



Werribee Uniting Church

We acknowledge the people of the Kulin alliance, the original custodians of the land which was never ceded and on which our buildings for worship stand and we gather.

23 August, 2026 Pentecost 13

Reflection



**Greetings, Sisters and
Brothers in Christ!
Welcome to Worship!**
**Today, we will be
reflecting on Matthew 16:
13-20**

Today's Gospel reading offers us one of the most profound questions in all scripture, asked by Jesus to his disciples: "Who do you say I am?" This is a basic question that I believe all followers of Jesus must answer – and not just once, but at various times in our life. Who do you say that Jesus is? For us personally, and for our world?

Jesus first asked the disciples a fairly easy question, "Who do people say that I am?" Well, some say John the Baptist, they answered, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. It's a pretty easy question, because they are just sharing what they hear, rather than what they believe. Then Jesus asked them the harder question, the more important question: "Who do you say that I am?" This is the question that cuts through time. It is the question that reveals the condition of our hearts, the foundation of our faith, and the direction of our lives. Peter steps forward with clarity that does not come from human insight: **"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."** In that moment, Peter sees Jesus not as the crowds see Him, but as the Father reveals Him. His confession is not merely correct theology; it is a Spirit-given revelation. It is the moment when Peter's faith becomes personal, rooted, and transformative.

Jesus affirms Peter's confession and then speaks identity over him: **"You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church."** Peter's name means "rock," but the true foundation is not Peter's personality or strength—it is the confession he has just made. The Church is built on the truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Everything else—tradition, leadership, mission, worship—flows from that central confession.

Then Jesus makes a promise that still strengthens believers today: **"The gates of Hades will not overcome it."** Gates are defensive structures. Jesus is not describing the Church as hiding from darkness; He is describing the Church advancing against it. The confession of Christ is a force that breaks through despair, sin, death, and every power that opposes God's kingdom. Jesus entrusts His disciples with authority—to bind and loose, to proclaim forgiveness, to declare the gospel that opens the way to life. This is not political

TODAY AND NEXT WEEK

Worship services

23 Aug: Raymond Surujpal

30 Aug: Rev Bruce Watson

Samoan service

3rd Sunday, 12pm, in the Church: All welcome.

Pastoral Care: Please contact Raymond Surujpal, convenor, pastoral care team on: 0432 619 184.

Bible readings

This week: Exodus 1:8-2:10, Psalm 124, Romans 12:1-8, Matthew 16:13-20

Next week: Exodus 3:1-15, Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, Romans 12:9-21, Matthew 16:21-28

What's on this week

Monday: 9.30am Playgroup

Tuesday: 9.30am Bible Discussion

Wednesday: 9.30am Property Group;
2.30pm Seniors Afternoon Tea

Thursday: 9.30am Gardening Group;
5.45pm Choir Practice

Rosters 23 Aug (30 Aug)

Greetings: Julie Rees (Agnes & Maru Levave)

Audiovisual: Faith & Chelsea (Noel Savory)

Morning Tea: Fa Tuipea & Site Tupua
(Judy Khor & Margaret Dent)

Music: Angela Murnane (Asanka Pakura)

Prayers: Emily Metusela (Lauina Levave)

Reader: Anemorie Ropeti-Kilifi (Node Madu)

Werribee UC on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/621987747878234/>

Church office

Open 9.30am to 12 noon. Phone 97411084

Email office@werribeeunitingchurch.org.au

PO Box 2156, Werribee, Vic 3030

WUC Newsletter

Please send information for inclusion to the church office by Wed on 97411084 or email office@werribeeunitingchurch.org.au

Bank Account & Boom Gate (0459#)

BSB 083-909 A/c 516109795

To book facilities at WUC:

Email: (Elizabeth Barnes)

bookings@werribeeunitingchurch.org.au

power or personal privilege. It is the sacred responsibility of representing Christ to the world, carrying His message, and participating in His mission.

Jesus' question—"Who do you say I am?"—is not meant to test us but to reveal us. It draws us into deeper relationship, clearer identity, and stronger faith. And when we answer as Peter did, not by human wisdom but by divine revelation, Jesus speaks identity and purpose over us too. Friends, may our confession of Christ continue to be the rock on which our life stands. Amen.

Blessings Raymond Surujpal

Sunday 30 August— Family Service

All are welcome to a Family Service led by Rev. Bruce Watson on Sunday 31 May at 9:30am.

The theme of the service is 'Light'.

We invite children, youth, adults (old and young) to come to be part of /participate in this service.

Look for more information on to come next week.

Regards, Margaret Bull

O.S.L.O

Occasional Sunday Lunch Out

Today at 12md.

Altona Sports Club, 11 Altona Road, Altona. All welcome.

Please contact Elaine on 0435998013 or Lorna on 0419101766 for bookings or cancellations.

Crosslight

There are copies of the August edition of Crosslight Magazine available, in the book case in the foyer.

Sew 'n Sow

Our monthly meeting of Sew 'n Sow will be held on the 4th Friday being 28 August, 2026 instead of the 3rd Friday at 1pm at the Church. If you are interested, bring along your crafts and join us.

Newsletter Articles

We are in need of articles to be included in the newsletter.

If in future anyone has an article that they think would be interesting or appropriate for the newsletter, please email it to the Church Office by Wednesday.

WEDDING 1st AUGUST in SAMOA



Last Sunday Ron Latu told the congregation about his daughter Sophia's wedding which was held in Samoa on 1st August. He introduced to us to Mr Matthew and Mrs Sophia Westcott.

Ron specially thanked the five Aussie members of the congregation who travelled to Samoa to join the wedding celebration. (Wendy Barnes, Margaret and Geoff Gook, Margaret Bull and Bev Lambie.)

Ron presented two cultural items to our congregation. You will hear more about those and their meaning in a future newsletter.

