

**WESLEY UNITING CHURCH, FORREST, ACT**  
**31 March 2024: 10am**  
Easter Sunday

**THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE**

*We enter the church in silence*

**Introit: Christ is Risen From The Dead**

George Elvey (1816-93), words from Romans 6:10

Christ is risen from the dead. Hallelujah!  
In that He died unto sin once,  
But in that He liveth unto God. Hallelujah!



**Welcome to Wesley**

**Affirmation of First Nation's People and Celebration of Mutual Acceptance**

Let us acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples, The first inhabitants of this place, Part of God's good creation. We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.

**Safe Place Statement**

The Uniting Church in Australia believes that all people are made in the image of God, and so we accept every individual regardless of race, age, creed, sexuality and gender.

## **Lighting of the Paschal and Community Candle**

Recognising the extended community of worshipers that we're joining today!

**Leader:** Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

**People:** CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED!

**Leader:** Darkness has been vanquished!

**People:** THE BRILLIANT LIGHT OF HOPE HAS COME!

**Leader:** Come let us worship and celebrate the Good News!

**People:** ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN! AMEN!!

## **Invitation to Worship Together**

**Leader:** You have turned our mourning into dancing!

You have taken away our funeral clothes and re-clothed us in joy, so that our whole being—body, mind and soul—might sing praise to you and not be silent.

**People:** O Lord, our Lord, we will give thanks to you forever!

## **Hymn 370 Christ the Lord is Risen Today**

Melody from 'Lyra Davidica' (1708), words by Charles Wesley (1707-88)

## **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Confession**

**Leader:** Risen Christ,

The world despised and rejected you

You responded with grace, humility, and welcome

The proud questioned your power, devised your death

You responded with peace, forgiveness, and new life

**People:** Forgive us, Merciful One

**Our arrogance**

**Our selfishness**

**Our scheming**

**Our violence**

**Forgive us, Merciful One**

**We are like them**

**Make us like you**

**Leader:** Risen Christ,

We claim your grace, your mercy, your forgiveness

We claim your resurrection power:

Dying, you destroy our death  
Rising, you restore our life.  
You come now with saving power

**People: Alleluia. Amen.**

**The Peace:**

The peace of Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.**

## **THE SERVICE OF THE WORD**

**All Age Story** include an image of Truff

**Children's Song**      **Amen** Anon.

Amen! Amen! Amen, amen, amen!

**Entering the Story**

**Prayer for Understanding**

**Reading:** Acts 10:34-43 (page 895 in the pew Bibles)

**Gospel:** John 20: 1-18 (pages 882-883 in the pew Bibles)

In this is the gospel of our Lord.

**Thanks be to God**

**Anthem**    **The Easter Song of Praise** Richard Shephard (b. 1949)

Sing choirs of heaven! Let saints and angels sing!  
Around God's throne exult in harmony!  
Now Jesus Christ is risen from the grave!  
Salute your king in glorious symphony.

Sing choirs of earth! Behold your light has come!  
The glory of the Lord shine radiantly,  
Lift up your hearts, for Christ has conquered death!  
The night is past the day of life is here!

Sing church of God! Exult with joy outpoured.  
The gospel trumpets tell of vict'ry won!

Your Saviour lives: he's with you evermore!  
Let all God's people shout the long Amen.

**Preaching** (The Rev'd Dr Geoff Dornan)

**Hymn 392 during the offering:** At the Dawning of Salvation

From 'A Repository of Sacred Music Pt. 2', harm. John Wilson (1905-92), words by Jock Curle (b. 1919)

**Offering Prayer**

**Renewal of Baptism Vows**

*Introduction*

Sisters and brothers in Christ:  
through the sacrament of baptism  
God's Spirit has been poured out upon water,  
water poured over and immersing us,  
water that flows freely for all who will receive it,  
water from the streams of God's saving power and justice,  
water that brings hope to all who thirst for righteousness,  
water that refreshes life, nurtures growth, and offers new birth.  
Today we come to the waters,  
to renew our commitments  
in each other's presence  
to Christ who has raised us,  
the Spirit who has birthed us,  
and the Creator who is making all things new.

***Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith***

And so I ask you, will you turn away from the powers of sin and death?

**We renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,**

**Reject the evil powers of this world,**

**And repent of our sin!**

Will you let the Spirit use you as prophets to the powers that be?

**We accept the freedom and power God gives us**

**To resist evil, injustice, and oppression**

**In whatever forms they present themselves!**

Will you proclaim the good news and live as disciples of Jesus Christ, his body on earth?

**We confess Jesus Christ as our Savior,  
put our whole trust in his grace,  
and promise to serve him as our Lord,  
in union with the church which Christ has opened  
to people of all ages, nations, and races!**

Will you be living witnesses to the gospel, individually and together, wherever you are, and in all that you do?

**We will remain faithful members of Christ's holy church  
And serve as Christ's representatives in the world.**

Will you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

**We affirm and teach the faith of the whole church  
as we put our trust  
in God, the Father Almighty.  
in Jesus Christ, his only Son.  
and in the Holy Spirit,  
one God now and forever.  
Thanksgiving Over the Water**

The Spirit of the Lord is with us.

**Even so, come Lord Jesus!**

Let us pray.

Almighty God, the life you birthed in us  
by baptism into Jesus Christ  
will never die.

Your justice never fails.

Your mercy is everlasting.

**Your healing river flows.**

**Your Spirit blows where you will.**

**We cannot stop you, God!**

But sometimes we try.

We try to block the flow,

we redirect the winds of the Spirit,

or we walk so far away from the life-giving Stream

that we do not hear its sound,

and we forget its power.  
We parch ourselves.  
**We are dry and thirsty, O God.**  
**Come, refresh us!**

Come upon us, Holy Spirit!  
**Come upon us, Holy Spirit!**  
Come upon these waters.  
**Come upon these waters.**  
Let these waters be to us drops of your mercy.  
**Let these waters remind us of your righteousness and justice.**  
Let these waters renew in us the resurrection power of Jesus.  
**Let these waters make us long for your coming reign.**  
Most Holy God, Abba, Father!  
**Glory to you!**  
Jesus Christ, Savior, Lord!  
**Glory to you!**  
Spirit of fire, Spirit over the waters, Spirit of holiness!  
**Glory to you!**  
Eternal God, One in Three and Three in One!  
**All glory is yours, now and forever. Amen!**

*All who are baptized and have renewed their vows are invited to come to the font to use the water as a sign of refreshing. As each uses the water, another says to her or him:*

Remember that you are baptized, and rejoice!

### **And we offer our Prayers of the People**

This week the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle invites us to pray for the peoples The Balkans - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia.

#### **We give thanks for:**

- the rich legacies that this area has long embodied
- those who kept both the people and their faith alive during years of repression
- those pursuing peace and reconciliation between the different ethnic and religious groups
- the resurgence of the ecumenical witness of churches in recent years.

#### **We pray for:**

- a continual healing of historic memories and pains that have been mutually inflicted

- those who continue to experience marginalization and injustice, especially the Roma
- religion to be a means of healing rather than of further separation and exploitation
- the nurturing and sustaining of pluralistic societies in the Balkans.

Prayers

### **Prayer before the proclamation of God's word**

Lord God, enlighten us through your word so that we can discover the needs of the people around us.

You are God, the Almighty, and we thank you that like a Father you protect us and through your divine mercy and love you create living space for us and for every single person.

We ask you especially to show mercy to our nation. Enlighten us through your divine Spirit and create in the hearts of the people interest in your word.

And in this time of crisis and challenges give wisdom from above so that we stay true to your word so that we can respond to the different needs - in both the spiritual and physical aspects.

God, watch over us, because of the mercy and love of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

and we particularly pray for the people of Palestine, Israel, and of Ukraine.

### **Lord's Prayer**

Let's join in offering the Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us in the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.***

## SENDING OUT

### Sent into the World

#### **Hymn 380: Yours Be the Glory, Risen Conquering Son**

George Handel (1685-1759), Edmond Budry (1854-1932), trans. Richard Hoyle (1875-1939)

#### **Blessing**

Our Lord Jesus Christ proclaims: "Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am he that lives forevermore." We know that Christ has risen from the dead, and he has become the first fruits of all who slept in the grave. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, and the blessing God almighty, Father, Son and HS be upon you this day and evermore.

Our service has ended.  
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**Amen.**

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#### **Worship team:**

Liturgist: Rev Dr Bruce Stevens Preacher: Rev Dr Geoff Dornan

Music Coordinator: Jade McFaul

Organist: Esther Jacobs

Wesley Music Scholars: Jess Hill (trumpet), Martin Magill (choir)

Reader: Sonia Di Mezza and Paul Hutchcroft

Flowers: Ann Sutton

AV Crew: Harold Small, John Alcock, Keith Hart and Christine Hearn

With thanks also to our morning tea and steward teams

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