

Our Prayer for 2026: Dear Father, Help us to gather to proclaim Christ, and please use every LMAP member to play a part in bringing 20 people to faith in Jesus in each of our ministries and congregations across the year. To your glory. AMEN.

Distress & Hope Bible Talk Series Break-up

Purpose of the Series: To encourage our church family: We can have deep and abiding hope in the Lord Jesus even in the midst of the distress, uncertainty and unjust circumstances which are often associated with Mental Health.

Marketing Title of Series: Distress and Hope

Series Champion: Liv Bush

The Purpose of this Document:

- To instruct the **Gathering Leader, Kids Spot Speaker, Band Leader, Song Chooser** and **Preacher** in shaping each church gathering as whole – so that we intentionally draw out what we are looking at in the Bible each week. It will also mean, that particular features which complement what we do as a church, are addressed.
- To assist **Growth Group Leaders** and **Friday Youth Leaders** (and other ministry leaders) to arrange their program most logically and effectively to work in with the Bible Talk Series. And further to point to resources which can be used to lead groups well.
- To help the **Gathering Planners** (i.e. those who organise the rosters), **AV Ministry Team, Social Media**, and **Office** to have the information that they need to do the roles that they do most fruitfully and efficiently.



Talk No.	Preachers <i>(note: Master is the Google Drive Version)</i>	Passages	Reading	Talk Title <i>(marketing friendly)</i>	Talk Topic/Focus/Purpose	Comment/Outline	Gathering Googly <i>(feature/consideration)</i>
<i>This block preached at MT Riv 9am, Blaxland 10.30am & 4.30pm (from 31st May to 28th June)</i>							
1. 31 st May 2026 CMS Mission Sunday	MR9: KDN MR9 Kids Spot: CMS Mission Spot BL10.30: KDN BL4.30: KDN	OT: Genesis 1-2 Psalm: 8 Nehemiah 9 NT: Hebrews 2:5-18 Colossians 1	OT: Psalm 8 NT: Hebrews 2:5-18	Image Bearers	Central theme: We are creatures of dust, made in the image of God, for relationship. <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that we are integrated, whole, beloved children of God.</i>	Song Suggestions: • NEW SONG IDEA: Abide (Dwell Songs) • Rejoice • All Creatures of our God and King • Crown him with many crowns • Christus Victor	Mission Focus: CMS Mission Spot (> JH)

					<i>Areas of mental wellbeing to consider: All humans have inherent worth and dignity. Therefore, there is no room for stigma in the church.</i>	• How Deep the Father's Love for Us • The Love of the Father Prayer Points to include: • To value all people as made in the image of God with inherent worth and dignity. • CMS Sunday Prayer (see below) • Our CMS Missionaries • The CMS Lasting Hope Appeal	
2. 7th June 2026 Kings Birthday Long Weekend	MR9: KDN & JH MR9 Kids Spot: Holiday Club (GO) BL10.30: KDN & JH BL4.30: KDN & JH	OT: Psalm 23, 27, 84, 139 NT: Matthew 1: 21-25 Colossians 1: 15-23 Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10	OT: Psalm 139 NT: Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10	Presence	Central Theme: God is present in all circumstances in our life. <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that God knows them deeply, and empathises with them. Where the circumstances of our lives and emotions shift, He is constant.</i> <i>Areas of mental wellbeing to consider: Anxiety and depression and the emotional changes that accompany these. We need to be ready to offer support and referral as needed.</i>	NOTE: Kings Birthday Long-Weekend Song Suggestions: • NEW Song Idea: Abide (Dwell Songs) • Kids Song: Jesus Strong and Kind • Before the Throne of God Above • The Lord is my Salvation • Indescribable • Won My Heart Prayer Points to include: • those experiencing mental health challenges would know that God is present and cares for them. • For the King and governments and all in authority	Lord's Supper: BL10.30am (KDN)

3. 14 th June 2026 MARS Mission Sunday	MR9: KDN & OB MR9 Kids Spot: Hugh Chilton BL10.30: KDN & OB BL4.30: KDN & OB	OT: Psalm 6, 22, 42, 43, 69, 88 Job 10; Lamentations 3; NT: Matt 5: 1-12, 26: 36 - 46, 27:45-55; Romans 8: 18-29	OT: Psalm 42 NT: Matt 26: 36-46	Lament	Central Theme: We can express our deepest distress to God, and in turning to him we can find hope. Jesus is both our <i>mediator</i> and our <i>model</i> in this. <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that they can turn towards God in their distress. He welcomes our cries of anguish, and because of Jesus we are no longer separated from God. There will be a brief, frank, and sensitive reference to suicide</i> <i>Area of Mental wellbeing to consider: We need to be aware of those who experience thoughts of suicide and mental health conditions such as PTSD, and be ready to offer support and referral as needed</i>	Song Suggestions: - Rock of Ages - It Is Well With My Soul - Consider Christ - No Other Name Prayer Points to include: - a prayer of lament on behalf of all those in our church and community who live with mental ill-health. - MARS Mission - Refugees and those displaced around the World	Mission Focus: MARS (BL4.30pm > NA)
4. 21 st June 2026	MR9: KDN & JH MR9 Kids Spot: Holiday Club (??) BL10.30: KDN & JH BL4.30: KDN & JH	OT: Psalm 133 NT: Romans 12: 1-21 Ephesians 4: 1-16 1 John 4: 7-21	OT: Psalm 133 NT: Romans 12: 1-21	Family	Central Theme: the church is family, and as brothers and sisters we support each other in the struggles of mental ill health <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that there is a pastoral role we can all play in caring for each other and supporting each other to access other types of help.</i> <i>Area of Mental wellbeing to consider: making referrals to mental health services wisely, being equipped to care for each other.</i>	Song Suggestions: (Try only having 'collective noun songs': we, our, us) - The Love of the Father - Here We Stand - The Chorus of the Saved - We Declare - Creation Awaits Prayer Points to include: - Those who work in mental health - nurses, psychiatrists, social workers and counsellors. - For Church families around the mountains in proclaiming Jesus	Mission Focus: LMAP Women's Retreat (>Naomi N)/Base Camp (>PH)
5.	MR9: KDN	OT: Psalm 17 Isaiah 25 - 26	OT: Psalm 17	Hope	Central Theme: Hope is ultimately found in Jesus.	Song Suggestions:	

28 th June 2026	MR9 Kids Spot: Holiday Club (Vincent W) BL10.30: KDN BL4.30: KDN	NT: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 1 Peter 1:3-12 Revelation 21: 1-7	NT: Revelation 21: 1-7		<i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that we have sure hope of eternity with God, free of distress and suffering. We can also see the goodness of God in the here and now, through His Word, His people, and appropriate mental health care.</i> <i>Area of Mental wellbeing to consider: because we have hope in the goodness of God now and into eternity, we are free to seek support and relief from our mental health challenges, without solely relying on or hoping in biological and medical understandings of mental ill health.</i>	- NEW SONG IDEA: Abide (Dwell Songs) - Come and Reign - It Was Finished Upon That Cross - In Christ Alone - Christ is Mine Forevermore - Hymn of Heaven Prayer Points to include: - To be assured of the hope we have in Christ into eternity. And be convicted of the presence and goodness of God in the land of the living, the deep resources of biblical lament, the support from our brothers and sisters in Christ, and the dignity of all human beings. - Holiday Club Opportunities/invitations	Mission Spot: LMAP Holiday Club (>RC)
Talk No.	Preachers <i>(note: Master is the Google Drive Version)</i>	Passages	Reading	Talk Title <i>(marketing friendly)</i>	Talk Topic/Focus/Purpose	Comment/Outline	Gathering Googly <i>(feature/consideration)</i>
<i>This block preached at Glenbrook 9am, 10.30am & 6pm (from 8th Nov to 6th Dec)</i>							
1. 26 th July 2026	GB9: KDN <i>(livestreamed)</i> GB9 Kids Spot: ?? GB10:30: KDN GB10.30 Kids Spot: ?? GB6: KDN	OT: Genesis 1-2 Psalm: 8 Nehemiah 9 NT: Hebrews 2:5-18 Colossians 1	OT: Psalm 8 NT: Hebrews 2:5-18	Image Bearers	Central theme: We are creatures of dust, made in the image of God, for relationship. <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that we are integrated, whole, beloved children of God.</i> <i>Areas of mental wellbeing to consider: All humans have inherent</i>	Song Suggestions: - NEW SONG IDEA: Abide (Dwell Songs) - Rejoice - All Creatures of our God and King - Crown him with many crowns - Christus Victor - How Deep the Father's Love for Us - The Love of the Father	Promote Square One Conf (>RC) Kids Church T3 starts back (GBam)

	<i>(Bible Talk recorded for Church Central)</i>				worth and dignity. Therefore, there is no room for stigma in the church.	Prayer Points to include: - To value all people as made in the image of God with inherent worth and dignity. - Other LMAP Gatherings	
2. 2 nd Aug 2026 MTC Mission Sunday	GB9: KDN & JH <i>(livestreamed)</i> GB9 Kids Spot: MTC Mission Spot GB10:30: KDN & JH GB10.30 Kids Spot: MTC Mission Spot GB6: KDN/JH <i>(Bible Talk recorded for Church Central)</i>	OT: Psalm 23, 27, 84, 139 NT: Matthew 1: 21-25 Colossians 1: 15-23 Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10	OT: Psalm 139 NT: Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10	Presence	Central Theme: God is present in all circumstances in our life. <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that God knows them deeply, and empathises with them. Where the circumstances of our lives and emotions shift, He is constant.</i> <i>Areas of mental wellbeing to consider:</i> <i>Anxiety and depression and the emotional changes that accompany these. We need to be ready to offer support and referral as needed.</i>	Song Suggestions: - NEW Song Idea: Abide (Dwell Songs) - Kids Song: Jesus Strong and Kind - Before the Throne of God Above - The Lord is my Salvation - All Things - Indescribable - Won My Heart Prayer Points to include: - those experiencing mental health challenges would know that God is present and cares them. - Moore College	MTC Mission Profile (NA)
3. 9 th Aug 2026	GB9: KDN & OB <i>(livestreamed)</i> GB9 Kids Spot: ?? GB10:30: KDN & OB GB10.30 Kids Spot: Lord's Supper GB6: KDN & OB	OT: Psalm 6, 22, 42, 43, 69, 88 Job 10; Lamentations 3; NT: Matt 5: 1-12, 26: 36 - 46, 27:45-55; Romans 8: 18-29	OT: Psalm 42 NT: Matt 26: 36-46	Lament	Central Theme: We can express our deepest distress to God, and in turning to him we can find hope. Jesus is both our <i>mediator</i> and our <i>model</i> in this. <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that they can turn towards God in their distress. He welcomes our cries of anguish, and because of Jesus we are no longer separated from God. There will be a brief, frank, and sensitive reference to suicide</i>	Song Suggestions: - Rock of Ages - It Is Well With My Soul - Consider Christ - No Other Name Prayer Points to include: - a prayer of lament on behalf of all those in our church and community who live with mental ill-health.	GB9am BBQ Bfast GB10.30 Lord's Supper (KDN)

	<i>(Bible Talk recorded for Church Central)</i>				<i>Area of Mental wellbeing to consider: We need to be aware of those who experience thoughts of suicide and mental health conditions such as PTSD, and be ready to offer support and referral as needed</i>	Those grieving	
4. 16 th Aug 2026	GB9: KDN & JH <i>(livestreamed)</i> GB9 Kids Spot: Lord's Supper GB10:30: KDN & JH GB10.30 Kids Spot: ?? GB6: KDN & JH <i>(Bible Talk recorded for Church Central)</i>	OT: Psalm 133 NT: Romans 12: 1-21 Ephesians 4: 1-16 1 John 4: 7-21	OT: Psalm 133 NT: Romans 12: 1-21	Family	Central Theme: the church is family, and as brothers and sisters we support each other in the struggles of mental ill health <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that there is a pastoral role we can all play in caring for each other and supporting each other to access other types of help.</i> <i>Area of Mental wellbeing to consider: making referrals to mental health services wisely, being equipped in caring for each other.</i>	Song Suggestions: (Try only having 'collective noun songs': we, our, us) - The Love of the Father - Here We Stand - The Chorus of the Saved - We Declare - Creation Awaits Prayer Points to include: - Those who work in mental health - nurses psychiatrists, social workers and counsellors. - For Church families around the mountains to be proclaiming Jesus - Give thanks for the LMAP Women's Retreat	GB9am Lord's Supper (NA)
5. 23 rd Aug 2026 BCA Mission Sunday	GB9: KDN <i>(livestreamed)</i> GB9 Kids Spot: BCA Mission Spot GB10:30: KDN GB10.30 Kids Spot: BCA Mission Spot GB6: KDN <i>(Bible Talk recorded for Church Central)</i>	OT: Psalm 17 Isaiah 25 - 26 NT: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 1 Peter 1:3-12 Revelation 21: 1-7	OT: Psalm 17 NT: Revelation 21: 1-7	Hope	Central Theme: Hope is ultimately found in Jesus. <i>Purpose: I want the listener to know that we have sure hope of eternity with God, free of distress and suffering. We can also see the goodness of God in the here and now, through His Word, His people, and appropriate mental health care.</i> <i>Area of Mental wellbeing to consider: because we have hope in the goodness of God now and into eternity, we are free to seek support</i>	As this is BCA Sunday it would be appropriate to either start the gathering or include in the prayer the First Nations Recognition prayer (see below) Song Suggestions: - NEW SONG IDEA: Abide (Dwell Songs) - Come and Reign - It Was Finished Upon That Cross - In Christ Alone - Christ our Hope in Life and Death	Mission Profile: BCA (>David Thompson)

					<i>and relief from our mental health challenges, without solely relying on or hoping in biological and medical understandings of mental ill health.</i>	● Christ is Mine Forevermore ● Hymn of Heaven Prayer Points to include: ● To be assured of the hope we have in Christ into eternity. And be convicted of the presence and goodness of God in the land of the living, the deep resources of biblical lament, the support from our brothers and sisters in Christ, and the dignity of all human beings. ● BCA Mission (see prayer below) ● First Nations Prayer (see below)	
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Key: MR = LMAP Mt Riv; BL = LMAP Blaxland; GB = LMAP Glenbrook; KDN = Ken Noakes; RC = Rachael Connor; PH = Paul Hallam; NL = Nick Lindeback; JH = Julie Haddon; GO = Gail Oakey; NA = Neil Atwood; TO = Trevor Oakley; JSh = Josh Schroder; OB = Olivia Bush; JB = Jared Bartlett; JE = Jake Evans; GBH = Gary Haddon; AC = Andrew Cox; DSw = Dave Swan; PC = Phil Coghlan; JLav = John Lavender; KR = Kevin Russell; DC = Dave Catto; BCA = Bush Church Aid; MTC = Moore Theological College; CMS = Church Missionary Society; DLS = Daylight Savings; YA = Young Adults; MARS = Mountains Anglican Refugee Support; CBM = Western Sydney Uni AFES Group.

Gathering Leader & Preacher:

- To help make your role as the Gathering Leader as effective as possible - go to ‘**LMAP Gathering Support**’ ([here](#)). This is a one stop shop to help you with resources to construct a meaningful and organised Sunday Gathering.
- Take special note of the suggestions in the ‘Gathering Googly’ column. This detail should be kept in mind as you lead or preach.
Gathering leaders, *if scheduled into the elvanto plan*, you will need to make arrangements to incorporate this aspect into the gathering.
- Please note there is a visual Powerpoint template which we would prefer that you used so that we have some consistency across what we display (and so that we avoid some traps e.g. colours that cannot be seen, text too small, fonts too difficult, text which covers set logos, livestream split screen requirements etc.). This template exists on the LMAP Gathering Support Site (as mentioned above) - and can be emailed to you on request (admin@lmap.org.au) .

Resources (for the benefit of Growth Group Leaders and Preachers):

- *The Mental Health and Pastoral Care Institute* <https://mentalhealthinstitute.org.au/?v=8bcc25c96aa5> – resources, factsheets, recordings and upcoming events centred around a Christian understanding of pastoral care and mental health. A good introduction.
- *Down Not Out* by Chris Cipollone – a mix of lived experience and theological insight. A good introduction.
- *Mental Health and Your Church A Handbook for Biblical Care* by Helen Thorne and Dr Steve Midgley - sections introducing different types of mental ill health and practical steps for caring well for each other.
- *Finding Lost Words: The Churches Right to Lament* edited by Geoff Harper and Kit Barker – a more technical series of essays on Lament in the Psalms.
- *Wayfarers: A Christian Approach to Mental Health Care* by Warren Kinghorn– a more technical read on a Christian approach to mental health care including history, theology, philosophy and psychiatry.
- *Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy: Discovering the Grace of Lament* by Mark Vroegop - a guide to expressing sorrow and pain to God through lament, finding solace and trust in His grace during life's darkest moments. It looks at lament in general and then specifically at some of the lament Psalms as well as Lamentations.

Bible Studies (for the benefit of Growth Group Leaders):

- Julie Haddon & Olivia Bush *Distress & Hope* (5 Studies - with Leaders Notes and Participant Booklets) available on Church Central Online (<https://churchcentralonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/distress-and-hope-bible-studies.pdf>) and 'LMAP Gathering Support'

A Prayer for CMS (to use on Sunday 31st May - which is CMS Sunday)

God of love, whose will it is that everyone should be saved, bless the Church Missionary Society and those who have gone out in its fellowship to preach, to teach and to heal. Guard, guide and use them; Raise up more people in your worldwide church to pray and to work, to care and to understand, to give to you and to go for you, that your church may grow, your will be done, your kingdom come, and your glory be revealed: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayer in Acknowledgement of Country (to use at the beginning of our Gathering or to include in the Prayer on Sunday 23rd Aug – which is BCA Sunday)

Our Lord and loving heavenly Father, we acknowledge that you are Creator of all that is. We acknowledge that in your Providence you gave custodianship of the land upon which we meet to the Dharug and Gundungurra people. We acknowledge with sorrow the painful history between the Aboriginal people and the later settlers of this land, and we pray that you may work between us for the réconciliation that is the gift of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

A Prayer for BCA (to use on Sunday 23rd Aug - which is BCA Sunday)

Lord our God, help us to remember those who live in isolated and remote parts of our land.

We ask you to strengthen and encourage all whose ministries are supported by The Bush Church Aid Society. Refresh them in times of discouragement and loneliness and call others to stand with them in the task of making Christ known.

Grant that, through the ministry of the Word, through caring service and by support for young people, the message of your redeeming gospel may be proclaimed and accepted by the people of our land. We ask these things through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Notes *(for the benefit of preachers):*

Talk 1 -

Structure

Part 1 - We are image bearers (Gen 1-2). We are distinct from the rest of creation and also part of creation. (Psalm 8) We have inherent dignity, and are built for relationship with each other and God. He is mindful of us (Psalm 8)

Implication - We all have equal dignity before God and each other. Experiencing mental ill health does not make us lesser than another human, this means we should not 'other' people who experience mental health challenges, or see them as lesser Christians. Personhood is granted by God in creation (Gen 1-2) and does not change based on capacity.

Part 2 - We are made of dust (Gen 1-2) and therefore have limitations and are distinct from God. We need to eat, sleep, have shelter etc. It means we are also impacted by the created world, and therefore mental ill health can have a myriad of causes - chemical, relational, trauma, physical ill health.

Implication - We need to understand ourselves in all our complexity and not create an unnecessary mind body dualism. We need to be careful not to proclaim a gospel of escaping our circumstances or suffering. We need to interact with each other as wonderfully created people, not as problems to be solved or riddles to be worked out. A key outworking is we can praise God for who He is, in his transcendence (Psalm 8, opening and closing refrain) and his closeness to us (Psalm 8: 4) (this could be a link to next sermon)

Part 3 - Jesus entered into creation and took on human nature for us (Heb 2: 5-18)

Implication - This means we are not bound by our natural deaths that will nonetheless occur. This means we can have hope even while we are impacted by the brokenness of creation and our own sinfulness. Whatever the cause for our mental health may be (this is complex and nuanced) Jesus brings hope and healing from it all.

Helpful book Chapter - Wayfaring, ch 2 From Duality to Unity

Talk 2

Part 1

God knows us deeply, and is with us for in the highs and lows of life (Psalm 23, Psalm 139)

Implication

Where our emotions shift and change and some of us may feel these deeply, God is constant. I think there needs to be careful nuance here to not unhelpfully dismiss our emotions, nor be governed by them.

Part 2

This is a comfort because God already aware of our suffering, he know our anxious thoughts (PSalm 139: 23) This is also a warning we are invited to participate with God in knowing ourselves and particularly those parts of us that are offensive (Psalm 139: 24)

Implication

Our culture encourages naval gazing, and this can drive unrelenting rumination and comparison. There is value to careful introspection, but greater value in reflecting on how God knows us, and our introspection being guided both vertically in alignment with him, and horizontally with wise friends, family and mental health professionals as necessary. God invites us into a relationship with him. By knowing him can see ourselves rightly, as both sinners in need of a Saviour and as beloved children. This points us towards healthy self knowledge.

Talk 3

I have some ideas of weaving some lived experience and personal theological reflection, through out the regular sermon format.

Opening story - A dog and a hospital floor

Part 1 - desperation (Psalm 42)

2nd story - healing, insight, questioning, and pain

Part 2 - questioning and pain (Psalm 42)

3rd story - Hope and suffering (again)

Part 3 - Jesus is our mediator and our model (Matt 26: 36- 46, Matt 27: 45-55, Psalm 22)

4th story - The hope we have in Jesus is fixed and eternal even where our suffering may seem endless or be cyclical.

Talk 4

Part 1

We are brothers and sisters (Romans 12:1), we belong to each other (12: 5) this is a familial relationship that deserves our time and devotion. Meeting together is a good and beautiful gift from God and to each other (Psalm 133)

Implication

We should encourage, support and enable each other to meet together, especially when it is hard. This means thinking of and meeting together in ways that acknowledge that we all suffer and have times when we will struggle to meet together

Part 2

We all have different gifts and functions in the body (Romans 12: 3 - 8)

Implication

Mental ill health does not mean we cease to be an important part of the body. We may be limited in our capacity but our value does not change. And it may be that God actually uses our experiences to enable us to serve and encourage others.

Part Three

This is all driven by love (Romans 12: 9-21) . It is right to not only celebrate with each but mourn with each other, and feel the weight of each other's pain (12:15).

Implication

It is appropriate to lament with each other as a way of supporting and encouraging each other, and it may be appropriate that this occurs along side practical support, and professional mental care.

Note: This passage may raise for some people the evil (12: 17-21) that they have experienced that has contributed to their current mental health struggles, we need to be careful how we talk about this.

Talk 5

Part 1 - We are caught between two worlds. The pain, suffering and uncertainty we face now and the sure hope of eternal life with him, free of pain and suffering, in God's presence. (Revelation 21: 1-7)

Implication

This current reality is not all there is, which is comforting especially when suffering is chronic or cyclical. Note: this is not an invitation to suicide. See Cipollone ch. 9 "Suicide" for a helpful overview of this

Part 2 - We can have hope in the land of the living (Psalm 17) and part of this can be seeking professional care. Because our hope is grounded in an eternal unshakeable reality, we have freedom to pursue this without seeking quick fixes or easy cures to complex experiences.

Implication

This is the lived experience of it being well with our souls, or being well when we are ill. Of grace received, and lives lived now in the middle of stories that will end in eternity.