

Monthly update

The Uniting Church in Australia

St Luke's Congregation, Highton

April 2022



Reflection for Easter 2022

On Good Friday we often sing the hymn “Were you there when they crucified my Lord.” No doubt you remember that the refrain includes the words, “... sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble...”

When we look back to the events of the first Easter, we can easily forget that the followers of Jesus must have indeed “trembled” on Good Friday. For them everything must have seemed lost. All the hopes they had placed in Jesus being the one who would put things right would have appeared dashed.

I was reading a reflection recently (see below for details) which reminded me that such an experience is not unfamiliar to us. We too experience times when our hopes seem dashed, when friends let us down, when one bad thing seems to follow another.

When we look at the world it is so easy to be despondent: bad things seem to be happening everywhere, people seem to have given up on faith completely ...

We too can feel like life is all about Good Friday and we are left trembling.

But Easter Sunday did dawn, and Jesus followers found themselves trembling for another reason: not only was the tomb empty but much to their amazement Jesus appeared to them!

Office administrator: Robyn Hodge.

Office open hours: Tuesdays and Fridays, 9:30am–12:30pm

All was not lost.

The resurrection speaks of God's power over darkness and death, and affirms the way of Jesus as God's way ... as the way of true life. When our lives seem to be stuck in the bleakness of Good Friday, the message of Gospel is (as someone has said), Sunday's coming!

(Reflection "Holy Week #2" in Craig Mitchell, *Deeper Water: resources for immersive worship*, Mediacom, Richmond SA, 2021, p.34)

Paul Stephens, Minister in placement

Image: Wikimedia Commons <https://depositphotos.com/7096804/stock-photo-jesus-christ-crucifixion-on-good.html>

Readings for the Month

| | <i>1st Reading</i> | <i>Psalm</i> | <i>2nd Reading</i> | <i>Gospel</i> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Apr 24, 2022 Easter 2 | Acts 5:27-32 | Ps 118:14-29 | Rev 1:4-83 | Jn 20:19-31 |
| May 1 Easter 3 | Acts 9:1-6,(7-20) | Ps 30 | Rev 5:11-14 | Jn 21:1-19 |
| May 8 Easter 4 | Acts 9:36-43 | Ps 23 | Rev 7:9-17 | Jn 10:22-30 |
| May 15 Easter 5 | Acts 11:1-18 | Ps 148 | Rev 21:1-6 | Jn 13:31-35 |
| May 22 Easter 6 | Acts 16:9-15 | Ps 67 | Rev 21:10,22 - 22:5 | Jn 14:23-29 |

Diary

| | | |
|-----------|---------------|--|
| Tues 19/4 | 8.30 - 9.30 | Prayers by the River (near Barwon Valley Fun Park) |
| | 10.00 - 12.00 | Church Sanctuary and Office open |
| Wed 20/4 | 8 - 8.15am | Weekly Prayer time on Zoom |
| | 7:00 - 8:30pm | Church Council meeting |
| Fri 22/4 | 10.00 - 12.00 | Church Sanctuary and Office open |
| | 12.00 - 2.30 | Sewing Group |
| Tues 26/4 | 5.30 - 6.30 | Environment Action Group |
| Wed 27/4 | 2.00 - 3.30 | Coffee & Chat @ Brioche 175 West Fyans St. |

Congregation News

Pastoral Connections

UKRAINIAN APPEAL

Geelong's Ukrainian community is seeking assistance to help welcome displaced people arriving from the war-torn country. St Luke's Pastoral Connections team have offered to help and are offering an opportunity for us all to assist these refugees in a practical way, through donating money to be used by the Ukrainian community leaders to create welcome packs. If you are able to donate, please speak to Barbara, Pam or Judy.

MIDWEEK WORSHIP

Our Midweek service takes place on the 2nd Thursday of each month (except in January) and commences at 1.30pm, communion is served regularly. The service is led by Rev Paul or a visiting minister with all members of the congregation and visitors are welcome. Afternoon Tea and fellowship are enjoyed following each service, with High Tea served at Christmas.

At our last service, Pam and Graham Reid dedicated a candle stand to their son Alex who passed away just one year ago, communion was shared during the service loop and over afternoon tea we celebrated the 90th birthday of Joan Marshman.

Our next service will take place on Thursday 12th May. For more details contact Pam on 0407 557 933 or Lyn on 0411 248 194.



PALM SUNDAY

Shaghek shared that her home church in Syria has the tradition of waving olive branches on Palm Sunday as an expression of peace. They also use the olive branch leaves to form the cross. In the pictures are Emily, Jamison and Barbara.



PRAYER REQUESTS (from Wednesday Prayer Time)

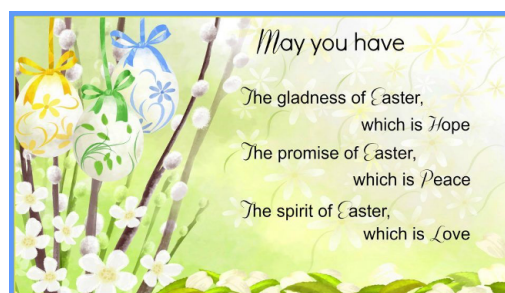
Praise and Thanksgiving

- Praise God for each new day and the moods and colours of Autumn.
- Praise and thanks for all who have a caring heart who support those who have lost a loved one, are still suffering from COVID, those who have ongoing health concerns and the support given to refugees who are newly arrived as well as those still on visas that give no security or peace of mind.
- Give thanks for new people visiting at St. Luke's and the diversity that they bring to our community.

General Prayers

- Our primary concerns this month have been for the people of Ukraine as they suffer the destruction of their cities and way of life. We pray for the doctors and medical staff who are trying to care for the injured and traumatised, and our thoughts are with the humanitarian agencies and staff who risk their lives to deliver food, water, medical aid and support to those unable to escape.
- Prayer for peace in the world. For those citizens living in all other war-torn countries, as they cope with the COVID 19 crisis and the suffering that that still brings to families. We pray that they will find relief from the stress and worry they endure. We have prayed especially for the children and older people who have no escape.
- Our prayers are always with all of those we know of who are unwell, having treatment, recovering from operations and making hard decisions. May they know God's peace and strength.
- We pray for the areas affected by the recent floods. For the ongoing mental health of farmers, small business owners and corporate leaders as they struggle with financial hardship, uncertainty about the future and the concern and worry for those they feel they can no longer support.
- We ask God's blessing on those hearing the Easter story this year That they will be inspired to share and filled with the Spirit of love and hope.

Pam Seller



Messy Church

NATURE WALK

A group of some twenty people from several Uniting Churches in Geelong shared in a nature walk on Tuesday 12th April. The walk began at the lower carpark at Buckley's falls and included following the path around Red Gum Island with our own Judy Clark as a guide. It was a great time of sharing and learning. Watch out for details of the next Messy Church event. We are planning to organise regular joint activities like this one.

