepniewski (Associate Minister)

☎ 0421 286 835 ✉ kevin@snac.org.au

### Troy Munns (Associate Minister)

☎ 0406 371 009 ✉ troy@snac.org.au

### Brendan Moar (Youth Minister)

☎ 0409 525 365 ✉ brendan@snac.org.au

### Sarah Munns (Children's Minister)

☎ 0403 686 284 ✉ sarah@snac.org.au

### Colin Francis (Electronic Giving)

☎ 9588 7119 ✉ finance@snac.org.au

### Carmel Vincent (Admin)

☎ 0431 969 516 ✉ carmel@snac.org.au

## Sunday Locations

### 8:30am Bexley (Contact Jason)

Corner of Albany St & Dunmore St, Bexley

### 9:00am Carlton (Contact Kevin)

St James' Carlton, entry via Percival St

### 10:30am Carlton (Contact Phil)

Carlton Public School, entry via Cameron St

### 10:30am Bexley North (Contact Jason)

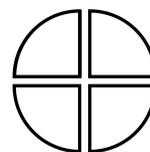
Holy Trinity, entry via Carrisbrook Ave

### 4:30pm Bexley North (Contact Jason)

Holy Trinity, entry via Carrisbrook Ave

### 6.30pm Church (Contact Troy)

Carlton Public School, entry via Cameron St



St George North  
Anglican Church

Glorifying God by  
Proclaiming Jesus | Growing Disciples | Serving Together

Weekly SNAC

Edition 695

19 November 2017

## What now for Christians?

Well that's it then. The people have spoken and 61% of Australians have said that they are in favour of legalising so-called "Same-sex marriage". I don't know about you but I was disappointed (we do believe in the God of miracles after all!) and saddened (this is not what is best for the people of Australia) but not surprised (why should I expect that people who do not believe God's word would always vote for what God desires?).

However, the question now turns to what next? Here are a few thoughts for what they are worth.

**1) Christians should surprise people by our grace.** The people have spoken, we have had our say and the result did not go our way. Christians should not get in the way of it now becoming law in our land. Instead, we should show grace in our acceptance of the result while continuing to encourage the Parliament to pursue appropriate protections for freedom of speech and religion as things that are good for our nation.

**2) Christians should get on with the main game.** In the end, what the people of Australia need more than good marriage laws is the life-giving news of the Gospel. Whatever the laws of the land, we should be praying for all people that they would have opportunities to hear about Jesus and find salvation in him. That's our main game and that did not change before or after 10am Wednesday.

**3) Continue to hold to and teach the truth of God's word** (on this and every topic) even if it does go against the law of the land. It will need real courage over the next few years to continue to say that homosexual practice is sinful and unacceptable to God. Increasingly, Christians will be under pressure to agree that homosexual activity is good or at the very least, keep silent. We need to pray that Christians will not bend on this issue. Part of loving our neighbours and preaching the Gospel is calling sin "sin" so that people know that they need salvation in Christ.

**4) Be ready to stand firm as Christians even if it costs us.** The concerns of the "No" campaign with regard to religious freedom were not simply rhetoric. Protections for people to say what they think on these issues going forward are far from guaranteed. Indeed, implicit (and often explicit) in many of the arguments of the "Yes" campaign was the view that religious freedom does not extend to the right of an individual lay person to say what they think on this issue. (Don't worry about me though because ordained people will be protected in the short term at least). This issue is really just the beginning of that battle. Hard times are ahead for Christians. More and more we will be tempted to keep our heads down and, frankly, be ashamed of our Lord and his words (Mark 8:38).

Sadly, for some this will sort out the reality of their faith in Jesus. Some who call themselves Christians (even in our own church) will be found to be not truly converted and will walk away from the faith rather than face ridicule from friends and family. For others this will show them that they do not accept God's word as the final authority and so they will search for an unfaithful "church" that bends on this issue. Sadly, some people have left or drifted away from the faith already over this issue. This should not surprise us given that Jesus and Paul both said that these things would happen whenever the going gets tough (Mark 4:16-17, 2 Timothy 4:3).

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However, this is not all a bad thing. Perhaps we have had it too easy for too long? Such times have historically led to a great strengthening of the church. So, now is the time to remind yourself of why you are a Christian, which I hope is because you “consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us.” (Romans 8:18)

**5) Christians should begin to think through the difficult ethical decisions that this will raise before we face them.** Once “same sex marriage” becomes law it will then become illegal to ‘discriminate’ against same-sex couples. This raises all sorts of questions for Christians:

- How should a Christian teacher react when required to teach a positive view of homosexual practice if that is part of the curriculum?
- Should a Christian attend a ‘wedding’ of a friend or family member, or should we not attend to show that we do not agree?

These are the sort of ethical decisions we will need to make and we will need to be careful not to base them on emotional responses (either way) but instead on trusting in the authority of Scripture.

These are a few preliminary thoughts that I hope you find helpful, but more than anything I want to remind us that Jesus is still Lord whatever people think on these issues. God still causes the sun to rise on the righteous and the unrighteous whatever parliaments do or decide. God is good, Jesus is Lord, our job is to trust him and live for him, in season and out.

Phil Colgan

\*Interestingly, the local electorates of Barton and Banks were 2 of only 13 electorates to have a majority voting ‘No’.

## How’s Troy’s voice?

Thanks again for all your support and prayer for me during the last 7 months (yes it’s been that long!). My doctors are happy with my progress, and my voice is getting stronger little by little each week. I’ve even been able to lead some services and do announcements on Sundays which I’m so thankful to God for. But just a heads up - speaking is still difficult and I hit my limits pretty quickly (especially on big days like Sundays)! So if I don’t speak much at any given time please know it’s not because I don’t like you! Often I will need to rest and save my voice in order to use it at other times e.g. up the front, welcoming new people, at another service later that day. Feel free to talk to me, but please bear with me if I’m not able to talk back much. Thanks!

Troy Munns

## Toys ‘n’ Tucker appeal

This year, as a church, we’re supporting **Anglicare’s Toys ‘n’ Tucker appeal**. The appeal aims to provide **food and toys** to families who otherwise might go without this Christmas. God has been incredibly generous to us; he sent his Son to earth to die in our place. As Christians we want to share God’s generosity with others. Toys N Tucker is one way to do that this Christmas. Please bring your items to church. Anglicare will collect them and deliver them to people in need .

**Here are some things you could bring:**

**Food:** Non perishable items, e.g. tinned meats/fruit/veggies, spreads, pancake mix, coffee, sugar, lollies, tea, biscuits, pasta, long life milk, cake mix.

**Toys:** books, puzzles, skipping ropes, board games, gift vouchers, toiletries, sporting equipment, colouring in books, textas, stickers. **(Must be new not used)**

**We are collecting this Sunday and next Sunday.** Please bring your items to church and leave them...

**At 9am Carlton:** in the big hall off the kitchen

**At 10:30 Carlton:** on the stage

**At Bexley North:** under/beside the Christmas tree

**At Bexley:** give them to Jason

You don’t have to bring much but please consider prayerfully how you might support others less fortunate than us this year. If you have any questions please contact Sarah (sarah@snac.org.au)

## Bexley

**CHRISTMAS EVE Sunday 24 December 8:30am** – Christmas Eve Carols with evangelistic message.

**CHRISTMAS DAY Monday 25 December 8:30am** – Holy Communion service

## Bexley North

**Sunday 17 December 10:30am** – Family Carols service

The Sunday before Christmas is always a good opportunity to invite friends and family to church before the silly season gets really silly. Our Bexley North congregation will have a Christmas Carols service with an evangelistic Gospel message. Afterwards will be lunch and other fun activities including a jumping castle and face painting for the Bexley North congregation and local visitors.

NB There will be a normal 4:30pm service on that day.

**CHRISTMAS EVE Sunday 24 December 4:30pm** – Traditional Carols service

A Christmas Eve service that is aimed more at adults. A great opportunity to invite friends along to hear about the true meaning of Christmas (but without puppets, glow sticks and jumping castles).

NB There will be a normal 10:30am service on that day.

**CHRISTMAS DAY Monday 25 December 9:30am** – Family service

## Carlton

**CHRISTMAS EVE Sunday 24 December**

There will be no morning services at Carlton on Christmas Eve so that people can focus on the two evening services.

**4:30pm Family Carols at Carlton Public School**

This will be our now traditional family Christmas carols celebration with lots of things for kids, lots of singing and maybe even a jumping castle.

**6:30pm Traditional Carols service at St James Carlton**

A Christmas Eve service that is aimed more at adults. A great opportunity to invite friends along to hear about the true meaning of Christmas (but without puppets, glow sticks and jumping castles).

**CHRISTMAS DAY Monday 25 December 9:30am** – Family service