



*“Church in the Trees”* -Morisset Uniting

## ***RUSTLING LEAVES***

***22ND APRIL 2020***

COVID 19 EDITION 3

**SUNDAY REFLECTIONS BY BRUCE EDGELL**

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April we celebrated Easter, the most important day of the Christian year, and the most joyful. There is no news that can compare to the message that Jesus rose from the dead. So all Christians should be really excited. The following Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April churches of many denominations right around the world heard another very exciting story – the story of Jesus’ encounter with ‘Doubting Thomas’ (John 20:19 – 31) and how Thomas came to faith in the living Christ.

In this message I don’t want to focus so much on Thomas, but rather on the words which Jesus spoke to the disciples three times while they gathered in a locked room after the resurrection: ***PEACE BE WITH YOU.*** Jesus still gives to his followers the same blessing today.

The peace that Jesus promises his followers is not based on our circumstances or our comfort or our confidence in our own abilities. Jesus’ peace comes from our knowledge of God’s unfailing love and God’s plan for the world. Jesus’ peace comes from knowing the end of the story: that God plans to redeem all of creation. That’s the peace that Jesus is offering to his disciples then, and that he offers to us now. So what does that peace look like in our lives?

1. Jesus’ peace leads to greater joy for us.
2. Jesus’ peace leads to greater courage for us.
3. Jesus’ peace leads to greater purpose in our lives.<sup>1</sup>

It seems clear that John wants us to see the two visits of Jesus to his <sup>2</sup>disciples a week apart as occasions of peace. And perhaps they can speak to us about some dimensions of peace that we do not normally think of - perhaps they can speak to us of peace in the midst of turmoil - of peace in the midst of fear - of peace in the midst of doubt. The risen Christ came to his disciples in the midst of their turmoil and fear. He came in the midst of their doubt and their sense of having failed both him and their own selves and said to them: "Peace be with you." The three times that Jesus offers his peace to his disciples in today's reading - it is done in close connection with the wounds of crucifixion. But his enemies' war against him failed. On the evening of the first day of the week he came to his disciples and showed them that he lived despite the worst that could happen. The peace that Jesus offers can be described as the confidence his followers are able to take from his resurrected appearance. His "peace be with you" was more than a greeting to be followed by another good-bye. It was the declaration of a persistent fact. Because Jesus lives nothing can separate his followers from him and from life in him. The disciples realized this fact and in realizing it received the peace that Jesus offered - the peace that only Jesus could offer. And peace showed itself - confidence showed itself - inner security showed itself - later when the disciples left that room and went into the world to proclaim the love and forgiveness of God through Jesus Christ - the risen Lord.

Peace be with you - is the word of Jesus to us.

Peace be with you and blessed are you when you have not seen, as the disciples saw, and yet have come to believe.

## **Prayer Points for this fortnight**

- **For our family members who are near or far away:** we think and pray for those with whom we cannot connect physically at this time. We pray that in your mercy, Lord God, you will keep them in your loving care.

- **School Holidays:** Pray for parents and children as they try to find creative ways to use the holidays for rest and relaxation despite the 'stay at home' rules.
- **For our community members who suffer from mental health issues:** We pray that your love and care will surround them. Thank you, Gracious Father, for organisations which exist to help.
- **For Health Care Workers:** Thank God for all levels of health care staff in our hospitals and medical facilities. Pray for good health and stamina for them to continue to provide much-needed services for all Australians.

## Lent Event 2020

This year, our own Lent has been a time of going without and we can have a better understanding of the significance to many in the world of going without some of life's necessities. For us it might just be not going to the shops as much, not going to Drs appointments, meetings etc. We have probably saved money on petrol, public transport, coffees etc. Some people have used the jars given out at church to collect those savings to donate to Lent Event. We were going to have a dedication service on Easter Sunday but that couldn't happen.

However soon after we return to regular Sunday morning worship we will have a dedication of Lent Event donations, and you may choose to keep your donation until then.

**Your gift means we can build peace and beat poverty together in Ambon and beyond.**

**YOUR GIFT**  
 \$25  \$50  \$75  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **OR**  
 Please accept my regular monthly donation and debit my credit card \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (You can change or cancel at any time)

LE20-CDF c077185  
**Name & address:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_  
 Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

**I need my gift to be tax deductible** (These gifts will only be used for poverty alleviation and community development projects, not for building the leadership capacity of the church).

UnitingWorld PO Box A2266 Sydney South NSW 1235 | ABN 16 939 630 947  
 Telephone 1800 998 122 | info@unitingworld.nrd.au | [www.lentevent.com](http://www.lentevent.com)

**PAYMENT METHOD**  
 Cheque/Money order (payable to UnitingWorld)  
 Visa  MasterCard

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Card Number  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name on Card  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Direct deposit or bank transfer using the following details:**  
 Account Name: Uniting Church Overseas Aid Account BSB Number: 032 014  
 Bank: Westpac – King St, Sydney Account Number: 182657  
 Your ID: c077185 (Please include as the reference.)

 **UnitingWorld**  
 connecting communities for life

## Pastoral Care Team

We hope everyone is enjoying this beautiful autumn weather and not missing our regular face-to-face contact with each other too much. We are blessed to have our phones and other electronic communication devices.

Church doors are shut across the globe, so it is an opportunity for us to show that the Church is not only about a “building “ ..... and that WE are the Church. We are currently unable to meet for worship and praise but Christians can share their faith, love and care by keeping in touch with each other. God is with us in this situation. Pray for when we can meet again and encourage each other in our Christian walk.

Is there someone from our congregation that you haven't spoken with for a while?

Why not check through our 'Church in the Trees' DIRECTORY and give this person a call to see how they are going?

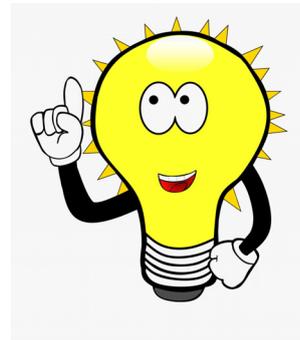
If they have any needs that WE (the Church) can help with, let Betty Small know. She will endeavour to organise some assistance.

For prayer needs please contact Rev Joan Horgan 0488 764 698.

**“It is a wonderful moment when a voice of kindness and care reaches towards you...” –**

John O'Donohue

Betty Small  
Coordinator  
Phone: 49 733181



## Forum

We have two challenges for you this fortnight. For the first one, we asked a number of our congregation to tell us what they have enjoyed doing over the last two weeks in lock down. Some have become very creative. We have listed their responses but we mixed up who said what. Your job is to decide who made each statement. Choose from the list at the bottom. 4

1. I had Zoom parties for our 47 year old son, 9 year old granddaughter, 7 year old grandson; birthdays all in early April. We blew up balloons and had a cake here with a candle on it and the whole family joined in. It was amazing and good fun-no mess to clean up afterwards either-that was a bonus!
2. I exercise with Coach Kozak and Claudia .( 20 minute workout for the elderly).via YouTube each day
3. I joined a family on line gathering where we were introduced to our new granddaughter Myra who was born on 1<sup>st</sup> April.
4. Family quiz via Facebook messenger (Face time) with all 4 sons and their families
5. The book I am reading at present is"A Dogs Journey"
6. I have enjoyed setting aside 2 hours to watch the final Film "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker
7. One thing I have enjoyed doing over the last few weeks is having more time to take our Border Collie ,Roxy, on longer walks in the park at the bottom of our street on the lake."
8. I have spent some time cleaning out cupboards throwing away rubbish and sharing memories with others.

---

The participants are

Winston, Parriss, Rob Hanks, Lesley, Anne Hart, Dianne, Bob Starling, Cathie Smythe

ANSWERS BACK PAGE

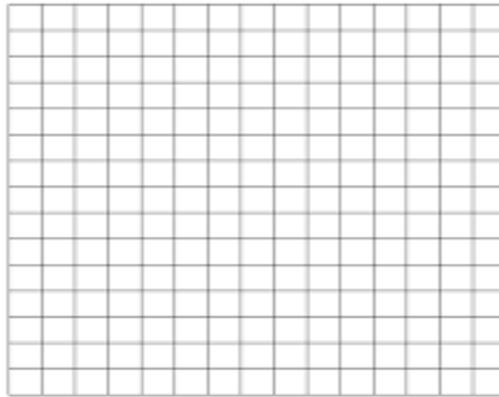
---

For the second challenge, most of you know about Find A Word, where a grid full of letters of the alphabet hide words which run vertically, horizontally and

diagonally forwards and reverse. Letters can be used multiple times. The puzzle maker lists the words he / she has hidden at the bottom of the puzzle. In our next issue I wanted to have a Find A Word puzzle but I want you to make it up for me. The grid will be 15 squares wide by 15 squares down and the topic of our puzzle is Morisset Uniting Church. You can include anything that relates to what we have on our property and what we do at the “Church in The Trees”.

Due by **I will need it by Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> May for our next edition.**

If you are smart and can do it with the computer, email it to me. You can do it on a piece of paper and scan it and email it to me or ring me and I will come and collect it.

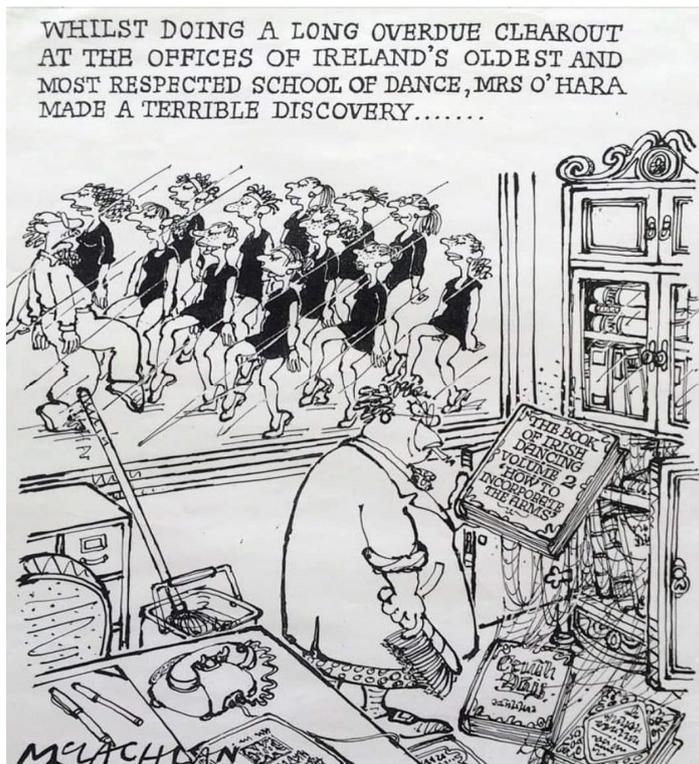


## News

Our guest for the fun game was Rev Rob Hanks. So how is he and Hamilton UC managing?

Many of you would have received an email forwarded from one of several sources from Rob to his congregation and others with 5 weeks of notes reflections, songs and prayers similar to what you would have in a church service. He put all of this on a CD which he distributed to his congregation. This was his response to arriving at a new church where a large proportion of his congregation don't have the internet. If you haven't seen it and are interested in having a look, let me know.

## Fun Time



I used to love the  
Hokey Pokey ....  
then I turned all  
around

Why can't a cow ride a  
bicycle?

Because it hasn't got a  
little finger to ring the  
bell.

Why is Australia  
such a dry country?  
We don't have a king  
or queen to reign on  
it.

Just seen a burglar kicking his own door in.  
I asked: "What are you doing?"  
He said: "Working from home."

*What do you call a belt made out of hundred  
dollar bills?*

*A waist of money.*



## **UCA Leadership**

Part of a letter from Rev Stephen De Plater Chairperson Hunter Presbytery

The Psalmist wrote: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change.” Psalm 46:1–2

The uncertainty we experience does lead many to fear and the Psalm draws us back to put that fear into perspective.

As I hear what is happening across the Presbytery and across the wider Church, I am encouraged by stories of hope in dark times. When we can no longer gather physically, the enthusiasm of our people to continue meeting together in new ways and the exciting and innovative initiatives taken by Congregations and Ministry Agents is truly inspirational. Thank you all for what you are doing, and please be assured that your efforts are appreciated and celebrated.

Please make sure that you set aside time for yourself and look to your own well being. I simply cannot stress that enough!

## **Finances**

While many Congregations are challenged meeting their largest expense, being the Minister’s stipend, we are lucky that is not one of our concerns.

Without the Op Shop income and no weekly Offerings (except regular Direct Giving ) we are managing. If you are a regular church goer but not on Direct Debit and want to keep up your donations to the church, you can do a bank transfer by phone or internet, but if you want to use cash, you will have to wait till we are meeting again.

Morisset Uniting Church BSB 032-524  
Account number 12-1985



Answers to forum challenge on P3

Statement 1 Cathie, 2 Dianne, 3 Bob, 4 Winston, 5 Parriss, 6 Rob Hanks, 7 Anne, 8 Lesley