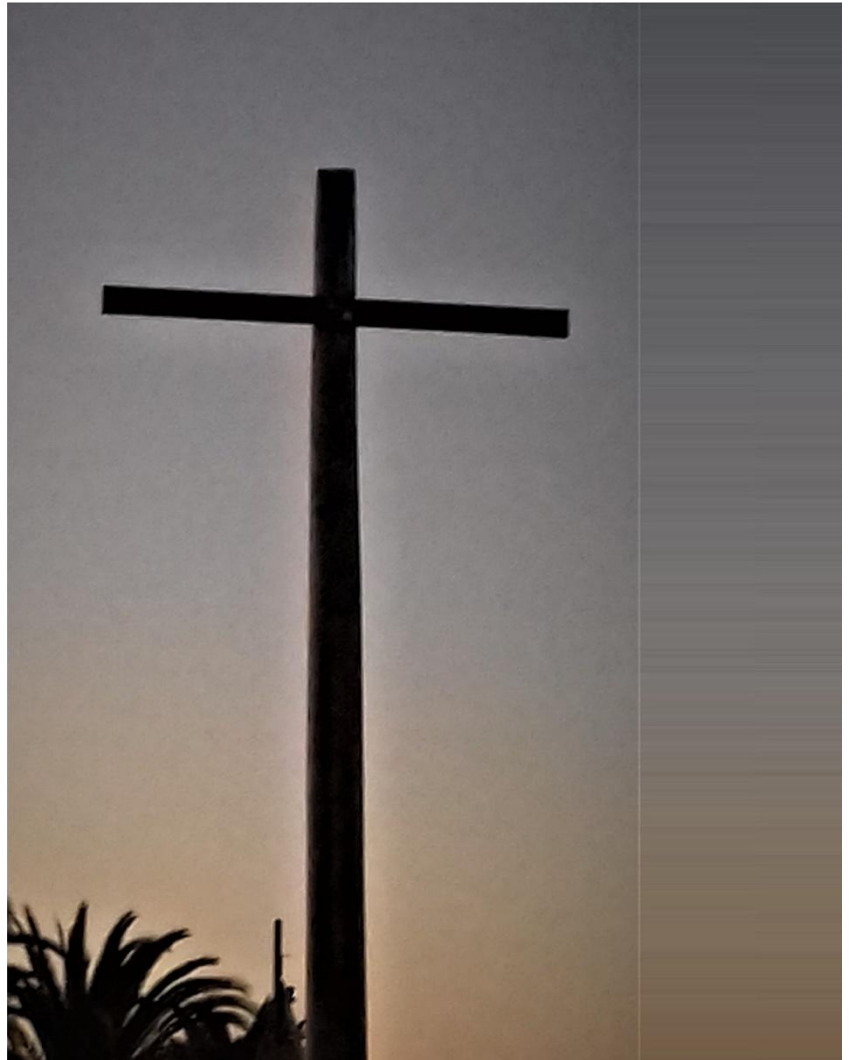




THE UNITING CHURCH
in Australia

ORMOND



THE

PATHFINDER

APRIL 2026

As Ji is currently on long service leave, we do not have a Minister's letter this month. We reprint the President's Easter message. It is also available in video form at <https://uniting.church/presidents-easter-message-2026/>

President's Easter Message 2026

Rev Charissa Suli, President, Uniting Church in Australia

If life feels loud right now...

If the world feels more anxious than peaceful...

The first Easter happened behind locked doors.

Not in a cathedral. Not in celebration. But in fear.

And into that fear, the risen Jesus stood among his disciples and said:

“Peace be with you.” He says it twice — because sometimes once isn't enough.

As President of the Uniting Church in Australia, I want to speak into this moment we are living through — because the world does not need more noise. It needs peace.

Many of us are carrying more than we show. We feel it when making ends meet feels harder than it used to. In private grief.

In young people wrestling with anxiety.

In conversations that divide more than they heal.

Across the world, families live behind locked doors of their own. Across the Pacific, rising seas remind us how fragile home can feel. Here in Australia, the wounds of this land are still carried by First Peoples. Easter does not look away from any of this. When Jesus appeared, he showed his hands and his side. He did not hide his wounds.

Resurrection is not denial. It is love moving through scars.

He stood among his disciples — not performing, not demanding — simply present. And he breathed on them and said:

“Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Continued on page 3



Uniting Church in Australia
ASSEMBLY

PEOPLE PAGE

Congratulations to *Mardie Townsend* on her nomination for the Assembly's International Women's Day "Uniting Church Women 2026" list. Very well-deserved recognition. (See page 4 for details)

We wish "safe travels" to *Ji, Xixi and Matthew* as they travel overseas during April and May. We look forward to their safe return and lots of stories and photos.



A number of other folk are also travelling during this time for shorter (or longer) trips. We wish you all a relaxing time and safe return.

Diane Dudgeon, a resident at Kirkside and keen attender at our Christmas in July dinners and other functions died on 13th March. A memorial service was held in the church on Friday 27th March. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.

There are a number of people on the "not so well" list this month. We remember you in our prayers. Please remember that if you are unable to attend worship and do not receive the weekly resources through email, we can organise to deliver worship resources to you each week. Just speak with Cate in the office or your Pastoral Link Network person.

Reminder about worship this weekend, starting tonight:

Maundy Thursday (2nd April) worship at 7.00p.m.

A service remembering Jesus' supper in the upper room with his disciples including foot washing and Holy Communion. (Please note that foot washing is optional.)

Good Friday (3rd April) worship at 10.00 a.m. A service of readings and hymns remembering the death of Christ on the cross

Easter Day (Sunday 5th April) worship at 10.00 a.m. The Day of Resurrection! A service of celebration of the Risen Lord, including Holy Communion.

All are welcome at worship – whether you can be there for one, two or all three services, please join us as you are able. Services will also be streamed. If you require transport or other assistance to attend, please contact Dianne Richter (0413 750 089).

Continued from page 1

This is how his peace comes alive in them. Not by pretending everything is fine, but in the middle of real life.

It brings them back to God — and back to one another. As Christians, this matters for us.

Because if Christ is risen — and he is — then fear does not have the final word. The Church does not live by anxiety. We live by resurrection.

Not anxious about survival, but faithful in witness. We are here to represent Jesus Christ.

And that peace does not stay behind locked doors.

It moves outward. It sends us.

So, this Easter — Receive his peace. Stand firm in resurrection hope.

And live as people of resurrection — because death and fear do not have the final word. Because the tomb is empty.

Love has not ended. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Happy Easter.

Peace be with you.

Rev Charissa Suli

Photo by [Anita Austvika](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Lenten Chat:

A small group of people met over three Tuesday mornings for a chat about Lent. We used some three-minute videos to get the conversations started. (You can re-visit the video links in the last Pathfinder)

Conversations ranged broadly: quiet spots, hospitality, listening, ongoing conversion, joyful perseverance, and mission. It was an excellent way to open up our minds to new possibilities for our personal lives.

"What does it mean to be a Christian in this society?" - the big question.

You might like to spend time, yourself, reflecting on this BIG question.

Heather Baxter

International Women's Day 2026 Celebrating Uniting Church Women

As the Church and wider community marked International Women's Day 2026, the Uniting Church in Australia celebrated the extraordinary women whose faith, leadership and service enrich congregations and communities across the country. This year's theme, "**Balance the Scales**", is a call to justice and to renewed commitment to equality. To mark the day, people from across the national church were invited to nominate inspiring women whose lives reflect faithful leadership, compassion and witness. The response was overwhelming, revealing countless stories of women nurturing faith, strengthening community and standing with those whose voices are often unheard.

Dr Mardie Townsend was one of 34 women across Australia who were nominated. Her nomination read:

"Mardie Townsend is celebrated for her exceptional leadership and faithful service at Ormond Uniting Church. As Church Council Chairperson and convenor of the Project Control Group, she has guided hundreds of significant decisions in partnership with the Synod and Simbuilt over the past five years, overseeing major projects with wisdom, clarity and unwavering dedication. Her steady leadership has strengthened the congregation's vision and ensured its ministries remain vibrant and sustainable.

Beyond governance, Mardie's heart for people shines brightly. She offers thoughtful pastoral care to vulnerable members and those on the margins, reaching out through phone calls, visits and quiet encouragement. She is a strong advocate for young people and women, nurturing confidence and participation in church life.

Through hands-on volunteering, consistent generosity and steadfast faith, Mardie embodies compassionate, visionary leadership that blesses her church community in countless ways."

Congratulations, Mardie, on well-deserved recognition of your significant contribution to the life of Ormond congregation and the wider Uniting Church and community.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

Sunday 17th May

Ormond Uniting Church Annual General Meeting will be held this year on **Sunday May 17th** following worship.

There will be more information closer to the date but in the meantime please could you note the date? We would like as many people as possible to attend.

Many thanks,

Brenda Grootendorst
Congregation Secretary

Ji's Long Service Leave

Ji is on long service leave until the end of May. During this time, we will have a number of people leading worship. Some familiar faces (Revd Ron Townsend, Brad Denniston), some slightly familiar (Revd Susan Stott-Floyd) and a couple of new faces (Revd Ann Simons and Revd Viola Leung). Welcome to each of you and thank you for making yourselves available to lead worship at Ormond.

If you require the services of a minister during the time Ji is away, please call the church phone no. (0411 958 127). Cate or Robyn will respond to your call and organise support.

CONTACTS at ORMOND UNITING CHURCH

We acknowledge, with respect, the heritage of the Boon-Wurrung people in this place.

Website: <http://www.ormondunitingchurch.org>

Street Address: 264 Booran Road, Ormond
3163 (cnr North and Booran Rds)

Phone: [0411 958 127](tel:0411958127)

Email Address:

office@ormond.unitingchurch.org.au

Sunday Worship Time: 10.00 a.m.

Livestream Link (Zoom):

Meeting ID: 889 8127 2730 Passcode: 639296

Minister: Rev. Dr. Ji Zhang

Phone: [0409 020 319](tel:0409020319)

Email: Minister@ormond.unitingchurch.org.au

Office Administrator: Cate

Office Hours: 9.30 am – 2.30 pm
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Safe Church Contact:

Brenda: [0433 494 600](tel:0433494600)

Articles for Pathfinder:

Articles or information for publishing in Pathfinder (monthly newsletter) should be emailed to dianne_ric@yahoo.com.au by last Monday of the month

FOOD DONATIONS FOR REFUGEES

Many thanks to all those who have already donated food for the refugees who access the foodbank at the Brigidine Sisters in Port Melbourne.

We have decided to delay our delivery a couple of weeks to the **15th April**.

There will be two more Sundays to donate: **Sunday 4th April** and **Sunday 11th April**.

With winter just around the corner, basmati rice, pasta and canned legumes would be very much appreciated.

If anyone has collected food at home I am very happy to come and collect before we deliver. Please contact me on mob 0433494600 – leave a message if I am unable to answer.

Thank you again for your generosity and support.

Brenda

COMMUNITY LUNCHESES

Our community lunches (in partnership with Glen Eira CISS) are now being held on the first Thursday of each month (except for April which is the second Thursday (9th) in April).

If you would like to volunteer to assist, please speak with Robyn (0423 232 285).

**SAVE THIS DATE:
Sunday 24th May, 2.00 p.m.**

TREK MUSICALS is returning with a concert
featuring the songs of various musical theatre duos.

More details in May *Pathfinder*.

The Ormond Uniting Church Journey

Following worship on Sunday 15th March, 28 people gathered in the church for a guided reflection on the OUC congregation's journey over time. Having collected our cups of tea or coffee and loaded our plates with some of the delicious food brought for sharing, we each made our way to one of the four round tables which had been set up in the west end of the church. Each table had a leader/facilitator, with Lisa Saffin, Marg Davis, Gary Richter and Hans Tilstra filling these roles. They would help us to recognise the three stages of transitional ministry at OUC and to reflect upon the lived experience of the past few years.

To aid our thinking and reflection, a diagram depicting three phases of our journey was displayed on the screen. Those phases: 'Ending, losing, letting go', 'The neutral zone' and 'The new beginning' helped us to think about where we are on the journey and what the future might hold for OUC. In addition, the leaders/facilitators brought to the table artifacts which would remind us of aspects of our journey. For example, at the table I was on, as we considered the 'Ending, losing, letting go' part of the diagram, we looked at the brass plaques from the old pews with donors' names most of us didn't remember. Then, to help us think about the 'neutral zone' – the 'in-between' time - we viewed pictures of the church as it had been but with features such as the organ which we still have in our re-vamped space. Other tables had different 'aide memoires' which served a similar purpose.

At each table, there was lively discussion. One of the great joys of the session was the enthusiastic involvement of the participants, no matter whether they had been long term members of OUC or were relative newcomers. The shared understandings generated through the discussions will form a strong basis for the next phase of our journey.

Mardie Townsend
23/03/2026

Images: Cover – <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56879>
<https://www.freepik.com/free-photos-vectors/christmas-border-clipart>
Stock Photos - 100% royalty-free stock images - Creative Fabrica
<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=58161>

Others by OUC members or website related to the article



FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

The Friendship Circle is a small group that meets monthly at Church at 1.30pm on the 3rd Monday of each month.

Our next meeting is on **Monday 20th April**.

YOU are welcome to join us for a chat & afternoon tea.

Take care

Jan Davenport (9578 1713)



Prayer Table in the church

Formation Group decided to reinstall the Prayer table in the worship space. This is a space for quiet prayer and reflection. You can light a taper as well. The space, below the decorated cross on the south wall, can be used before, during or after the worship service.

Lectioary Readings

April 2	Maundy Thursday	Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14, Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, John 13:1-17, 31b-35
April 3	Good Friday	Isaiah 52:13-53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25 or <i>Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9</i> , John 18:1-19:42
April 5	Easter Day	Acts 10:34-43 or <i>Jeremiah 31:1-6</i> , Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, Colossians 3:1-4 or <i>Acts 10:34-43</i> , John 20:1-18 or <i>Matthew 28:1-10</i>
April 12	Easter 2	Acts 2:14a, 22-32, Psalm 16, Psalm 16, John 20:19-31
April 19	Easter 3	Acts 2:14a, 36-41, Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19, 1 Peter 1:17-23, Luke 24:13-35
April 26	Easter 4	Acts 2:42-47, Psalm 23, Peter 2:19-25, John 10:1-10
May 3	Easter 5	Acts 7:55-60, Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16, 1 Peter 2:2-10, John 14:1-14
May 10	Easter 5	Acts 17:22-31, Psalm 66:8-20, 1 Peter 3:13-22, John 14:15-21

ORMOND LEARNING HUB – JULY PROGRAM

SERVICE AS MISSION

Living our Theology Through Mission

Wednesday evenings (1st July – 5th August), 6.30 – 8.30 p.m.

More details in next *Pathfinder*

Rosters

	Reading	Prayers	Communion	Welcoming	AV
April 3	Robyn M	-	-	Robyn M Dianne R	Gary R
April 5	Dianne R	David N	Heather B Robyn M	Jan D Graeme D	Lisa S
April 12	David N	Dianne R		Robyn M Dianne R	Gary R
April 19	Dianne R	Warwick B		Frank O Hans T	Robyn M
April 26	Lorraine D	David N		Gary R Nev P	Graeme D
May 3	Suzie F	Heather B	Lorraine D Marg D	Brenda G Graeme D	Nev P
May 10	Marg D	Dianne R		Frank O Robyn M	Lisa S

	Music	Tea & Coffee	Resource Delivery	Coffee Spot	Mowing
April 3	Peter H				
April 5	Peter H	Lorraine D Jan D	Hans T	4/4 Team 1	
April 12	Peter H	Brenda G Sue M	Dianne R	11/4 Team 2	Gary R Frank O
April 19	Peter H	Suzie F Lisa S	Brenda G	18/4 Team 3	
April 26	Peter H	Lorraine D Lynne P	Lynne P	25/4 Team 4	Kevin D Matthew Z
May 3	Karen R	Lisa S Jan D	Marg D	2/5 Team 1	
May 10	Peter H	Brenda G Sue M	Frank O	9/5 Team 2	

Diary Dates

Thursday, 2 nd April	7.00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Worship
Friday, 3 rd April	10.00 a.m.	Good Friday Worship
Saturday 4 th April	9.30 a.m.	Unity Tea and Coffee Stop
Sunday 5 th April	10.00 a.m.	Worship - Revd. Ron Townsend
Thursday 9 th April	12.00 noon	Community Lunch
Saturday 11 th April	9.30 a.m.	Unity Tea and Coffee Stop
Sunday 12 th April	10.00 a.m.	Worship – Brad Denniston
Wednesday 15 th April	12.00 noon	Wednesday Home Group
Saturday 18 th March	9.30 a.m.	Unity Tea and Coffee Stop
Sunday 19 th April	10.00 a.m.	Worship – Revd Sue Stott Floyd
Monday 20 th April	1.30 p.m.	Friendship Circle
Thursday 23 rd April	7.30 p.m.	Church Council
Saturday 25 th April	8.30 a.m.	Bob's Boys
	9.30 a.m.	Unity Tea and Coffee Stop
Sunday 26 th April	10.00 a.m.	Worship – Revd Viola Leung
Monday 27 th April	6.00 p.m.	Material for <i>Pathfinder</i> due
Saturday 2 nd May	9.30 a.m.	Unity Tea and coffee Stop
Sunday 3 rd May	10.00 a.m.	Worship – Revd Ann Simons
Saturday 9 th May	9.30 a.m.	Unity Tea and Coffee Stop
Sunday 10 th May	10.00 a.m.	Worship – Revd Ron Townsend
Saturday 16 th May	9.30 a.m.	Unity Tea and Coffee Stop
Sunday 17 th May	10.00 a.m.	Worship – Revd Ann Simons
	11.00 a.m.	Annual General Meeting

He is Risen!