

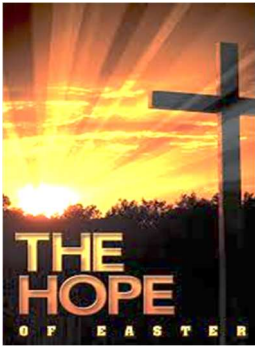


# Werrabee Uniting Church

We acknowledge the people of the Kulin alliance, the original custodians of the land which was never ceded and on which our buildings for worship stand and we gather.

## 31 March 2024: Easter Day

### Mark's musings



Mary Magdalene's world collapsed when Jesus took his last breath on the cross. We read: "Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.'" (John 20:1-2). Mary must

have been reeling as she made her way to the tomb that Sunday morning. She had suffered with Jesus through his painful death, the helpless agony of one who can only watch and wait for the suffering of a loved one to end. Jesus' death, when his life was finally *'finished'*, must have come as a relief, followed by the deeper pain of the finality of his absence.

A young doctor said to me once, after watching her father, also a medico suffer greatly before he died, that she had come to believe her father's suffering, as excruciating as it was for him to bear, had served a purpose. It made her father ready to leave this world with all its pains and sorrows and it helped her family to let him go, knowing he would have no more pain.

Many of us know this to be true from painful experience. Still we let our loved ones go reluctantly, fearing they are lost to us forever, wondering how we can possibly live without them. Our hearts ache for years. We are tempted to despair. We feel sorry for ourselves, we are angry with our loved ones for leaving, even angry at God for taking them and angry with everyone else for going on with their lives as if nothing has happened.

"*It's not fair!*" we want to scream. This is not what we signed up for. When we gave birth to our little ones we thought we could protect them, from everything! When we said, "*till death do us part,*" we thought it would never happen.

When my mum died at age 79 in December 2012, she was so sick and in so much pain that we gave thanks for her release. But the pain of her absence is no less than if she had died at a young age. Death wounds us deeply - and frightens us like nothing else. We all walk the hard path Mary walked as she made her way to the tomb, "*...on the first day of the week while it was still dark*" (20:1).

I invite you to experience the power of resurrection as we celebrate the Easter story once again. It begins in darkness and ends, well you know how it ends. The journey will take you where you have never been before and it is truly life-giving.

*Blessings on your Easter...! Mark Dunn*

Thank you to the Rev. Mark Dunn

Mark, you have been an amazing leader for the last two

### TODAY AND NEXT WEEK

#### Worship services

31 March (Easter): Rev. Mark Dunn

7 April: Rev. Ian Pearse

#### Bible readings

**Today:** Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; I Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

**Next Sunday:** Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:29-31

#### What's on this week

**Monday:** Easter holiday

**Tuesday:** 11.30am Bible Discussion & Lunch

**Wednesday:** 10am Property Committee; 12noon UCAF at the church.

**Thursday:** 9.30am Gardening Group

#### Rosters 31 March (& 7 April)

**Greetings:** Armando A (Kur M)

**Audiovisual:** Christian R-K (Jacob L)

**Morning Tea:** Mary D & Margaret D (Samoan Ladies)

**Flowers:** Lorna H (Jennie K)

**Music:** Angela M (Wendy B)

**Prayers:** Jeremy W (Neil T)

**Reader:** Fa'asega T (Lauina L)

#### Werrabee UC on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/621987747878234/>

#### Church office

Open Monday to Friday 9.30am-12noon.

Phone 97411084 Email

[office@werrabeeunitingchurch.org.au](mailto:office@werrabeeunitingchurch.org.au)

#### WUC Newsletter

Send information for inclusion to the Editor at [robert.renton@bigpond.com](mailto:robert.renton@bigpond.com) or Neil Tolliday on 0402 817 673.

#### Bank Account & Boom Gate (0459#)

BSB 083-909 A/c 516109795

#### To book facilities at WUC:

Email: (Elizabeth B)

[bookings@werrabeeunitingchurch.org.au](mailto:bookings@werrabeeunitingchurch.org.au)

**Samoan service** The Samoan language service is held every 3rd Sunday at 4pm in the church. All welcome.

months. We have appreciated your leadership of worship and the way you have participated in our congregation's activities. You have provided so much pastoral care and concern. Your insight and understanding of the challenges of amalgamating two very different congregations has been helpful. We would like to keep you but we understand that you and your wife Jan are looking forward to a special retirement trip overseas so we must say farewell and THANK YOU for all you have done.

## Welcome to the Rev. Ian Pearse

We are pleased to welcome Rev. Ian Pearse as a long-term supply minister for the months of April, May, June & July. He will lead Sunday morning worship on 1st & 3rd Sundays plus work two other days per week. Those days/hours will be flexible enabling Ian to provide pastoral care for members in need and drop into activities at the church. Ian and Presbytery will assist in finding persons to lead morning worship on 2nd & 4th Sundays. Ian is a retired minister living near Bacchus Marsh. (MB)

## Congregation Chairperson/Secretary

The nominees for these positions are **Sandra S** - Congregation Chairperson, and **Bev L** - Congregation Secretary. The election will be at the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation on Sunday 14 April.

## A challenge for Lent



**UnitingWorld**  
connecting communities for life

This Lent, we're taking up a 40-day challenge to raise funds to fight poverty

and injustice through the work of UnitingWorld and their partners. UnitingWorld works with partners in the Pacific, Asia and Africa, helping communities unlock their potential and set themselves free from poverty and injustice.

Our church has its own page to fundraise during this Lent Season and our goal is to reach \$1500.

We'd love your support to help us reach our fundraising goal and make a big difference. Ways to donate—follow the link below, use envelopes marked with "UnitingWorld", or by speaking to Luciana.

[https://donate.unitingworld.org.au/fundraisers/werribeeunitingchurch?ref=ch\\_3OwChnGzSl8A8p7F01NgzxEI](https://donate.unitingworld.org.au/fundraisers/werribeeunitingchurch?ref=ch_3OwChnGzSl8A8p7F01NgzxEI)

## Jean B in the news

Local *Star Weekly* (20/3) on page 6 includes a story (by journalist Cade Lucas) about Werribee UC member Jean B, with a lovely photo of her displaying the Victorian Volunteering Award.

Cade's story "Jean volunteers decade of her time" sums up a life of 88 years, including more than 70 years volunteering.



Recently invited to Government House to receive the award, Jean (pictured) says that she will continue to help others "I'll keep on going as long as I'm able."

According to *Star Weekly*, "Jean's lifetime of helping others, ranging from hospital visits and home care, to Lifeline, St John's Ambulance and radio for the print handicapped was last month

recognised at the Victorian volunteering Awards where she took out the volunteer impact category."

For many years Jean was a faithful member of Trinity Uniting congregation, in Seves St Altona. Her professional life as a nurse included "Gwennap" the Uniting Church aged care facility in Geelong Road Footscray.

Jean continued volunteering during her nursing career and also while raising her four children and then caring for her late husband John prior to his death from a long illness in 2006.

"Absolutely honoured," she said of how it felt to receive the award at Government House. "I love what I do so it gives me a feeling of satisfaction that I'm doing something with meaning and purpose."

Nowadays she writes bereavement cards to family and friends of those who died in palliative care, a less active role than she's had in the past. Jean says age isn't a barrier to volunteering. "You're never too old to help another person." (Story by Neil T)

## Uniting Church Adult Fellowship

Our next meeting will be Wednesday 3rd April at the Church. Our guest speaker is to be Ann C, General president of UCAF Victoria. All Welcome. Please bring your plate at 12 noon for a 12.30 lunch with Ann and her husband John (as organised last month). (Margaret G assistant secretary.)

## Exercise classes

EXERCISE CLASSES will continue Thursdays 6pm–6.50pm and Saturdays 7–8am after Easter, all under the leadership of Tracey S. All welcome. ♫ ♪ 🎶.

## Ethical chocolates

A reminder of the ethical scorecard for chocolate. New edition just out. Check it out!

<https://www.chocolatescorecard.com/>