

"LIFE THROUGH THE LENS"



PEACE

At 6.45 am, Easter Sunday, the small Bookpurnong Lutheran Church members and assorted families and friends started gathering on the bank of the Gurra Gurra Creek in the Riverland of South Australia to celebrate this annual celebration of faith and friendship.

The morning was one of those for which The Riverland is renowned: calm, the merest hint of a breeze, postcard picture sunrise, and a flock of pelicans paddling past, nodding in agreement, "Yes! It's a great morning to be alive!".

With the worship service starting, it felt as if no one would have been surprised to see Jesus come wandering along the edge of the water, stop, light a fire and start cooking some fish to share with us, and offer the unique "Peace" he offered to all he met in his travels around the now war-torn Middle East.

As we, few in numbers, sang and prayed under that tin shelter, I thought about Jesus, the Son of God, and how he brought peace, healing and forgiveness to people, seldom in grand cathedral-like edifices, but as and where he met them. People like the blind beggar sitting in the dirt and crying out for help (**JOHN 9:1-12**), despised, shunned and cast aside lepers in their rags (**LUKE 17:11-19**), a deaf mute (**MARK 7:31-35**), a Roman Centurian's servant, (**MATTHEW 8:5-13**) a paralytic man brought to Jesus by friends and left carrying his stretcher (**MATTHEW 9:1-8**), and healed the daughter of a church leader who everyone thought was dead. (**MARK 5:21:-24, 35-42**)

Jesus still comes to where his offer of peace and love is needed; it has nothing to do with grand and glorious buildings with stained glass windows, fine, respectable locations, or well-dressed crowds of people. This same Jesus, son of the loving God, continues to offer his presence and peace. He offers it in the dirt and slums of wind-blown city streets and to the lonely, struggling single parent and her children in their cramped two-room flat. He comes to the lonely and unemployed figure huddled under a blanket in a parkland or under a bridge and, always in love, calls us to accept his offer of peace.

He hears our cries for peace and delivers no matter who we are or where we might be. He might do this directly by His Spirit bringing inner peace to you or through the actions of another obeying his call to love and care as he did for them.

May the peace offered by Jesus be in your life and always with you as promised.

Kevin.