

## Plains Church News 9 February 2020

Pastor Margaret Bell reminded the children of the time Jesus said that we were to be light and salt to the world. Using a flashlight in a darkened sanctuary she talked about the importance of light that gives us energy, makes things grow and helps us see where we are going. Salt can heal and improves the taste. Both suggest helpful things about the way we live. "Shake and shine", she said.

Our service today is followed by bag lunches and the annual church meeting. Next week's service will include the dedication of leaders for the coming year. The Lenten DVD study "Dateline Jerusalem" will begin Thursday 20 February at 10.30am. Proceeds from the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper on 25 February will be donated to the Union Community Centre. Flowers in the sanctuary today are in loving memory of Eleanor House. Deacon John Gibbons greeted the congregation. Jack Cummings and Paul O'Drowsky took part.

The service started with the hymn, "Come and find the quiet centre in the crowded life we lead...find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed, clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes that we can see all the things that really matter, be at peace and simply be".

Using as her title, "Cracks of Light, Salty Tears" Margaret pointed out that Jesus describes his followers as light and salt. He was being descriptive, not prescriptive. Often our self-image is fashioned by how we are treated early in life. Not all feel loved and secure, shown kindness and empathy. Jesus suggested a new way of thinking about ourselves. Reject the negative voices and listen to him. In the crowd listening to him were many common people who felt inferior to the religious leaders of their day. So often Jesus reminded people, "All you need is Love". To practice our faith we just need to let the love flow. We are made in God's image, with hearts of love and many gifts. Our life may have had its darker moments but perhaps someone needs to just catch a glimpse of God's love to find a way home. "Salt and light – you are certainly that to me" Thanks be to God.

To quote the closing hymn: "Every promise we can make, every prayer and step of faith, every difference we will make is only by his grace... We will go forth in grace alone."