

ORMOND UNITING CHURCH

Palm Sunday

10th April



Christ's entry into Jerusalem ~ Albrecht Durer

WORSHIP AT HOME

We enter Holy week with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. There are some in the city, anticipating his arrival, who recognise him as king, while we know that the city also contains forces which are extremely hostile to him, to the extent that they want him dead. The words of the seventeenth century hymn, My love is love unknown, spring to mind:

*Sometimes they strew his way
and his sweet praises sing,
resounding all the day
hosannas to their King.
Then 'Crucify!'
is all their breath
and for his death
they thirst and cry.*

The events of Palm Sunday elicit ambiguous feelings in us because we know where the arc of this week in Jerusalem will end. This week is a week for stillness and watchfulness as we approach remembering Jesus' passion. May your experience of Jesus' gift of himself and the meaning for yourself and our world be deepened this week.

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.

*'Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!'*

Prayer

The Kingdom of God is at hand – You proclaimed it, Jesus;
But, it often feels like it's a million miles away.
You demonstrated its grace and showed its power,
but the signs often appear faded or absent in our world.

We need Your Kingdom to come, O God,
in all its fullness, in all its glory;
This waiting, this “now and not yet” experience of Your reign
is hard and frustrating.

And so we pray for Your Kingdom to be revealed in our lives,
turning our sickness and sin, our brokenness and fear
into friendship and compassion, wholeness and joy.

May Your Kingdom come to us now.

We pray for Your Kingdom to be revealed in our neighbourhoods,
turning our division and suspicion, our judgement and our competition
into fellowship and care, compassion and service.

May Your Kingdom come to us now.

We pray for Your Kingdom to be revealed in our world,
turning our war and our disparities, our consumption and our self-interest
into peace and collaboration, stewardship and reverence.

May Your Kingdom come to us now.

Your Kingdom is here, and it is coming, O God.

Make us faithful heralds of its message
and tireless practitioners of its ways.

For Jesus sake.

Amen.

The prophet Isaiah 50. 4-9a

The Lord God has given me

the tongue of a teacher,

that I may know how to sustain

the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens—

wakens my ear

to listen as those who are taught.

The Lord God has opened my ear,

and I was not rebellious,

I did not turn backwards.

I gave my back to those who struck me,

and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face

from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me;

therefore I have not been disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint,

and I know that I shall not be put to shame;

he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

It is the Lord God who helps me;

who will declare me guilty?

All of them will wear out like a garment;

the moth will eat them up.

Psalm 118. 1-2, 19-29

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!

Let Israel say,
'His steadfast love endures for ever.'
Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.

This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Save us, we beseech you, O Lord!
O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
We bless you from the house of the Lord.

The Lord is God,
and he has given us light.

Bind the festal procession with branches,
up to the horns of the altar.

You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol you.

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

The letter to the Philippians 2. 5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

The Gospel according to Luke 19. 28-40

After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it."' So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' They said, 'The Lord needs it.' Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

'Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!'

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.' He answered, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.'

Reflecting

When I was in primary school, which began for me in about 1961, we used to gather in the school yard for assembly on Monday morning, face the flag, place our hands on our hearts and say The Oath together:

I love God and my country,
I will honour the flag,
I will serve the Queen
and cheerfully obey my parents, teachers and the law.

In my developing identity it spoke to me of a kind of compact between myself, being Australian and the sense that the Queen somehow was the embodiment of a social cohesion and a set of values which I was asked to 'cheerfully' subscribe to. God was tied up with all this too, but that's another question. As I have recalled this weekly vow, this has felt like a form of social control at times but, as with all things as we get older, I have mellowed a bit about the intent at the heart of this ritual. For the whole of my life the Queen has continued to embody those values and to both dutifully and graciously fulfill her part of that compact. I have lived through a period of

unprecedented stability in that regard and it feels, on reflection, that monarchy – not necessarily the British monarchy – can be a good thing. But when we look at history, this long and stable, dignified and principled reign is really the exception, rather than the rule. Being a student of Russian history, I know that Putin's practice of leadership and brutal tactics of control have been used by Russian Czars, by Soviet General Secretaries and by Presidents-for-life, alike.

As Jesus enters Jerusalem the crowds cry out:

Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven.

While the republicans among us might think that monarchy and king or queenship is an outmoded and defunct form of leadership, we need to get ourselves out of the way when we read this passage. Kingship was the form of leadership that the ancient Jews knew; there was no other option for them to consider. So they gave voice to a longing for a kingly reign which Jesus was embodying. As we watch the destruction and distress in Ukraine we can see how quickly a reign of peaceful flourishing can turn to carnage and destruction with one maniac in control. In a sense we shouldn't over-spiritualise the clamouring for a godly rule that the Jerusalem crowds call for. They were repressed, exploited and brutalised. And Jesus had embodied a new way of being for them. In their cry: *Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven*, they echo the song of the angels to the shepherds. It is, as if, the people Jesus has connected with have heard the angels' song, and now echo it back to heaven. The song of the angels has come to fulfillment in Jesus. He has embodied a reign which is in accord with heaven's heart.

I have been interested to watch the invasion of Ukraine unfold and the response in Europe, North America and other English-speaking countries. While the outpouring of grief and shock, and the mobilisation of action to defend Ukraine and weaken Russia has been prompt, it continues to be not quite enough for a decisive shift in the war. What is interesting to me is the fact that in our outpouring for Ukraine and our rallying to action, we have overlooked the twenty-two or three other crisis points around the globe. What outpouring of grief and action has there been for the crisis in Syria and appalling treatment of the Syrian population by Assad? What of the 380,000 Yemenis killed either by warfare or war-induced famine by other Arab nations in the war in Yemen? While our reaction to what is taking place in Ukraine has a sense that this is somehow unfinished business from WWII – we thought that Europeans had agreed to not invade and kill each other ever again - some have suggested that our horror and our calls to action over Ukraine have a racist element to them. Why have we not responded in like way to Syria and Yemen? Our horror at the situation in Ukraine is white European horror.

We have mostly been raised to believe that religion should have no part in politics. But the truth is that the church has always had a vexed, often conflictual and ambiguous relationship with those with political power. When Jesus mounts a donkey and makes his way into Jerusalem, he performs a political act, not a party-political act but one, nevertheless, which mobilises people's hopes and longings, their frustrations and pain. The crowd welcomes him as king. What more political affirmation could there be than this? Indeed, we have been coached to spiritualise the

meaning of Easter – Jesus dies so that we can go to a better place. It’s really an Elon Musk or Richard Branson take on the world, let’s find a better place to live: “good riddance to this one and all those other difficult people.” This mindset abandons the political sphere to the sociopaths and bullies and passively hopes for a better day behind closed doors. The David and Goliath struggle going on between Ukraine and Russia is resistance by a people who are willing to not abandon the political sphere to the psychopaths. This is why we are in awe of their tenacity, dignity and creativity in the face of brute evil.

As Jesus makes his bit of street theatre on the donkey, all eyes turn to him and watch as the events of the week unfold; the crowds watch, the religious leaders watch, the political leaders watch, the disciples watch, the women watch.

They rise and needs will have
my dear Lord made away;
a murderer they save;
the Prince of life they slay.
Yet cheerful he
to suffering goes,
that he his foes
from thence might free.

When we say Jesus frees us, I believe he frees us from the inevitability and the terror of human violence. As the resurrection says: your violence and abuse is not the last word. For each of us, for us collectively, the political implication of what this lone God-man does is that he offers us, as Paul writes, a new and living way shaped by an image of God which Jesus was prepared to live into, even to death. As Paul writes to the Philippians:

he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

This is, of course, a political statement about the nature of the world which we envision as disciples of Jesus. We are called to live into this vision which we do with hope and anticipation of the coming kingdom. As we pray in the Lord’s Prayer:

For yours is the kingdom,
The power and the glory are yours,
Now, and forever.

Amen

Prayers of the People – prepared by David Northwood

This prayer includes some of the poem Ash Wednesday by TS Eliot.

Ash Wednesday was written by TS Eliot after his conversion to Christianity and the poem deals with the struggle that ensues when one who has lacked faith in the past strives to move towards God.

Because I do not hope to turn again
Because I do not hope
Because I do not hope to turn
Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope
I no longer strive to strive towards such things
(Why should the aged eagle stretch its wings?)
Why should I mourn
The vanished power of the usual reign?

Lord, help us to understand and reflect on this time in the Christian year.

Ash Wednesday: The beginning of Lent

Palm Sunday: The end of Lent and the beginning of holy week. Jesus and his followers entered Jerusalem, perhaps in anticipation of a positive outcome with the authorities. The crowds were enthusiastic. The palm fronds were waved.

Good Friday: The day of mourning and despair.

Easter Sunday: The day of renewal and anticipation for the future

So too our spiritual journey parallels the events at Easter

Positivity, as we begin to understand the ways of the spirit

Sometimes despair and the black night of the soul

Then renewal and anticipation of the survival of consciousness after going gentle into that good night.

These are our prayers for others. Others who may be Christians, others who may follow other religions and others who profess no religion.

Those who seek and anticipate the survival of the spirit and consciousness.

“I look forward to the new adventure” said my friend Wayne before his death

Although I do not hope to turn again
Although I do not hope
Although I do not hope to turn

Wavering between the profit and the loss
In this brief transit where the dreams cross

The dream-crossed twilight between birth and dying

(Bless me father) though I do not wish to wish these things
From the wide window towards the granite shore
The white sails still fly seaward, seaward flying
Unbroken wings

Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks,
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks
Sister, mother
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,
Suffer me not to be separated

And let my cry come unto Thee.

This is our prayer for Palm Sunday.

Amen

Blessing

Lead us into Holy Week

We tell your story
We follow in your footsteps
Lead us into Holy Week

We walk towards the city
We wait in the garden
Lead us onto Holy Ground

We journey towards death
We hope for resurrection
Lead us into Holy Joy

There will be no worship resources distributed for Good Friday. We will distribute material for Easter Sunday, nevertheless. Below are the readings set for Good Friday. They are quite long, too much for one sitting and readings which should be savoured. We suggest that you read them over the week, maybe one each day and allow yourself to sit with them prayerfully.

Isaiah 52. 13 – 53. 12

Psalm 22

The letter to the Hebrews 4. 14-16, 5. 7-9

The Gospel of Luke 22. 39 – 23. 56

Prayer: Your kingdom come from Sacredise.com John van de Laar

Lead us into Holy week: Ruth Burgess, Eggs and Ashes , Wild Goose Worship Group

Rev. Andrew Boyle
Mobile 0409 869 009; Email: ajmboyle@outlook.com

Music Director: Mr Peter Hurley

Administrator: Mrs Cathy O'Connor
Fridays, 9am-5.00pm – 0411 958 127
office@ormond.unitingchurch.org.au

Website: www.ormondunitingchurch.org

NEWS AND NOTICES

WORSHIP DURING THE DEMOLITION PHASE – back in the church

The worship service for this weekend will be able to be face to face and the congregation is welcomed back to the Church again at 10.00am Sunday. We hope that as many as possible can join in. Water is still not connected and toilet facilities are limited. Please bring a bottle of water if you feel you will need water.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE – 10AM

EASTER DAY SERVICE – 10AM

CONCLUSION OF ANDREW'S MINISTRY AT ORMOND

After a period of reflection, Andrew has decided to conclude his placement at Ormond. This will be effective from Sunday 8th May, when a Cutting of Pastoral Ties service led by the chairperson of the presbytery will form part of our Sunday worship. This will be the last service Andrew will lead. More details to come about an opportunity to thank Andrew for his valued leadership and contribution to Ormond, and to wish him well in his next phase.

Andrew is not moving to another placement at this stage but will be taking Long Service Leave initially as he considers future options. Church Council will also now undertake a period of reflection and planning as they consider the next phase of the congregation's life.

OUC FILM LOVERS

Come along and enjoy a wonderfully warm film about the people who shape us and the culture we inherit, and see a film called *Belfast*, loosely based on the upbringing of the director Kenneth Branagh. Join us at the **Palace Brighton Bay (it has a lift)** for an **11:30 am** start time, next **Wednesday the 13th of April**, the film goes for an hour and a half, to be followed by lunch at a café a short distance up Bay Street called Rocksalt at about 1:15pm.

Great actors as well including Judy Dench, Ciaran Hinds and boy actor named Jude Hill. Plenty of interest in the film to chat about afterwards. I suggest you have a good morning tea beforehand or take or buy something to nibble on during the film. Approximate costs: Film Ticket \$12.70 (Seniors), Lunch \$20-25 with coffee.

Lifts can be arranged if needed. Please let Warwick know by phone or email or in person by Monday 11th of April at the latest, for a booking at the café.

Warwick- Mobile 0487770045, email: wazbarry66@gmail.com

Further details see [here](#):

PALM SUNDAY MARCH FOR JUSTICE, Sunday 10th April

Calling on all Refugee Supporters!

The annual march for justice and freedom for asylum seekers will be on this **Sunday 10th of April, at 2:00pm**, starting at the State Library. Speakers include the Rev Tim Costello, Arnold Zable and a refugee in a detention hotel near the Park Hotel (end of march destination), together with a panel of faith speakers.

Ormond has always had a small but faithful group of passionate asylum seeker supporters given our long support for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. Given metro train works and buses on some lines, I am happy to meet and travel in with any who would be able to and like to come, to maintain the cause for a better outcome for refugees. We will meet at 1:00 pm on the platform at Ormond Station to catch the train to Flinders St, then catch a connecting one to Melbourne Central Station from there. Please bring your own sign or banner and hat & sunscreen etc, hopefully we may be able to enjoy a coffee & nibble afterwards on a lovely autumn afternoon.

Any queries, please contact Warwick (0487770045)

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.

ACT FOR PEACE – UKRAINE CRISIS

Please refer to the link below for more information and ways to help.

<https://ac.actforpeace.org.au/index.php?action=social&chash=eb163727917c bba1eea208541a643e74.570&s=9034067d3a5810c4bf5f90d2073b7fbo>



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.

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

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

PLEASE GIVE URGENTLY



CALL: 1800 025 101
AF.PORG.AU/UKRAINECRISIS

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 17 April 2022

READING	Brenda Grootendorst	
PRAYERS	Dianne Richter	
DOOR DUTY	Nev Parker	Lyn Parker
SOUND	Graeme Davenport	
FLOWERS	Robyn Mulder	
RESOURCES DELIVERY	Brenda Grootendorst	