



4 APRIL 2021



Welcome to worship this Easter Sunday morning.

Lectionary Readings

This week Easter Sunday

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

Next week 11 April, 2021

Acts 4:32-35
Psalm 133
1 John 1:1-2:2
John 20:19-31

Entertainment books

Each year we offer the entertainment books as a fund-raiser for our congregation. These books provide discounts for hundreds of dining, shopping and travel experiences across the state. Find out more at www.entbook.com.au/2152t36 or see Elizebeth.

Joint Nominating Committee

Following last week's Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee meeting and our congregation meeting we can now begin the process of calling a new minister.

As the first step in the process, we need to appoint a Joint Nominating Committee (selection committee) of 4-6 people from this congregation plus two from Presbytery. This committee will conduct conversations with prospective ministers, and eventually bring a recommendation to the congregation for a new minister. This is not a difficult task but may involve a number of meetings over an extended period.

If you feel you would like to nominate for this committee, please see Sue for a nomination form.

Nominations will close next Sunday 11 April.

There will be a Congregation Meeting after church on Sunday 25 April to vote for this committee.



Greystanes Uniting Church

Cnr Cumberland & Eldridge Roads (P O Box 5064)

Greystanes NSW 2145

Minister:

Office

Phone: 9636 3245

Email: office@greystanesuniting.org.au

Website:

www.greystanesuniting.org.au

Easter 2021 - Reading: John 20:1-23

We live in uncertain times – Droughts, bushfires a little over a year ago, then the dreaded Covid hit us. And just recently, we have had widespread flooding and a mouse plague in rural NSW. Just 12 months ago, we couldn't meet in worship at Easter. It was as if Easter had been cancelled.

Can Easter be cancelled? If we are talking about celebrating the resurrection of Jesus, last year was not the first year that some have not celebrated the resurrection. For many, the resurrection of Jesus has been lost in a flurry of activity, the cuteness of children, and superficial wishes for a happy Easter. Even in churches, the busyness of church services and the sharing of chocolate eggs has threatened to obscure the truth of the resurrection.

I invite you this Easter, to strip away all that stuff that gets in the way of the real Easter message.

On the very first Easter, the Jewish power players anxiously conspired to make sure any plans for Easter would not be a "thing" at all, yet the resurrection of Jesus went on as planned!

The guards felt an earthquake, and they saw an angel, bright like lightning in the dawn of the day. They were so afraid that they shook.

The women heard the angel say, "Do not be afraid." Do not be afraid? Of course they were afraid! Yet the angel challenged their fear, "He is not here; he is risen!"

As the women hurried away, "afraid yet filled with joy," Jesus met them. He too said to them, "Do not be afraid."

Do you catch a theme here? "Do not be afraid." Many are saying that these days, because of the pandemic and the uncertainty and fear it causes. Why should we not be afraid? Not because we don't see the danger; we do. Not because we have everything under control; we don't. We should not be afraid because Jesus is alive.

The Jewish power players did not want to know the truth about whether Jesus rose from the dead; for if Jesus actually rose from the dead, it would threaten their way of life, and the entire Jewish establishment.

Even today, some people see the resurrection of Jesus as a threat, for if Jesus rose from the dead, Jesus is Lord. Jesus seeks commitment to his kingdom of righteousness and transformation. Jesus asks people to humble themselves, take up their cross of service.

If Jesus rose from the dead, anything is possible. Forgiveness is possible. Emotional as well as physical healing is possible. Relationships can be restored and unhealthy habits overcome.

That is good news! But it is also a threat to a way of life. Jesus asks us to live for others, not just ourselves.

The Jewish leaders recognized the threat, so they took steps to MANAGE the truth. The guards were paid handsomely to spread a story about the disciples stealing the body while they were asleep.

The guards took the money and circulated the story—a story to CANCEL EASTER.

Yet Easter could not be cancelled. Why? Because the resurrection really happened. Cancel Easter? Not if you believe that Jesus rose from the dead.