Roseville New Church, 4, Shirley Road, Roseville, NSW 2069

CHURCH BULLETIN FOR MID-AUGUST 2026

Each Church Bulletin will come out online or get to you posted before the end of the previous month. If anything is to go into the next one, it needs to be with me by the previous 25th, please. Feel free to contact me on 0427 938 732 or julian@duckworth.me Thanks, Julian

Note that this Bulletin is an extra one, before Ben comes, and another one will be sent before the end of August, about September and onwards.

Minister's Message

I remember a minister talking about our need to be involved with, open to, and focused on other people. He used the phrase 'caring and sharing' which seemed to me to say it all in a nice poetic way…it rhymes.

A more modern word would be 'empathy', feeling for where another person is in themselves, but empathy doesn't say what it means, like 'caring and sharing' do. So let's explore this for a while. I think the two great commandments give us a really helpful model. The first commandment is all about our relationship with God, and the second commandment is all about our relationships with other people *because* we have obeyed the first commandment before the second. And this second commandment – 'You shall love your neighbour *as yourself*' – has this quirky ending, asking us to love other people (all other people?) just like we love ourselves.

That's a winner, because we know all about loving ourselves. I love … being right, knowing I'm good at certain things, appreciated, being the life and soul of the party, being quiet, knowing I'm not perfect … you name it! And now I am to love someone else the same way, to the same amount, whoever they are. Wow, that is pretty challenging.

So, back to 'caring and sharing'. I have always had a tense relationship with 'care'. We can sometimes care too much and it drains us. The value of God for us (the first commandment!) is that God is completely able to care 1000% (yes, a thousand times), so my job is to help that happen, come alongside (what a wonderful word that is!) but not to take it all upon me. We need to care to show something of God's love but stay in our humanity.

'Sharing' has quite a number of meanings. It can mean sharing ideas with people, sharing our time, sharing our own values and beliefs. It can also mean sharing in listening to someone else who needs someone to listen. Sharing can also mean being part of a community or group where we trust ourselves to these friends that bit more openly and sincerely, and they with us.

Other people are a blessing to us because they bring variety, newness, enrichment, likely friendship, and maybe some challenges. And we are blessed by their involvement with us, as they might feel about ours with them. I like to think about groups as a circle where everyone is an equal part, and everyone can be brought to the centre, having a special place for a while. One among equals. Heaven, really, and heaven is where God is. Heaven can be felt here…

Let's love God first with all we've got, and then care and share, because... Go well, Julian

About our time with Rachel and with Ben

At the moment I'm writing, we are between the two visits to Sydney, from Rachel who came August 10th and went back on August 19th after a mutually much-appreciated time with us, and coming soon, a visit from Ben who is very much looking forward to being here, to meeting people, experiencing Australia, and leading our church service on the Sunday he is here. Ben is here from Tuesday, August 25th until Tuesday, September 1st.

There are two set dates and times I would like to draw your attention to –

On Wednesday, August 26th – the day after Ben arrives – we will have another social meeting, this time with Ben in the evening in church from 7 p.m. to around 8.30 p.m. If you are free, come and spend time meeting Ben for a while in a nice relaxed setting. There will be tea, coffee, herbals and biscuits on hand.

On Sunday, August 30th at 10 a.m. Ben will lead our church service including the Holy Supper. After the service we will have a light lunch in the Hall, and it's important to say that this will be AN OUTSIDE CATERED FINGER-FOOD LUNCH, so people do not need to bring plates – just bring yourselves!

Hopefully, you can come to one or both of these meet-ups with Ben. During the time he is here, he will have a similar program as Rachel, with some differences.

IMPORTANT
As Ben is taking the service on August 30th including sacrament, we will **NOT** have a service one week later, on the first Sunday of September, the 6th, but we will have a service on the third Sunday, September 20th, as we normally do.

Another Church Bulletin will be sent out before the end of August with more information about things in September, October, and perhaps even giving the dates of services and events over the Christmas period.

As interim Minister and on behalf of everybody in our church community, I want to say thank you very much to everybody who in a particular way or in a being-there way was part of our church's time with Rachel. I do know first-hand how much Rachel enjoyed her visit, and in meeting people new to her who she quickly made friends with. Thank you so much.

The Council of Ministers are holding their annual face-to-face 'retreat' in Melbourne during the middle of September, from Tuesday to Thursday 15th-17th. This is a time to be together and share support, to look at directions in which the church can go forward and is doing so, and explore the value and use to people of our teachings which are universal and inclusive.