

Sunday Worship

Sunday, 26 April 2026

Easter 4 A

ANZAC Day

Greetings and Welcome

Christ is Risen!

He is Risen indeed.

Today, we hear of a community shaped by shared life, prayer, and generosity. Of a shepherd who leads, restores, and remains present even in the darkest times. We are called to follow Christ's example, not in silent suffering, but in turning toward life. Jesus stands as the gate, calling us by name into an abundant life. And on this ANZAC Day, we remember sacrifice and courage, and ask what it means to choose the path that gives life to others.

So, come into this abundant life to worship God. We share this life as we acknowledge diverse understandings, identities, relationships, and languages. Let us say good morning in different languages, connecting us with one another and with this land.

Balka wittaberri! (Goreng Goreng)

Balka wittaberri!

בֹּקֶר טוֹב! [Boqer Tov] (Hebrew)

Boqer Tov! [boker tove] (Hebrew)

καλή μέρα! [Kalí Méra] (Greek)

Kalí méra! [Kalay merra] (Greek)

Goeie dag! (Afrikaans)

Goeie dag!

Goedemorgen! (Dutch)

Goedemorgen! (Dutch)

Buongiorno! (Italian)

Buongiorno! (Italian)

Noa'ia! (Rotuman)

Noa'ia! (Rotuman)

Magandang Umaga! (Filipino)

Magandang Umaga! (Filipino)

Zou San! (Cantonese)

Zou San! [jaow sun] (Cantonese)

Marhaba! (Arabic)

Marhaba! (Arabic)

Parev! (Armenian)

Parev! (Armenian)

G'day! (Australian)

G'day! (Australian)

Lighting of the Christ Candle

As the light of new life shines out from the Empty Tomb,
so may we in this Easter season shine with the light of hope and share the
promise of life.

Acknowledgement of Country

*As we gather in this joyful Easter season to worship God, let us take a moment
to acknowledge the land and all the resources that God has graciously made
available for us:*

For this Land

We give thanks!

For the First People who cared for this land

We give thanks!

For all nations and people who live on this land

We give thanks!

We honour the custodians
of sacred stories,
of dreamings
and the connections
with the deep earth.

*May we work together
for the restoration
of the Land
and Her Peoples.*

Call to Worship (inspired by Psalm 118)

In the laughter of children,
we hear the voice of the Gate of the Way,
and find our way home.

*In the lap of a parent,
God's compassion cradles us
in the still waters of love.*

The Shepherd of our lives
leads us through that door
into life with him forever.

*We are baptised with living waters
which refresh us, restoring us
to follow Jesus all our days.*

The Holy Spirit, Keeper of truth,
is the Light that guides us
through every shadowed moment.

*The Breath of life stills our worries
and fears, as we are led to that
peaceful place of God's heart.*

Praise Hymn:

Jesus Messiah

Psalm 23 begins "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Name above all names, the rescue for sinners, the ransom from Heaven. As we stand to sing Jesus Messiah, we worship the One who fills our cup to overflowing and invites us to dwell in his house forever.

Prayer of Invocation/Adoration/Thanksgiving/Approach

*He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.
Let us approach God, our shepherd.
let us pray:*

Sustained by your living waters,
we are at peace in seas
of stress and success;

detoured onto those walkways
leading to your joy,
we find our way out of mazes
of meetings and deadlines;

nourished at your picnic
in that garden of grace,
our shredded souls
are anointed by your healing;

you slow us down just enough,
as we try to escape
the very lives we think we want,
so goodness and mercy
can catch up with us
and carry us into your heart.

May you always be with us on our journey,
God in Community, Holy in One,

Amen!

Praise Time: The Lord is my Shepherd & I Am Carried

In Psalm 23, we are reassured that “He leads me beside still waters... even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.” In our praise songs today, we are reminded that our Shepherd not only leads us faithfully, but also carries us when the path is hard; so we can trust that, in every moment, we are held and never alone. Please stand to praise the Lord in song.

Prayer of Confession

Day by day, God leads us to the places of hope and healing, while moment by moment, we continue to follow sin down all the wrong paths. Let us confess our lives, as we draw near to the One who restores us to wholeness. Let us pray:

God of our lives,
we know all too well the wrong paths to foolish lives and repeated mistakes.

Stirring up trouble in the waters comes easily to us. And locking the doors of our hearts so we don't have to love others is second nature to us.

God of Mercy,

Forgive us.

May our hearts overflow with hope for others,
as you anoint us with healing oil.

May we share from your abundance
with all who hunger for life.

May we follow Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour,
to the places of service and life with you forever.

Silence is kept

Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Our Comforter leads us to that place where the Table is spread with grace,
and God declares:

Your sins are forgiven!

Thanks be to God.

The Peace

The Lord leads us to green pastures and still waters.

The Lord gives peace to our bodies, our minds and our souls.

The Peace of the Risen Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Announcements/Notices

ANZAC Day commemoration

Today, we set aside a brief moment to honour the courage and sacrifice of the brave ANZACs, past and present, who have served in the Australian Defence Forces.

In the spirit of remembrance, I invite you to participate in a small yet significant act. If you have any memorabilia or items of remembrance associated with the ANZACs, I encourage you to bring them forward and place them on the table. These items serve as symbols of our collective gratitude and reverence for those who have served and continue to serve.

As we reflect on their legacy, let us hold in our hearts all those who have made sacrifices for the greater good and all those who have served the stranger. Together, may we offer our thanks and prayers for their service and commitment.

The Ode

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

A minute of Silence

Prayers of Intercession

Our notices are part of our service, so we bring them to God. Our prayers reach beyond ourselves and our congregation. God calls us to care for all creation, so we join the World Council of Churches' prayer cycle and pray for Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. We also remember the 111th anniversary of ANZAC Day and the Armenian Genocide.

Include other events or incidents that you will be praying for.

Note: You can find some prayers for this week on my blog, Prayers.

Let us pray for the church, for our community, and for the world.

God of remembrance,
help us this day to remember the sacrifice of the first ANZACs at Gallipoli.
In your hands are the destinies of this and every nation,
We give you thanks for the freedoms we enjoy in this land
And for those who lay down their lives to defend them.
We pray that we and all the people of Australia,
Gratefully remembering their courage,

May have the grace to live in a spirit of justice, generosity, and peace.
We pray that people around the world,
Remembering their sacrifice in providing aid to a nation being massacred,
May have the compassion to reach out to those in need.

God of mission and movement,
You call us not to sit still but to step out:
to serve, to give, to love, and to proclaim.
Bless the activities of our congregation.
Bless us when we are present to someone in need.
May our efforts bear fruit, not for our glory but for Yours,
that in all we do, Your grace may be known.

God of every joy,
we give thanks for this special moment,
that we are blessed today to celebrate 30 years
of witness, life, love, and meaningful work.
Bless the years ahead with grace
and may all that is celebrated today
bear fruit in witness, love and faith.

God of healing,
your Word speaks of your mercy, bringing wholeness to the broken and
renewal to the weary. Heal all who are sick or suffering, easing their pain and
lifting their spirits. May your presence bring relief, comfort, and hope to those
in need of healing.

In the silence of our hearts, we raise to you the names of those we know and
remember:

— A moment of silence. Mention names —

We also bring to you those we forgot and those we do not know.

Open our eyes and give us the wisdom to see where we can bring your healing and hope in our relationships, neighbourhoods and communities as your hopeful and compassionate people.

God of peace,
bring calm to the tensions between Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.
Guide leaders toward wisdom and reconciliation.
Heal old wounds, stir forgiveness
and let your justice and peace take root and grow.

Grant us all the resolve to advocate for peace, to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, as we join the universal church in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn/Song:

Goodness, Love and Mercy

Psalm 23 tells us that "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." For You are with me and You comfort me. As we prepare to hear the word of God, let us remember His promises to us; a love that never lets us go and a mercy that follows us wherever we wander. Please stand to sing Goodness Love and Mercy.

Do not read the titles (black or red text in bold)

Prayer of Illumination

Let us say the prayer of illumination together.

*Open our eyes, gracious Lord, as we turn to your word.
We long to know you, to understand life, and to be changed.
Examine us, Lord, by the floodlight of your truth.*

Amen.

Scripture**First Reading: Acts 2:42-47****Epistle Reading: 1 Peter 2:19-25****Gospel Reading: John 10:1-10****Acts 2:42-47**

The First reading is from the book of Acts, chapter two, verses forty-two to forty-seven. Listen now for the word of God.

- 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.
- 2:43 Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.
- 2:44 All who believed were together and had all things in common;
- 2:45 they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.
- 2:46 Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts,
- 2:47 praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

1 Peter 2:19-25

The Epistle Reading is from the first epistle of Peter, chapter two, verses nineteen to twenty-five. Listen now for the word of God.

- 2:19 For it is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly.
- 2:20 If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God.
- 2:21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.
- 2:22 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

- 2:23 When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.
- 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.
- 2:25 For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

For the Word of God in Scripture
 For the Word of God among us
 For the Word of God within us

Thanks be to God

John 10:1-10

The Gospel reading is from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, chapter ten, verses one to ten. Listen now for the Word of God

- 10:1 Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit.
- 10:2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.
- 10:3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.
- 10:4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.
- 10:5 They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.”
- 10:6 Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.
- 10:7 So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.
- 10:8 All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them.
- 10:9 I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture.
- 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Thank you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Children's Story

Sermon:

Who will you be when history calls?

Hymn:

Let me be as Christ to you (Brother Sister)

Prayer for Offering

As we offer our gifts this day, may we join Mercy and Goodness in being in the lives of all who long for rest, who hunger for hope, who thirst for living waters, and who ache to be part of your community of grace and peace. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray.

Amen.

Communion Song

Living Waters

Psalm 23 reminds us that "He leads me beside still waters, He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths..." Are you thirsty? Are you empty? Come and drink these living waters. As we prepare to share in the sacraments of Baptism and Communion, we remember that Christ is our living water, refreshing our lives with mercy and love. Please stand to sing Living Waters.

Baptism

Presentation Of The Candidates

The candidates for baptism are brought forward by their elder.
The elder says to the congregation:

Friends, the church council of Gladstone Uniting Church has received a request for baptism from Dale and Whitney.

This important decision has been prayerfully and carefully considered, and I am glad to welcome them here today.

The minister says to the parents:

What do you ask of God's Church for your child?

**We ask that he be baptised
into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.**

Lucas has been brought for baptism
that he may be grafted into Christ
as a member of his body the Church,
to grow up into the faith of Jesus Christ
and become his faithful witness and servant.

Scripture

On the day of his ascension our Lord Jesus Christ said:

All authority on heaven and earth
has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptising them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
and teaching them to obey everything
that I have commanded you.

And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

The apostle Paul said:

Do you not know that all of us
who have been baptised into Christ Jesus
were baptised into his death?

Therefore, we have been buried with him by baptism into death,
so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead
by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

The Meaning Of Baptism

The minister or elder addresses the congregation.

Baptism is Christ's gift.
It is the sign by which the Spirit of God

joins people to Jesus Christ
and incorporates them into his body, the Church.

In his own baptism in the Jordan by John,
Jesus identified himself with humanity
in its brokenness and sin;
that baptism was completed in his death and resurrection.
By God's grace, baptism plunges us into the faith of Jesus Christ,
so that whatever is his may be called ours.
By water and the Spirit we are claimed as God's own
and set free from the power of sin and death.

Thus, claimed by God we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit
that we may live as witnesses to Jesus Christ,
share his ministry in the world and grow to maturity,
awaiting with hope the day of our Lord Jesus.

The Confession Of Faith

The minister says to the parents:

The Uniting Church, in baptising children,
takes responsibility for their instruction
and nourishment in the faith.

That we may know that you hold the Christian faith
and claim your membership in Christ's Church,
we ask you:

Do you repent of your sins?

I repent of my sins.

Do you turn to Jesus Christ
who has defeated the power of sin and death and brought us new life?

I turn to Christ.

Do you commit yourself to God,
trusting in Jesus Christ as Saviour
and in the Holy Spirit as God's power and presence along the way?

I commit myself to God.

The minister says to the congregation and to the candidate(s):

In unity with the whole Church,
let us stand and affirm the faith
into which we were baptised.

The people stand.

Do you believe in God?
Do you believe in Jesus Christ?
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

*I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.*

Amen.

Prayer Of Thanksgiving

Water is poured into the font.

The minister says:

God of life,
through the breaking of waters and the coming of the Spirit,

you bring us new birth;
you give the living water, which becomes in us
an eternal spring quenching our thirst, flowing through us
and refreshing us for eternal life. Washed and cleansed,
we are called into service with Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit,
bless this water, and those to be baptised in it,
that they may be born anew,
live in your light all their days, and come to share your likeness;
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Baptism

The minister says:

Lucas,
for you Jesus Christ has come,
has lived, has suffered;
for you he endured the agony of Gethsemane
and the darkness of Calvary;
for you he uttered the cry, 'It is accomplished!'
For you he triumphed over death;
for you he prays at God's right hand;
for you, Lucas,
even before you were born.

In baptism, the word of the apostle is confirmed:
'We love, because God first loved us'.

*Water is poured visibly and generously over the candidate's head three times, once at each name of the Trinity.
In baptising, the minister shall use the following words.*

Lucas William Jacobsen, I baptise you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

The people respond:

Amen.

The minister marks the sign of the cross on the person's forehead. Olive oil may be used for this purpose (see Note 18). The minister says:

Lucas, from this day on, the sign of the cross is upon you.
May the Lord open your ears to hear his word
and your mouth to proclaim his praise.

The minister presents the newly-baptised to the congregation saying:

Lucas is now received into the one holy catholic and apostolic Church
according to Christ's command.

Aaronic Blessing

***The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you,
and be gracious unto you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
and give you peace.***

Responses

The following is asked of the parents and sponsors.

Dale and Whitney, I ask you now to respond to God's graciousness to Lucas
by making these solemn promises:

Will you encourage Lucas's growth within the Christian community,
guiding him through participation in the worship,
nurture and fellowship of the Church
to a mature Christian faith?

With God's help, we will.

Will you, by word and example, teach him the way of Christ
until the Spirit draws him to make his own response in faith and love?

With God's help, we will.

The minister addresses the Godparents

Parker, Sara and Daniel, you have been chosen as Godparents for Lucas.

Will you assist his parents, and if for some reason they are unable to fulfil their promises, will you take their place to set an example of Christian life for Lucas and encourage him to grow within the fellowship of the church?

With God's help, we will.

The minister addresses the Children,

Will you be a big brother or big sister in Christ to Lucas?

Will you look out for him?

Will you show him how to live like Jesus?

The minister addresses the congregation.

Friends in Christ,
will you promise to maintain a life of worship and teaching,
witness and service so that Lucas may grow to maturity in Christ?

*With God's help,
we will live out our baptism
as a loving community in Christ:
nurturing one another in faith,
upholding one another in prayer,
and encouraging one another in service,
until Christ comes.*

Recollection Of Baptism

The minister says the following.

Sisters and brothers:
Always remember you are baptised, and give thanks to the risen Lord.

Prayers Of The People

God of love,
we rejoice again

to receive your grace in Word and Sacrament.

We have heard your call and are made new by your Spirit.

Guide and guard Lucas all his days.

May your love hold him, your truth guide him, your joy delight him.

Bless his parents, that he may grow up in a secure and happy home.

Give to his family wisdom and courage, laughter and peace,
and the love that endures all things, through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Baptismal Candle

The elder may take a white candle, light it from the Easter Candle standing near the font, and present it to the child, saying:

Lucas, you belong to Christ,
the light of the world.

When all have received a lighted candle, the minister says:

Let your light so shine before the world
that all may see your good works
and give glory to our Father who is in heaven.

Certificate And Gift

A certificate of baptism may be presented to the parents.

Communion

Invitation

This is the table of abundant life to which Christ our Lord invites us. In baptism, we are joined to Christ and to one another, and here we are shaped again for lives given in love. So come, and discover who you will be when history calls.

Narrative Of The Institution Of The Lord's Supper

Hear the words of the institution of this sacrament, as recorded by Matthew, in chapter 26 (this is from the Message Translation):

During the meal, Jesus took and blessed the bread ..., broke it, and gave it to his disciples:

Take, eat.

This is my body.

... Taking the cup and thanking God, he gave it to them:

Drink this, all of you.

This is my blood,

God's new covenant, poured out for many people
for the forgiveness of sins.

"I will not be drinking wine from this cup again until that new day when I drink with you in the kingdom of my Father."

And so, according to our Saviour's command, we set this bread and this cup apart for the holy supper, remembering his call that we must not let familiarity breed contempt, and we come to God with our prayers of thanksgiving.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

May the God of gates be with you!

And also with you!

God calls us to open our hearts to others,

for they are filled to overflowing with grace.

Every day, let us rejoice in the Restorer of our lives.

We sing glad songs to the One who leads us.

God of patience,

you watched over creation

as it emerged out of nothingness:

meadows where sheep could rest,
still pools of water teeming with tadpoles,
paths worn smooth by mountain goats.

You shaped us in your divine likeness,
anointing us with the Spirit's breath of life,
so we could wander the garden by your side.

But that thief, sin, and that bandit, death,
climbed into Eden by another way,
and we followed their voices.

Day by day, you sent prophets to us,
who challenged us to lead God-centered lives,
but we devoted ourselves to that life
which is empty and bitter.

So then you sent Jesus,
shaped in human likeness, to us,
so we would know you are with us.

With those who walk your paths,
with those who long to find their way,
we offer glad and generous hearts to you:

*Holy, holy, holy are you, Guardian of our souls.
All creation praises you day after day after day.
Hosanna in the highest!*

*Blessed is the One who trusted in you alone.
Hosanna in the highest!*

You lead us to this Table
where we want for nothing,
for your Spirit transforms
everyday foods into a sacred feast.
Your bread and cup comfort us,
nourishing us so we might be together
in everything with our siblings.

The broken bread strengthens us
to provide clean, still waters to all;
to build shelter for those who sleep rough;
to feed those who are hungry.
Your grace overflows into us so we may offer
companionship to those who
wander shadowed valleys;
an open gate to those
longing for a community;
voices of compassion
and hope to the oppressed.

When we follow goodness and mercy
to the end of time, we will find you
coming out of the kitchen,
setting dish upon dish of peace and hope
on that great table prepared for all your children,
and we will join our hearts and hands
as we sing praise and wonder to you,
God in Community, Holy in One.

Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

... Christ is the bread of joy, who shares food with sinners

... Christ is the cup of life, who revives the faint-hearted.

Let us receive what we are;
Let us become what we receive.

The body of Christ.

Distribution of the Elements

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray:

We thank You, God, our Creator, for Word and Sacrament, through which we receive Your Son, true Bread of Heaven. In this meal, you shape us for lives given in love, to choose life when history calls; yet not us, but through Christ in us. Strengthen us in Your service, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hymn After Communion: Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me (v1-3)

Psalm 23 says, "I will fear no evil, for you are with me." The night is dark, but I am not forsaken. For by my side the Saviour he will stay. The Shepherd walks beside us, so that every step we take is not by our strength, but through Christ in us. Please stand to sing Yet Not I But Through Christ in me.

Blessing

Christ is Risen.

Christ is Risen indeed. Hallelujah!

Go now, listening for the voice of the Shepherd,
and choose the path of abundant life.

Stand with those in need,
crossing the distance when others turn away,
offering your life in love,
and living as people shaped by Christ.

And may God lead you to places of rest and renewal;
May Christ Jesus give you life in abundance;
And may the Holy Spirit fill your hearts with gladness and generosity.

Amen.

Blessing Song

Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me (v4)