

# ORMOND UNITING CHURCH

Lent 4

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022



# WORSHIP AT HOME

*This time is an opportunity to be still, seeking to be aware of the presence of God within.*

*Carve out a time for this practice; prepare yourself, as you might for a usual Sunday morning and remember that there are others from the congregation gathering at the same time as you. There are also many from the church around the globe who are gathering to seek the presence of God as we are.*

*Prepare a space in the house; find a comfortable chair, light a candle, turn off distracting noises and close the door if that will help you to be still. This is something that does not need to be hurried.*

## Call to Worship

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, Loving God as we come into this time of worship help us to make room for you in our thoughts and actions. You call us to this place; you guide us in what is good even when we cannot see it for ourselves. As the psalmist of old reflected. "O Lord you are my portion and my cup; it is you who uphold my lot. In your presence there is fulness of joy"

Psalm 16 UIW

Let us worship God

## Acknowledgement of First Peoples

We acknowledge those who were here before us,  
the first inhabitants of this place.  
we honour them for their custodianship of the land,  
on which we gather today.

## Prayers of gathering in God's presence prepared by Warwick Barry

Holy God, Word Shaper:  
you are not our accountant,  
    but our lover;  
you are not angry at us,  
    but you forgive us;  
you are not our enemy,  
    but the One who runs towards us  
    with wide open arms,  
throwing steaks on the grill  
to celebrate our newness!

Jesus Christ, Shaper of our story:  
you travel to that distant country called our sin  
to bring us home once again;  
you share your inheritance with us  
so we might be blessed;  
you know the famine of our spirits  
and fill it with your hope.

Holy Spirit, Life Shaper:  
surrounded by your grace,  
we offer glad cries of salvation;  
encircled by your constant love,  
we shout for joy;  
enclosed in your comforting arms,  
nothing can overwhelm us.

God in Community, Holy in One,  
Like the lost sons in the parable,  
Help us “come to our senses”  
Lost keys, lost glasses, lost papers,  
Finding these brings a moments relief.

Lost direction, lost passion, lost relationship.  
Finding these things is a lifelong task.  
We lose, we find, we lose again...

But God of the lost we do not fear;  
even when we are lost to ourselves and others,  
we are always in your sight and ready to be embraced in grace...

## Call to Reconciliation

We know our faults -- the way we have treated others, our alienation from God, our unwillingness to be faithful people. We will not hide our sin or remain silent, but confess them to the One who surrounds us with steadfast love. Please join me as we pray together.

## Prayer of Confession

On this very day, Waiting God, we admit all the lengths to which we go so we might avoid you.

**You offer us that kingdom of joy and wonder, yet we would hide in places where temptation waits.**

You invite us to feast on your grace and peace, but we stubbornly refuse, because you also welcome those we call 'outsiders.'

**We are quick to see all the mistakes that those around us make, but hope you will ignore our foolish choices.**

Celebrating God, before we come to our senses, we find you running towards us, sweeping us up in your arms, tears of grace mingling with our cries of confession, a mighty river washing away our sinful ways to restore us to new life.

**In Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, we find no limitations on your grace, no reservations about your love, but a feast that overflows with wonder, a place we can finally call home.**

*Silence is kept*

## Assurance of pardon

God rolls away everything that stands in our way - our past, our sin, our pain, our hesitation, and reshapes us into new people living in the new creation. What wonderful grace. We are forgiven!

**Broken, we are made whole;  
lost, we are brought home;  
empty, we are filled with songs of gladness.  
We rejoice and give thanks to God who has graced us with mercy. Amen.**

Adapted from Thom Shuman – Presbyterian Church, USA

## Scripture

Your word O Lord, is a lamp to our feet  
**A light to our path**

## The Gospel according to Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

<sup>1</sup>Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. <sup>2</sup>And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'

<sup>3</sup> So he told them this parable:

<sup>11</sup> Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of

hunger! <sup>18</sup>I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’ ” <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”<sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, “Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup>for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!” And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, “Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.” <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, “Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!” <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.” ’

NRSV

The Word of the Lord

**All praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

## Prayers of the People

prepared by Warwick Barry

The LORD upholds all those who fall  
and lifts up all who are bowed down.

Psalm 145:14

God of love

hear the cry of those who yearn for love;

fractured families, broken homes

neglected, unwanted, alone.

The homeless, the despondent, the unemployed,

The anxious, the fearful, the uncertain, the lonely,

Both here in Australia and in other places of a troubled world.

God of love

**ALL: hear our prayer**

God of justice

hear the cry of those who yearn for justice;

persecuted and oppressed,

exploited, ill-treated, broken.

For our First Nations people, for those who seek asylum here and in other lands, including those from Ukraine,  
For political prisoners in autocratic countries, for victims of criminal injustice, for the Muslim Rohingya people of Myanmar, for those suffering racial persecution in China and Sri Lanka,  
For the people of Afghanistan under the tyranny of the Taliban hunting down enemies of the state

God of justice  
**ALL: hear our prayer**

God of peace  
hear the cry of those who yearn for peace;  
in battle zones and broken states,  
frightened, fearful, anxious  
For the citizens of Ukraine and Russian soldiers,  
For the people of Syria where civil war drags on  
For the people of Myanmar where the military wage war on minorities.  
For individuals who are overwhelmed by the daily challenges in life,

God of peace  
**ALL: hear our prayer**

God of healing  
hear the cry of those who yearn for healing;  
physical and spiritual  
hurting, weakened, depressed, oppressed or weighed down.  
For those who are victims of addiction of all forms,  
For those whose lives have been changed by Covid  
For those who are hungry and living in refugee camps  
For those experiencing the ongoing effects of mental illness  
For those who have lost loved ones  
For those who have experienced loss through floods and fires, cyclones and earthquakes.  
For our own minister Andrew

God of healing  
**ALL: hear our prayer**

God of mercy  
Hear the cry of those who yearn for mercy;  
convicted, in need of your Grace,  
contrite, humble, bowed down,  
For all who have lost direction, passion for good and relationships  
For those of have lost their faith and have given into despair or cynicism

God of mercy  
**ALL: hear our prayer**

As the Psalmist reminds us,  
I love the LORD, for he heard my voice;  
he heard my cry for mercy.  
Because he turned his ear to me,  
I will call on him as long as I live.

Psalm 116: 1,2

May we know  
The peace of God  
The love of God  
The justice of God  
The healing and mercy of God  
This day and all days

**Amen**

Adapted from John Birch – Faith & Worship

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in Heaven  
Hallowed be your name  
Your kingdom come  
Your will be done  
On earth as in heaven  
Give us today our daily bread  
Forgive us our sins  
As we forgive those who sin against us  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever Amen**

## Dismissal

Love the Lord with all your heart,  
and with all your soul,  
and with all your mind  
This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it:  
love your neighbour as yourself

## Blessing

May almighty God bless you,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen**

## Word of mission

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord,  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

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## NEWS AND NOTICES

### **ANDREW'S LEAVE**

Andrew is currently taking a period of personal leave until **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022** and during this time we ask that any pastoral matters be referred to Heather Baxter directly, and any administrative matters continue to be sent via the Church office at [office@ormond.unitingchurch.org.au](mailto:office@ormond.unitingchurch.org.au) or via the Church contact phone number on 0411 958 127. We ask that Andrew not be contacted directly via phone or email during this time.

### **WORSHIP DURING THE DEMOLITION PHASE**

The worship service for this weekend **27 March 2022** will be held **face to face** at the Ormond Church.

### **POSTPONEMENT OF ORMOND LEARNING HUB COURSE (READING LUKE'S PASSION)**

*Please note: the March Learning Hub Course “Reading Luke’s passion” has been postponed until further notice – a future date for the course will be determined in time.*

## **UNITING WORLD – LENT EVENT**



**Please refer to the UnitingWorld link [here](#) for some more information around the LENT EVENT**

Lent Event calls you to join other Christians in a pledge to give up or take up something in solidarity with those who live with less. Learn about how to be a good global neighbour and see the many ways to donate to support our work, knowing that every dollar is part of God’s mission in the world, ending poverty and building hope.

## **EAST COAST of AUSTRALIA - FLOODING EMERGENCY APPEAL**

The recent floods in southern Queensland and NSW have been truly devastating in their magnitude and destruction. As is so often the case, the Uniting Church is stepping up to support individuals and communities affected by such disasters. Below you will find details of the National appeals from the Vic/Tas Moderator Rev. Denise Lersch and National President Rev. Sharon Hollis to support the work of the Assembly in flood relief efforts. If you are able to contribute there is a button which takes you to a site where you can make a financial contribution to this work.

You will find the link [here](#) (press ctrl key and click mouse) for the national appeal launched by Uniting Church in Australia President, Rev Sharon Hollis.

## APRIL PATHFINDER – Contributions welcome

It is planned, that the April edition of Pathfinder will be ready for distribution on Friday 1st April (no, this is not an April Fool's joke).

So please get your contributions in by this Tuesday, 29th March - extended deadline.

Looking forward to lots of interesting material - perhaps also some thoughts on our Lenten book - are you enjoying a read and reflect with a cuppa? Please share with us. Take care and stay safe,

Dianne and Gary

## ACT FOR PEACE – UKRAINE CRISIS



**UKRAINE CRISIS EMERGENCY APPEAL**



The shocking Russian invasion of Ukraine has created a humanitarian crisis unlike anything seen in Europe since World War II. Millions of people could become refugees, forced from their homes and their loved ones.

Please give what you can today to help provide urgently needed food, medicine and temporary shelter to displaced families.

**PLEASE GIVE URGENTLY**



**CALL: 1800 025 101**  
**AFP.ORG.AU/UKRAINECRISIS**

**ACT FOR PEACE**  
CONFRONTING INJUSTICE TOGETHER  
THROUGH THE **actalliance**

The international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia | ABN 86 619 970 188

As we are all aware, the crisis in the Ukraine has been devastating. Please refer to the link [here](#) (Cntrl & click mouse) for more information and for the many ways to donate and help this appeal.

### **ROSTER for Sunday 3 April 2022**

READING	Heather Baxter	
PRAYERS	Mardie Townsend	
COMMUNION	Karen Roberts	Robyn Mulder
DOOR DUTY	Frank Ortolan	Nev Parker
SOUND	Gary Richter	
FLOWERS	Heather Baxter	
RESOURCES DELIVERY	Mardie Townsend	Ron Townsend