

ORMOND UNITING CHURCH

Easter 2

24th April



The supper at Emmaus - Caravaggio

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.

'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God,
who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Prayer

Resurrected One,
You come along side us
And travel with us on our journeys of pain and uncertainty.
You sit with us in our tiredness and grief.
In your mercy you hear us,
Let us talk ourselves out
And then you offer us a reminder,
a correction,
an opportunity to see things anew,
That our eyes might be opened.

As the disciples thought,
So, we think we see,
Think we understand.
Until it all comes tumbling down
And we are left with the refuse of our dreams
And dejection about what next.

Jesus, your way confronts us
because you invite us to abandon everything
and to follow you.
We would rather hold on to our securities,
Our certainties,
Than risk the uncertainty of our own cross.

Open our eyes to who you are,
By your mercy, open our eyes to the truth about ourselves,
That we may know the truth and so be free,
Free to inhabit your divine freedom
And to be your joyful children.

All blessing to you Father, Son and blessed Spirit.
Amen

The Acts of the Apostles 5. 27-32

This account follows an episode where the apostles have been arrested by the temple authorities in Jerusalem and put in prison for preaching and curing the sick in the temple precinct. But during the night an angel has 'released' the prisoners and they have gone straight back to the temple to continue what they were previously doing.

When they had brought the apostles, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us.' But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than any human authority. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, so that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.'

The Revelation of John 1. 4-8

John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Look! He is coming with the clouds;

every eye will see him,

even those who pierced him;

and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

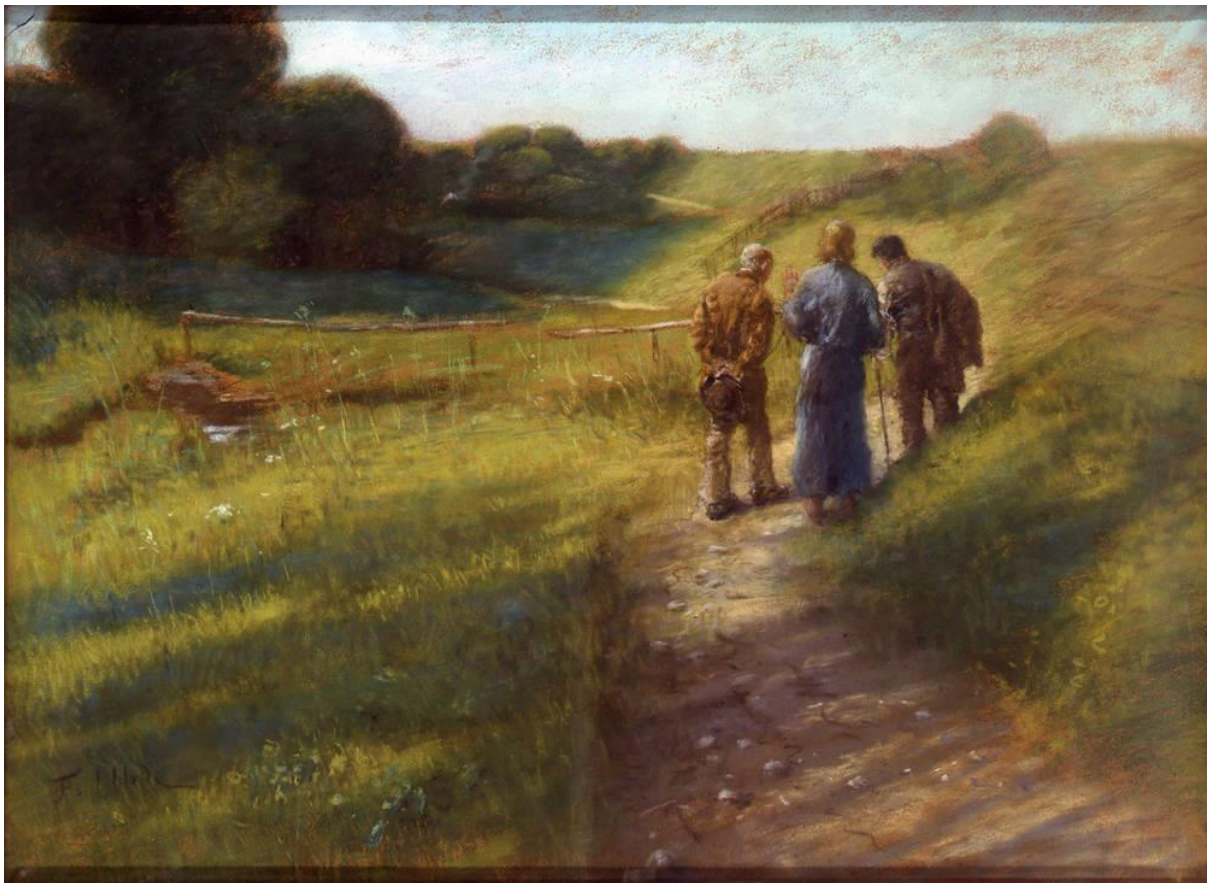
'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

The Gospel of Luke 24. 13-32

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of

our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'



Der Gang nach Emmaus - Fritz von Uhde - 1891

Reflecting

I find the road to Emmaus story, crafted by Luke, an exquisite piece of scripture. After the tumultuous events leading up to and of the crucifixion, this story is reassuringly pastoral. Jesus

comes near and, in the wake of the trauma of the last days, all suddenly becomes clear. The disciples suddenly understand everything and rush back to Jerusalem to share what has been revealed to them.

The Season of Easter, which runs from Easter day to Pentecost, is a time of joy and light in the church. In the Protestant church we have, though, been inclined to set the trauma of the crucifixion to one side and gloss it over with the brilliance of the resurrection. But in this sustained Emmaus resurrection appearance Jesus is at pains, not to wow the disciples with his risen glory, rather to help them understand the meaning of all that has taken place. Jesus' explanation elicits a deeply emotional recognition within the two – their hearts burn, yet this is not enough. It is in the broken bread that their recognition becomes complete. At this point Jesus can leave them. Now they understand. The Spirit may come; and soon does.

On Good Friday as we read the Suffering Servant passage from Isaiah 52 and 53, along with Psalm 22, I was struck with how these passages resonate with Jesus' passion. I was reminded of Jesus' question to the two disciples as they are on the road: *Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?* Only in understanding the passion does the future make sense.

As we make our way through our lives, we are often inclined to flee from our suffering, our painful experiences, our times when we are laid low with a sense of abandonment, those experiences of betrayal and aloneness. We must not discount the pain we experience. *Oh, I'm not as badly off as some*, I continually hear Christians say, as though this denial is some kind of virtue. We must not flee from our experiences. They are our life. God is somehow present in them, disguised in their sometimes-disfiguring circumstances. We are changed by them. We are often unwilling to admit that this is so, but it is true. We like to imagine that we can remain unaffected, maintaining a stiff-upper-lip, but this is not to be human, rather a facsimile of what it means to be human. We can choose to avoid our experiences, or we can seek to find the life of God in them. This is what Jesus does with his own story. Through it comes resurrection.

So, when we say Christ is Risen through the Easter Season, we say it with hope, knowing that as Christ is raised so we may also be raised with him.

Christ is Risen!

Prayers – prepared by Marg Davis

On this first Sunday after Easter Day, we bring our prayers for all people near and far – for Christians, non-Christians, believers and non-believers.

Creator God may your love guide all political leaders in the stewardship of your planet. We pray Lord that their decisions will lead to sustainable outcomes in preserving the natural wonders of your world for future generations

Abba God, the cups of our lives are filled with so many blessings and challenges. May we hold our cup as your gift to us and in so doing see you in the faces of our sisters and brothers, who live on the margins of poverty, abuse, homelessness, sadness, detention and discrimination.

Redeemer God, we doubt you in so many ways. We allow our pride to justify our actions at so many levels. Jesus, by your grace help is to take up our daily cross of doubt, so that by your word we may give witness in faith and deed and say:

“Your Kingdom Come. Your Will be done”

Spirit God, tis week we particularly remember all those who have given their life and service in defending our freedoms and way of life. Bring hope to all those who have suffered, and sacrificed, so much. Help guide aid workers in caring for the needs of veterans and their families.

Dearest Lord We pray for our families, friends and ourselves and we pause to pray for those known to us personally ...

God of grace and peace Thank you for always being with us and for your prayer, which we say together:

Our Father in heaven, ...

Blessing

Stay with us in our frailty,
stay with us on our journey,
Walk beside us, live within us,
Lead us to glory, lead us home.

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

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.

Andrew is not moving to another placement at this stage but will initially be taking Long Service Leave 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.

A special farewell morning tea will be held after the worship service on Sunday 8th May to say thanks and celebrate Andrew's significant contribution at Ormond.

A SOCIAL GET TOGETHER AND FELLOWSHIP "COFFEE AND DESSERT"

We are hoping that you may be free to join in the next planned social get together for the congregation.

When: 7th May 2022 7.00pm

Where: Karen and Frank's home, **204 Poath Road Hughesdale** (note: more accessible entry/parking off Ellendale Street).

For: **Coffee and Dessert** (if wishing to contribute a plate/dessert to the evening or if you require transport, please liaise with Ron Townsend).

RSVP: by Thursday 5th May, to Ron Townsend mobile 0438 404 104 or email: townserh@gmail.com

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE BUILDING PROJECT – SUNDAY 1ST 11AM

The Project Control Group (PCG) has been working steadily over the past months developing a design for the new facility. In preparation for submitting a Planning Permit Application to council we want to share our progress and the plans with the congregation.

This will take place after church on **Sunday 1st May** at a meeting in the church. The building plan, landscape plan and budget for the project will be explained and discussed. There will be an opportunity for feedback and input. If you are not able to be at the meeting, we can make printed draft plans available for you or they can be emailed, with explanatory notes. Please be in contact with Mardie Townsend or Andrew Boyle if you would like plans sent to you.

AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2022 SYNOD MEETING

Port Phillip East Presbytery is encouraging members of congregations and faith communities, ministers, pastors and lay leaders across the presbytery to consider joining as a member or serving as a volunteer in Victoria Tasmania Synod meeting being held from June 30 to July 3 at Box Hill Town Hall.

The 2022 Synod meeting is an opportunity to hear about the work of the Uniting Church across Victoria, Tasmania and beyond. The gathering provides opportunities to worship together, listen together in small groups, learn together, pray together, eat together. There will be opportunities to join together in discerning the way God is calling us as the Uniting Church forward in mission and ministry.

David Fotheringham, as the new moderator, has named the Synod theme as “Arise, come with me”, inspired by Song of Songs 2:10. Appropriately for our first post-pandemic meeting, verse 2:14 goes on to say “Leave your seclusion, come out in the open. Let me see your face, let me hear your voice.”

Sign up as a member of the Synod meeting

In our Presbytery we have thirteen spaces left for ordained and thirteen spaces for lay members of the Uniting Church. As a member you will have

access to the reports and proposals being considered at the Synod meeting and will be able to take part in decision making.

We have heard of some older church members who have been reluctant to attend Synod so as to make way for younger members. We applaud such selfless motives and look forward to the input of younger members, but it is vital that all age groups are represented.

We understand people are concerned about meeting in person in this post-pandemic world. The Synod Business Committee and Synod Standing Committee are doing everything they can to ensure everyone's safety. Numbers have been reduced and the meeting has changed from five days to three days.

If you would like to attend, or know someone who you believe should be a member of Synod 2022, but have possibly missed the chance to be nominated by our Presbytery, it is not too late.

You can obtain a nomination form from Anne Kim, Presbytery Secretary at secretary@ucapnep.org

Sign up as a volunteer

We already have members of our Presbytery volunteering on the tech team for Synod.

Sarah Manase, presbytery's communications officer, is looking for volunteers to join a team of at least eight people to help with the Synod meeting. We need people to help with the opening worship at Wesley Church, Lonsdale St, Melbourne on Thursday, June 30, and people to help at Box Hill Town Hall, Friday to Sunday, July 1 – 3. Duties include welcoming and greeting members at registration, staffing the information table, assisting members with computer or app log ins, helping with bump in and bump out (tables, chairs etc), and other administration tasks.

Volunteers need to be 18 years and over, have attention to detail, with good communication and interpersonal skills. Enthusiasm, patience and understanding.

Volunteers will need proof of Covid-19 vaccinations and a Working with Children Check.

Please contact Sarah Manase by email: sarah.manase@victas.uca.org or phone 03 9116 1963 by Monday 25 April.

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=eb163727917cbb1ee208541a643e74.570&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 act Alliance

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

PLEASE GIVE URGENTLY

CALL: 1800 025 101
AFP.ORG.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 1 May 2022

READING	Lorraine Denniston	
PRAYERS	Mardie Townsend	
COMMUNION	Marg Davis	Heather Baxter
DOOR DUTY	Graeme Davenport	Mardie Townsend
SOUND	Neville Parker	
MORNING TEA	Jan Davenport Lorraine Denniston	Brenda Grootendorst
FLOWERS	Lorraine Denniston	Lynne Parker
RESOURCES DELIVERY	Lynne Parker	