

From the Rector's Desk...



As I write this, I reflect that I have been in this parish for seventeen Sundays, and on nine of these Sundays I have led worship via Zoom from my office. Perhaps all you have seen of me for the last two months has been my face on a computer screen! It is not how I envisaged the start of June and my time in the parish to be.

However, as others will reflect upon later in this edition of 'Church News,' there is something good to be seen in this time. It is not a time of inactivity. We are not closed, just doing things differently. We are still fulfilling the mission of the church in proclaiming the Good News, nurturing disciples and showing loving care to those in need. We are still praying and singing God's praises (although with the 'mute button' on...).

To my view there are several positive things. With the use of Zoom for our services a number of those members of our congregation who have been unable to physically come to St Lukes have been able to participate. One person emailed me to say that "It is rather lovely to see Mum smiling at the computer and enjoying naming the familiar faces". Then several members of the congregation have taken to heart a call to keep in touch with others. This has included the delivery of the weekly letter and service sheet to those without email. It has also been wonderful to be able to share Evening Prayer regularly with 8-12 people via Zoom. There is also a great sense of looking forward to what we might do in the future. The Faith and Worship 365 group are considering how our worship and faith formation programmes might look like post Covid-19, others are looking at the future plans for viability of the parish, and the Acts 1:8 group have a program of mission focuses to remind us that we are part of the world-wide church.

Continued Page 3

PARISH DIRECTORY – JUNE 2020

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Our Mission Statement:

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to be a faithful, worshipping, caring community, committed to serving God by sharing His love and peace with others, in the name of His Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ

Sacraments And Rights Of Passage

March, April and May 2020

Baptisms

Olivia Rose Rodger 15th March 2020

Funerals

Grahame John Bertram 29 May 2020

Memorial Service

nil

Marriage

nil



Continued from Page 1

There are challenges of course. Covid-19 will be with us for a long time, and even when we are allowed to return to St Luke's things will have to be different. I know that many miss the opportunity to share in the weekly Eucharist, and I have taken the decision not to celebrate the Eucharist until I can do so in the company of the congregation again. Then it is too easy to feel that one is achieving things because we are busy doing stuff.

I believe that we need to view this time as a period of waiting, dreaming and preparing. I am writing after preaching on Acts 1:6-14 (seventh Sunday of Easter). Here the disciples have an enforced period of time between the Ascension and the Day of Pentecost. They don't rush to start on the mission goals that Jesus gave them, but spend time together in prayer, expectantly waiting on God, attentive to where God might lead.

Such times are important. Sometimes we would like to skip this step (remember the child's cry on a journey to a holiday destination 'are we there yet?'). The bible is full of these pauses. The Israelites took 40 years between the Exodus and entering the Promised Land; Elisha had to follow Elijah on a long journey before inheriting his mantle; Good Friday was not followed directly by Easter Day, Holy Saturday was necessary.

These periods give an opportunity to reflect on the core values of why we are here, so we can be more effective in our mission and calling. The

prayer that was offered in the diocesan 'Pray Daily' notes for May has moved me particularly:

*Ever present God,
be with us in our isolation,
be close to us in our distancing,
be healing in our sickness,
be light in our darkness,
be wisdom in our confusion,
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,
that when the doors reopen
we may, with the zeal of Pentecost
inhabit our communities
and speak of your goodness
to an emerging world.
For Jesus' sake. Amen.*

On Ascension Day, I showed a video made by a vast montage of people from many British churches singing a version of the Aaronic Blessing ("The Lord bless you and keep you...") for the UK. The video closed poignantly with the message 'Our buildings may be closed: But the church is alive'. Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/PUtlI3mNj5U>

I have a great sense of hope for the future. We worship a God who has a plan, who desires the best for creation, and who invites us to share in mission. St Paul puts this eloquently in his letter to the Romans (5:1-5)

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.



Rev'd Timothy

Parish Hotpot Dinner – 13 March 2020



Hotpot Diners

What a blessing this Parish Hotpot Dinner was for all who attended! Not least because it was the last Parish event before the COVID 19 shut down.

At very short notice, it was decided to hold a Parish Hotpot Dinner as a parish opportunity for relaxed fellowship with Reverend Timothy and June, who had joined us only in the previous month. Janette Hagerty and Chris Bromwich ensured that those bringing main courses and those bringing desserts were fairly evenly spread. What a feast we had, with plenty of delicious food and lots of fellowship to be enjoyed by the approximately forty parishioners who attended.

At that time, just before the COVID 19 isolation rules were brought in by the National Cabinet, there was a severe shortage of toilet paper in the grocery stores, but still plenty of flour, sugar, pasta and eggs for the wonderful cooks of our Parish. Not long after our Dinner, all those staples were also “panic-bought” by frightened Australians and very hard to find.

I look forward to when we can celebrate being allowed to worship together, have coffee together, fund-raise together, and have face-to-face fellowship once again. We all appreciate the fortunate happenstance of those in our Parish who decided to hold the Hotpot Dinner that night, despite the short notice. We have such happy memories of the evening. Thank you to all who contributed to this delightful evening together.

Fellowship And Fund Raising Report

Fund Raising has come to a halt in the last few months because of the Corona Virus.

As it will be some time before restrictions are eased and we can conduct events with numbers of people, we are currently exploring our options for fund raising in this environment.

One suggestion received is for a Cakeless Cake Stall. How this can take place is being investigated.

Any suggestions for future fund raising events, and how these can proceed, will be greatly appreciated.

Janette Hagerty

Faith And Worship 365 (F&W 365) Update

Recently parishioners had the opportunity to meet and discuss all things 'Faith and Worship' at St Luke's. This was the first meeting of the F&W 365 Committee with Reverend Timothy at the helm. Having his leadership, experience and sense of vision will be so valuable moving forward.

During the meeting, discussion explored current and future worship services, faith formation activities and 'relaunching' when we are able to meet in St Luke's again. This included identifying elements that are highly valued and working well, lessons to be learned from meeting remotely and exploring new opportunities. It is certain that 'the new normal' will be different and will probably include elements from what we used to do pre COVID-19, what we are doing now, together with new ideas. This applies equally to our worship services and other faith formation opportunities such as study or discussion groups.

We would like to have a diverse range of options to meet the diverse needs and preferences of current parishioners and those we may be reaching out to, and so are keen to hear from as many people as we can about these things. Please look out for a survey coming your way soon.

We would also encourage anyone who would like to be a part of F&W 365 meetings to let us know and join as you can.

Judy Jones

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere - in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the world.”

Acts 1:8 NLT.

This verse describes the way the gospel of Jesus is spread from the local Jerusalem to an ever widening circle, throughout the country and eventually throughout the whole world. The mission of St Luke’s Church is to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit in the work of sharing the Good News of Christ. This may begin with local focus, as well as national and international mission, in an ever widening circle. It may be in the form of Prayer, Raising Awareness of mission, Teaching, Stewardship, Encouragement and/or financial support.

Over the last few months, the focus has been on Chaplains. In March we prayed for Hospitals Chaplains and those working in Aged Care, that God would provide for any emotional, spiritual needs and challenges they face, patience and understanding, strength and wisdom. We asked that God would comfort and encourage the patients/residents whose lives have been unsettled and disrupted by illness. We remembered the elderly of our community and thanked God for those who having given a lifetime of service, face the future with faith. We remember the housebound, lonely and fearful, the doubting and despairing. We gave thanksgiving for the residents of Regis, Salisbury who are open to the gospel and encouraged by pastoral care.

In April we prayed for Defence Chaplains, that they would be Christ’s ambassadors among all service personnel and that they will be able to exercise the spiritual component of their responsibilities well. We prayed that as they work in an increasingly complex space dealing with a multi-faith environment and an increasingly secular Defence culture, that they will be gracious, faithful and wise in the way they approach this.

In May, our prayers were for School Chaplaincy and their in providing counsel, developing relationships, providing emotional support for students and staff. We asked God to help the Chaplains in linking and referring students to help the wider community. We gave thanksgiving for Chappy week 24-31st May, for the community building, advocacy, prayer and finances raised. We asked that the upcoming Inservice days

enable that the chaplains to be even better equipped to serve their schools. We prayed for a Chaplain for Wellers Hill State School and encouragement for the chaplaincy support group as it seeks to assist her.

Coming up in June is the CMS appeal “Lasting Hope Appeal”. In July, we focus on the Mission to Sea Farers - there are beanie patterns available for any keen knitters. Please speak to church Admin. In August, the focus is the Barnabas Fund. There is an exciting new link through Bush Church Aid, with more to come in future publications.

Please remember the Inala Pantry through these troubled times. Financial assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sue Vassella

Covid Humour

Nail salons, hair salons, waxing centres and tanning places are closed. It's about to get ugly out there.

St Luke's Campus Redevelopment Update June 2020.

Since late February this year, the proposed redevelopment of the St Luke's campus has been on hold. We were notified that C&K (the proposed Child Care development operator) has withdrawn from the project, as there were elements of the proposed lease agreement they could sign off against. Therefore, this gives us an opportunity to look forward again, and consider how we ensure a viable long-term future for our Parish, from a Mission (that is outreach and parishioner growth), income and facility points of view.

At the May Parish Council meeting, a motion was passed “That the Parish Council endorse the forming of a committee with the purpose of openly canvassing and exploring all development and income options for the parish”. Rev. Timothy will be leading this new committee (starting in the next week or so) which will include wardens, parish councillors and parishioners. If you want to be part of this committee, please contact Rev Timothy or the wardens.

Please pray for the future of our Parish and think about how we can move forward together in an understanding and cooperative manner, growing together to ensure a viable ministry and financial base for us for many years ahead.

Brian Wood

Church Music in a Covid-19 Lockdown World



The St Luke's Choir

Music is an integral part of our worship that in some ways is taken for granted – hymns get played; people sing along in a large, corporate group. Singing praise, singing worship, singing celebration – we all feel good and like it. However, this came to a rapid halt earlier this year, with the restrictions placed upon us for gathering and corporate worship.

So, what has this meant for church musicians, singers and choirs? At St Luke's we have been very lucky. Organists are able to practise and play in their own home, we are blessed with a priest who can embrace technology and share music and song as part of on-line worship, we have other musicians who can produce recordings at home, however the impact runs deeper.

For our choir, many of whom are in the “high risk” age bracket, it meant that even though some can gather to pre-record music they were excluded. Workers in essential services excluded themselves. Others were not keen or able to venture out. For the whole choir, it has meant the loss of a weekly, energising, cleansing, wholesome and social experience. This group of people feel that we sing to enhance and supplement our worship week to week, and this has been taken away. The social and prayer support this group offers each other weekly at rehearsal is greatly missed. The opportunity to fill our lungs, expel large volumes of air, increase our endorphin levels, make a joyful noise (mostly) and go home feeling refreshed and free is sadly gone.

As a church organist, my role has changed very dramatically. I am now needing to practise only a small number of hymns and reflections each



Brian Wood

week. I have become a part time recording engineer – and learnt some new skills and software in the process. I have become a bit more of a perfectionist! Anyone who has done recordings of performances knows that mistakes get amplified, so when recording, we strive (often unsuccessfully) to get that “clean take”. This has been a challenge for

our group of singers also – maybe we should release a bloopers tape!

To publish that 2-minute video recorded organ reflection can often take 2 evenings, plus a lot of extra practise. Moving microphones, checking levels, then getting that elusive “clean take”. Followed by reviewing recordings, cleaning up, adding titles, etc.... Our singers group (4 women plus myself) records 2 songs each Friday evening, and this also can be challenging – minimal practice time together, making sure the traffic noise is not too loud, then of course getting the best recording we can in not more than 3 goes, otherwise everybody runs out of breath from limited practice! Even the pipe organ has suffered a bit from lack of use – after a 3-4 week break from use, there were lots of sticky notes.

We are all looking forward to corporate worship in our church again with live music and singing. However, this might also be a slow or different return. It is not clear how activities like singing may contribute to viral spreading, or if our choir will be allowed to gather as one and sing, with the challenges of physical distancing, the available space and also the inclusion of persons in higher risk groups. Let’s pray that we will be able to do this some time in the future together.

In the meantime, don’t forget to sing along on with the hymns and videos when you join our Sunday @9 on-line. Sing like you are in the shower and don’t care what the neighbours, family or housemates think or say. Thank you for the positive feedback many of you have give myself and others who have put together music for our on-line services. Your encouragement and support is highly valued, and I hope we can keep improving over the coming weeks until we join back under the roof at St Luke’s.

History Of St. Aidan's Church

St Aidan's Church on Eric Crescent, Clifton Hill, in the Parish of Ekibin was deconsecrated in May 2019 because of the lack of Anglican worshippers and was recently sold to the St. George Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

So this seems a good time to recall the ministry of St. Aidan's over a 90 year period.



In 1925 the Parish of Ekibin was established at 193 Ekibin Road East and the original wooden church was built and dedicated to St. Luke. The Revd. Dawson Thomas was appointed as the first vicar. In 1929, at a meeting of St. Luke's parishioners, it was unanimously decided to procure land in the Southern part of the parish and build a Church Hall for the local inhabitants. It would be used as a church on Sundays and during the week as a community hall for the benefit of the young people, as was St. Luke's.

Later, in 1962/63, a two-level hall was built behind the original one which became St. Aidan's Church, and later still a brick porch was added to the front.

In 2014, the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Salisbury closed down due to a lack of worshipers and David and Judy Moy moved to Ekibin Parish, and as David became the Parish Property and Maintenance Officer, he had a lot to do with St. Aidan's where he made many friends in the congregation. He soon realised that it was necessary to write a history of St. Aidan's Church, and at a Community Meeting held to inform and discuss the proposed formal sale of the church's property, he appealed to former worshipers to contribute their memories of St. Aidan's Church.

The following are extracts from some of the replies he received. There is a lot of documentation of St. Aidan's Church held in the parish office which can be referred to by anyone who is interested, but which is too voluminous to put in the Church News.

The first two replies were from Judith Sawtell, a former teacher at Salisbury High School, and Naomi Tatzenko (née Searle)

Judith Sawtell

Judith's family moved to Brisbane in 1951 when she was 12 and she soon became involved in the many activities at St. Aidan's Hall. A Sunday School had been established and when she was 14, she had a class of 10-year olds! She also attended the GFS (Girls' Friendly Society) on Monday nights when they had a variety of ball games, folk dancing and square dancing. They also learned 'new and exciting' crafts, and Judith remembers making a leather purse, weaving a cane basket, colouring photographs and other skills.

She also remembers monthly dances run by Bill and Dottie Hamilton who were great supporters and Bill playing the organ during church services.

For adults, Euchre card games were held on Friday nights and indoor bowls which was very popular at that time.

St. Aidan's Hall was a very popular polling booth site for Federal, State and Local elections, partly because it brought in an income and partly because of the splendid cake stalls the ladies set up, which also was a financial blessing.

Naomi Tatzenko

Naomi's parents came to Clifton Hill in 1956 and until they died, were very much part of St. Aidan's. Her father was Warden and her mother

played the organ for many years. When the small congregation moved to St. Luke's Church, she joined St. Luke's Choir and still enjoys singing.



Ex St. Aidan's Church - Current Day

David hopes to include more memories in a future Church News.

Jan Moody, who ran St. Luke's Theatre Society for many years worshipped at St. Aidan's Church and has many memories, much to do with the flowers. There were four flower arrangers, including Jessie Miller in Hamlet St where she grew the flowers for the church display. She had been an arranger for many years, but was very thrilled when Jan took over from her. Members of the congregation were allowed to take the flowers home after the Sunday service because there were no services during the week.

Hopefully, there will be more of this, so if you have any interesting memories, please send them to David Moy.

June McNicol

Children's Church During Covid-19

The current time of isolation has provided the opportunity for us to engage with our parish children in a different way. Each week, material is prepared to match the readings and theme being used in services.

Do these themes sound familiar? Glorifying God in every situation; Jesus weeps with his children; The King is coming; An Easter Surprise; Believe it or not; Anzac theme; Shepherd's voice; Jesus is the way.

It is our aim to give our children a positive message with reassurance that Jesus is the king who surprised us at Easter – believe it or not! We can glorify him in every situation (yes even COVID-19), He is our Shepherd and He weeps with us when we are sad.

How are we spreading this good news? A message and variety of activities are emailed out to those who were attending children's church before isolation, as well as others who have expressed interest in receiving it. The activities are designed to reinforce the message we hear at church. They are simple and fun and encourage parents to engage with their child with the simple message.

We know times have been tough for many, but this virus has provided us the opportunity to engage with our St Luke's children and many others, reaching them at home. It's such a joy to see smiling children's faces at our Sunday service and especially when they hold up their take home kids' message for all to see.

If you know of someone who'd like to be included in our weekly email (sent by blind copy to preserve privacy), please email admin@stlukesekibin.org.au and we'll add you to our mailing list.

Sharon, David and Chris



A Typical Day In Lockdown

- Don't wake up too early
- Make a cup of tea, go back to bed and read the Courier-Mail
- Get up and have breakfast
- Spend the morning solving C-M puzzles
- Have lunch
- Read a book or knit beanies
- Water the garden
- Watch large number of walkers and dog walkers in Andrew Avenue
- Have prepared dinner
- Watch TV (lots of good documentaries on SBS)
- Go to bed early and read a book

As I am well over 65 and live alone, I am not supposed to leave the house, so my daughter does my shopping, but I do sneak down to the local shop for milk and the PO to pay bills.

So far I haven't found this routine boring.

June McNicol



Covid Humour

Yeah, I have plans tonight. I'll probably hit the living room around 8 or 9.

My reflection on “Zoom on Sunday”

When we last met together as a parish family to worship at St. Luke’s on Sunday, 22 March, I felt sad as I walked out of church that day. When would we be able to meet again in our much-loved church? How safe and well would we all stay with the uncertainty of Covid 19? Then our Zoom service kicked in only a week later, thanks to the expertise of Rev’d Timothy and June. After that I felt very connected to my church family and knew that we would get through to the other side, whenever that may be.

There have been many positives for me as I sit quietly in the corner of my family room at home. I find I can concentrate on the service and really focus on the spoken words of the prayers, the hymns, the readings and Timothy’s message. It is wonderful to see all those faces, especially parishioners who haven’t been able to come to church services for a long while. Brian’s musical reflections, the recorded choir members helping us to sing along at home, a selection of choral and other music – all these have added so much to the overall experience of our Zoom church service. The break-out rooms at the end of our service give us an opportunity to chat to our fellow parishioners and to support each other in this surreal time of the pandemic.

I do look forward to walking through the St. Luke’s door again but, in the meantime, I give thanks for the many blessings of worship via zoom. Thank you, Timothy and June, for facilitating this experience.

Lynn Mitchell



A Bonus Of Isolation - “Sunday @ 9” In Our Own Lounge!!!



Rev'd Timothy in Our Lounge Rooms

My Mother and I are grateful to be worshipping with the “Sunday @ 9” Congregation. A big “thank you” to the Administration at St Luke’s Ekibin Parish and our new Rector Reverend Timothy Nicholson. Only a couple of weeks into Rev. Timothy’s appointment and we were all ordered into isolation, with no further services at St Luke’s. Thanks to modern technology and some cyber experts we have our Zoom “Sunday @ 9” Services in a familiar service format. This is a wonderful opportunity, for it says in Matthew 20 -18 “ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them ”.

It is exciting to be with the Congregation we know so well and with whom we have shared so much of our lives and beliefs.

Some time ago, as my Mother became frailer, getting to church on a Sunday became very difficult and the 9am deadline seemed impossible to meet. The Home Communion visits and a few Parishioner visits were the only chance we had to share our Christian Worship. The convenience and joy of being able to get to the Lounge Chair for the shared Zoom Service “Sunday @ 9” has filled that gap. We are no longer isolated from the worshippers at St Luke’s! Long may it continue!

Covid Humour

Loane and Noel Mary

What’s the difference between COVID-19 and Romeo and Juliet?
One’s the coronavirus and the other is a Verona crisis.

St Luke's During Covid-19 – A Personal Reflection

How are we the same? How are we different? How have we gained as a church community? How have we lost?

Thankfully, at this stage, all our St Luke's parishioners have stayed safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through their own endeavours and with the help of family and friends, everyone is surviving and maybe even thriving. Our Parish Mission Statement affirms "Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to be a faithful, worshipping, caring community, committed to serving God by sharing His love and peace with others, in the name of His Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Yes, this is all still the same even though the way we do it may be different.



We are more intentional in seeking each other out and voicing our care and concern. Rather than a quick "hello" over a cuppa on Sunday morning after church, we now ring or email to check how our fellow parishioners are. This is different. This is BETTER.

Rev Timothy sends out a pastoral letter each week with a message of hope and another follow-up email after the Sunday service. He sends out the service sheet and readings for Sunday@9 worship which enables us to prepare for our service and fully participate. A copy of the service and letter are delivered to letterboxes of those without email so they can also equally participate. Even for those unable to join the service, this resource forms a source of connection with God. This is different. This is BETTER.

It is a total joy to know we have fellow parishioners worshipping with us online (by internet or phone) who have been unable to join us for maybe years, due to infirmity or other personal circumstances. We are sharing Evening Prayer four times each week, led by Rev Timothy. We are in our own homes but the prayers are raised to God the same and there are

often 10 joining this service. How long is it since we can say that for regular evening prayer at St Luke's? This is different. This is BETTER.



Of course, not everything is gain. There is a strong sense of loss as we miss the physical contact with our parish friends. For those living alone, there is a real sense of isolation and loneliness. For those coping with work at home whilst also caring for their children, a sense of feeling overwhelmed. We haven't been able to share communion together since 22nd March. Rev Timothy is currently unable to undertake pastoral visits or provide home communion. Our income has suffered significantly through loss of the ability to hire our facilities, however there is joy in realising the generosity of our parishioners as they contribute to our financial needs.

Now is the time for us to consider how we will change, as a parish community, as we start to move out of our "bubbles". What will return to the old ways of worship and being a church? What will we choose to retain from our time in isolation? It is a wonderful opportunity for reflection, and we thank God for that.

Chris Bromwich



David & Judy Moy "Attending" a Zoom Service

The History Of Masada, Israel



The modern road to Masada

Many people visiting Israel today will take a tour to the massive and



historic rock of Masada in the Negev desert overlooking the Dead Sea. It is historic in many ways, as a fortress dating back thousands of years and where the imposing ruins of the palace built by Herod the Great between 37 and 31BC, can still be seen. Built on three levels, the palace is perched on the edge of the rock, resembling the prow of a steamship overlooking the sea and the desert. It consisted of many rooms, a bath house, huge storage areas, vast vegetable gardens and a series of large water cisterns fed from rainwater, which provided ample needs to those who

lived there.

Building materials and other provisions had to be carried up a winding path named the Snake path, which is still climbed today by athletic people. It consists of 700 steps that cover two km, and takes several hours to complete the walk. A guide told me



that the shore of the Dead Sea was much closer to the foot of the rock a thousand years ago, allowing boats to travel to Masada, but the path up the hill was the only route to the top. Luckily for those less able to make the ascent today, a cable car system takes only a few minutes to reach the summit.

Sadly Masada's real fame lies in events that took place there during the time of the Roman occupation of Judea in the first century AD. The only record of what happened at Masada is contained in the work of Flavius Josephus, a Jewish general who surrendered after being defeated in battle and decided to throw in his lot with the Roman occupiers led by Vespasian and his son Titus (both to become Roman Emperors of the Flavian Dynasty). Josephus wrote several historical works including *de Bello Judaica*, describing the Roman war against the Jews.

According to Josephus, after a defeat in a huge and bloody uprising in Jerusalem in AD72, the perpetrators, a group of Jewish zealots known as sicarii led by Eleazer ben Ya'ir, fled to Masada for safety, thinking the fortress was impregnable. The Romans however were determined they would capture the rebels and punish them. A Roman general Flavius Silva led the Roman Legion X Fretensis, comprising of between 8000 and 9000 soldiers, to Masada where they pitched several camps around the foot of the rock. They soon realized that it was so strongly fortified they would be unable to reach the summit so they decided to construct a siege ramp to the top. This took more than a year, being completed in AD74.



One of the Roman Camps



The Ramp

When the Romans had almost reached the summit, the Jews realized their men were facing torture and crucifixion and slavery for the women and children, deciding that suicide was the only option. Suicide is forbidden to Jews, so each father killed his family, then the men killed each other, leaving only the last man to sin by suicide. According to Josephus the only survivors found by the Romans were five women and children who hid in the water cisterns.

This account of what happened has always been seen as a heroic last stand of Jewish patriots against the Romans, and Masada has become a modern place of pilgrimage to many Jewish people. However, over recent decades many revisionist historians now deny that it happened at all as there is no other historical epigraphical evidence, and archaeology findings of a siege on the rock are almost negligible. The fact that Josephus records a long and noble speech by Eleazer before their deaths is cited as proving the record untrue as only those who would have heard it were dead. In defence of Josephus, other Roman historians like Tacitus and Caesar, had a habit of adding dramatically heroic imaginary speeches made by the enemy into their reports of battles.

One can also only wonder at the reason for the visible remains of so many Roman camps around the foot hills, and the traces of a second siege ramp to the summit made for military equipment to move along. These certainly were built with a purpose! Maybe the Romans murdered the rebels and their families and didn't want it to be known. But what happened to the bodies? Well, it is being investigated, I think.

Note: Some of the artefacts found by archaeologists at Masada, were fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls. To learn more about this I was very fortunate to be able to attend a conference at New York University, from the 17th to 20th of May, conducted totally via Zoom. Using this medium, more than 30 eminent scholars, scientists, archaeologists and other experts were able to share the results of their latest investigations of the scrolls to more than 500 people around the world. It was amazing to see how advanced 3D microscopes, multi spectral imaging, Micro CT and PET scans can now unroll scrolls that were fused into solid chunks, separate and flatten the sections. Now scholars are able to read the scripts on them, completely untouched by human hands.

Llyn Crawford

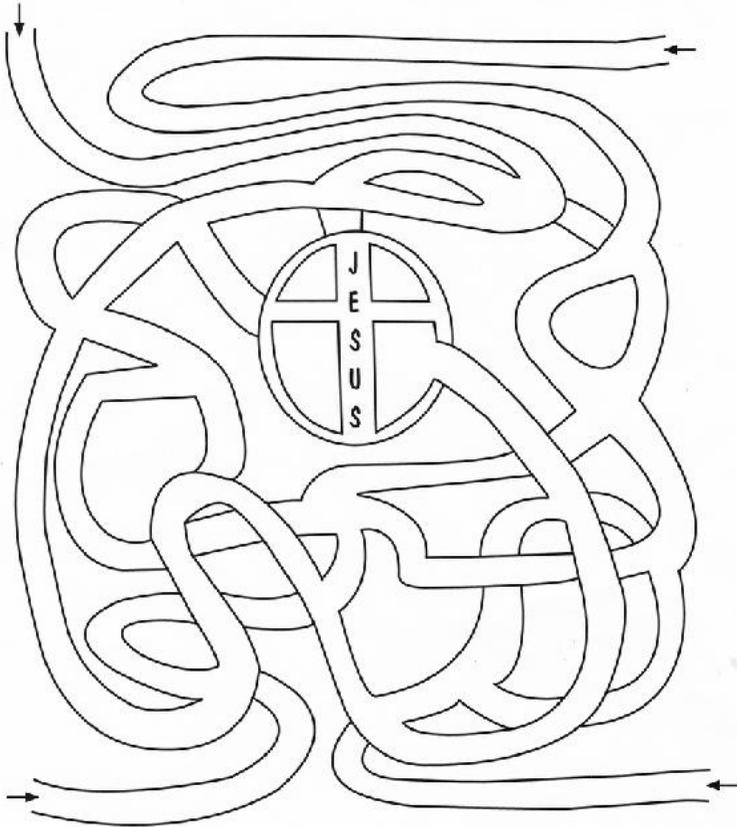




K I D S K L I P S

Jesus Is the Way

Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Find the path that leads to Jesus.



Hidden Word

Draw a line between the letters that are the same to reveal a hidden word.

