



Anglican Diocese
of Bendigo

The Spirit

monthly

Easter 2020

Special issue

Easter at Home 2020

Aband I like sings, "the only constant is change." They are not the first to do this. Indeed, the beginnings of philosophy as we know it began with that realisation. It seems that these last few weeks have brought this general understanding of the unpredictability of life to a confronting and disorienting point.

We are experiencing a deep disturbance in our lives as we face restricted patterns of gathering, shopping, interacting with others and travel. Not to mention the worry over the wellbeing of loved ones and that sense of not being sure that we, individually and nationally, are doing what we need to do to be safe. For many around the world this is the pattern of their daily lives, but by-and-large we have been insulated from this for the better part of a century. As we come to Holy Week and Easter the sense of disorientation is likely to grow as cherished and meaningful activities which secure us to the pivotal events of our faith cannot be undertaken in their usual way.

Yet friends we have an opportunity this year to discover a better security. If we had to sit a test to describe how and where we find comfort and a safe haven in our faith we would probably answer correctly and say, "in Jesus of course," yet the familiarity of our actions to meet and process our faith become the actual point at which we anchor our lives.

Our opportunity is to discover anew that, "We have [a] hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul." (Hebrews 6:19) that can endure beyond the circumstances which we cannot control. A hope that is not dependent upon our cherished institutions or even our patterns of gathering, as important as they are. It is a hope that was able to fully achieve all of God's purposes for his world - and that hope is pinned on a person. Namely, Jesus (Hebrews 6:17-20). As we approach Holy Week and Easter may I encourage you to act in ways that allow you to focus steadily and surely on Jesus because he is the anchor which will not fail in any storm.

This special supplement to the Spirit is

designed to help you do just this given that our usual patterns are impossible. It includes the guided readings from Scripture which paint the vivid picture of what Jesus went through and achieved for us, prayers to kick-start your own and reflections to help you ponder how your purposes may be brought into alignment with God's. I am deeply thankful to four of our clergy who have collaborated to make this happen - Heather, Tracey, Zan and George together with David Thorne.

Having enjoyed this opportunity to be tethered to the 'anchor of our soul' why don't you also take to heart something else the writer to the Hebrews said, "Don't give up meeting together." (Hebrews 10:25). Take what you have learned anew and use it to encourage someone else in a phone call or letter. The chances are they will be aching for just your word.

Your servant in Christ,

thatt

Designated prayer space

The environment around us can affect the way we feel and think. Although God hears our prayers no matter where we are, it can be helpful to create a special prayer space in your home to do business with God.

Using visual symbols to focus your attention during prayer is a great idea.



As Lent is a time of repentance, it is best to keep things simple, for example:

- A bible, a cross and a candle

On Easter Sunday, you might like to add:

- a small bunch of flowers or
- some figurines from your nativity set
- a bright coloured cloth
- a beautiful image

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Lectionary readings

Sunday 29 March 5th Sunday in Lent

OT Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130
NT Romans 8:6-11
Gospel John 11:1-45
Hymn 342 When I Survey The Wondrous Cross

Monday 30 March

Psalm 23
Gospel John 8:1-11
Hymn 145 The King Of Love My Shepherd Is

Tuesday 31 March

Psalm 102:18-22
Gospel John 8:21-30
Hymn 135 All Things Bright And Beautiful

Wednesday 1 April

Psalm 74
Gospel John 8:31-42
Hymn 134 Praise My Soul The King Of Heaven

Thursday 2 April

Psalm 105:7-11
Gospel John 8:51-59
Hymn 129 Amazing Grace

Friday 3 April

Psalm 18:1-7
Gospel John 10:31-42
Hymn 28 God Is Our Strength And Refuge

Saturday 4 April

Psalm 85:8-13
Gospel John 11:45-57
Hymn 161 Tell Out My Soul

Sunday 5 April Palm Sunday

OT Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-18
NT Philippians 2:5-11
Gospel Matthew 27:11-54
Hymn 216 Rejoice The Lord Is King

Monday 6 April

Psalm 36:5-11
Gospel John 12:1-11
Hymn 216 Rejoice The Lord Is King

Tuesday 7 April

Psalm 71:1-14
Gospel John 12:20-36
Hymn 154 Great Is Your Faithfulness

Palm Sunday

Sentence

At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2.10-11

Prayer of the day

God of all, you gave your only-begotten Son to take the form of a servant, and to be obedient even to death on a cross: give us the same mind that was in Christ Jesus that, sharing in his humility, we may come to be with him in his glory, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Readings

Isaiah 50.4-9a, Psalm 31.9-18, Philippians 2.5-11, Matthew 26.14-27.66

Reflection

"Hosanna! Praise God!" - this was the shout of the people as Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. Lining his way - crowds of people; lining the road under his feet - palm branches and cloaks. What a sight, what a sound that must have been. Such rejoicing and jubilation!

Not much to shout about this year. We can't have crowds or parties or even gather for worship in church. It is like we are living in a foreign land - nothing is familiar, all is changed.

In the midst of life death is stalking us.

Yet not all has changed. God is still God; Jesus is still Christ the Lord; The Spirit is here, with us.

- Can we shout "Hosanna" this year?
- Or just speak it?
- Or even whisper it?

I encourage you to remind yourself of the truths of our faith, the faith we hold dear and have lived by, and continue to live by faith.

So sing the Hosannas and wave your palm cross. Remember that after Palm Sunday comes Holy Week.

As you walk with Jesus through his last days, a journey so familiar to us, ponder afresh all he gave - his very life

Wednesday 8 April

Psalm 70
Gospel John 13: 21-32
Hymn 246 Christ Is The Worlds Light

Thursday 9 April Maundy Thursday

OT Exodus 12:1-14
Psalm 116:1-2, 11-18
NT 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Gospel John 13:1-17, 31-35
Hymn 699 A New Commandment

Friday 10 April Good Friday

Isaiah 52: 13-53:12
Psalm 22
Gospel John 18:1-19:42
Hymn 350 There Is A Green Hill Far Away

Saturday 11 April

Psalm 31:1-8
Gospel Matthew 27:57-66
Hymn 256 From Heaven You Came Helpless Babe

Sunday 12 April Easter Day

Psalm 118:1-3, 14-24
NT Acts 10:34-43
NT Colossians 3:1-4
Gospel Matthew 28:1-10
Hymn 362 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

Monday 13 April

Psalm 16
Gospel Matthew 28:8-15
Hymn 447 Lord Your Almighty Word

Tuesday 14 April

Psalm 33:4-9
Gospel John 20:11-18
Hymn 531 Sent Forth By Gods Blessing

Wednesday 15 April

Psalm 105:1-7
Gospel Luke 24:13-35
Hymn 547 Be Thou My Vision

Thursday 16 April

Psalm 8
Gospel Luke 24:35-48
Hymn 584 Just As I Am Without One Plea

Friday 17 April

Psalm 118:21-29
Gospel John 21:1-14
Hymn 412 God Sends Us His Spirit

Saturday 18 April

Psalm 118:14-19

Gospel Mark 16:9-15
Hymn 342 When I Survey
The Wondrous Cross

Sunday 19 April

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalm 16

NT 1 Peter 1:1-12

Gospel John 20:19-31

Hymn 590 What A Friend
We Have In Jesus

Monday 20 April

Psalm 2:1-8

Gospel John 3: 1-8

Hymn 607 Make Me A
Channel Of Your
Peace

Tuesday 21 April

Psalm 93

Gospel John 3:7-15

Hymn 609 May The Mind Of
Christ My Saviour

Wednesday 22 April

Psalm 34:1-8

Gospel John 3:16-21

Hymn 640 Yesu, Yesu

Thursday 23 April

Psalm 34:11-18

Gospel John 3:31-36

Hymn 650 Brother, Sister Let
Me Serve You

Friday 24 April

Psalm 27:1-5

Gospel John 6:1-15

Hymn 658 I The Lord Of Sea
And Sky

Saturday 25 April ANZAC Day

Psalm 89:1-9

Gospel Mark 16: 1-15

Hymn 675 Shine Jesus Shine

Sunday 26 April

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalm 116:1-4, 11-18

NT 1 Peter 1:13-25

Gospel Luke 24:13-35

Hymn 693 Come As You Are

Monday 27 April

Psalm 119:17-24

Gospel John 6:22-29

Hymn 703 As The Deer
Pants For The Water

Tuesday 28 April

Psalm 31:1-5

Gospel John 6:30-35

Hymn 717 Give Thanks With
A Grateful Heart

Wednesday 29 April

Psalm 66:1-8

Gospel John 6:35-40

- the WE can have life - in all its
fullness!

Then when we wake to the new fire of
Easter Day, we can declare again to the
world and ourselves: Jesus Christ is
risen! Hallelujah!

Hymn

Ride on, ride on in majesty

Ride on, ride on in majesty hark,
all the tribes hosanna cry!

O Saviour, meek, pursue your road
with palms and scattered garments
strowed.

Ride on, ride on in majesty,
in lowly pomp ride on to die;
O Christ, your triumphs now begin
o'er captive death and conquered sin.

Ride on, ride on in majesty;
the winged squadrons of the sky
look down with sad and wondering
eyes

to see the approaching sacrifice.

Ride on, ride on in majesty;
your last and fiercest strife is nigh;
the Father on his sapphire throne
awaits his own anointed Son.

Ride on, ride on in majesty,
in lowly pomp ride on to die;
bow your meek head to mortal pain,
then take, O God, your power and
reign.

Good Friday

Sentence

Christ became obedient unto death,
even death on a cross. Therefore God
has highly exalted him and has given
him the name that is above every
name. Philippians 2.8-9

Prayer of the day

Lord God, whose blessed Son our
Saviour gave his back to the smiters
and did not hide his face from shame:
give us grace to accept the sufferings
of this present time with sure
confidence in the glory that shall be
revealed; through Jesus Christ our
Lord. Amen.

Readings

Isaiah 52:13-53.12, Psalm 22,
1 Corinthians 1:18-31 John 18:1-
19.42

Hymn 745 Seek Ye First The
Kingdom Of God

Thursday 30 April

Psalm 66:7-11

Gospel John 6:44-51

Hymn 457 The Church's One
Foundation

Friday 1 May

Psalm 19:1-6

Gospel John 14:6-14

Hymn 643 I Want to Walk as a
Child of the Light

Saturday 2 May

Psalm 116:11-18

Gospel John 6:60-69

Hymn 477 Jesus Calls Us

Sunday 3 May

Acts 2:42-47

Psalm 66:7-11

NT 1 Peter 2:1-10

Gospel John 6:44-51

Hymn 517 Hallelujah! Sing to
Jesus

Monday 4 May

Psalm 42:1-5

Gospel John 10:11-18 Hymn

Tuesday 5 May

Psalm 87

Gospel John 10:22-30 Hymn

Wednesday 6 May

Psalm 67

Gospel John 12:44-50 Hymn

Thursday 7 May

Psalm 89:19-25

Gospel John 13:16-20 Hymn

Friday 8 May

Psalm 2:6-11

Gospel John 14:1-6 Hymn

Saturday 9 May

Psalm 98:1-4

Gospel John 14:7-14 Hymn

Sunday 10 May

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 31:1-5,17-18

NT 1 Peter 2:11-25

Gospel John 14:1-14

Reflection

In our Lent studies we talked about costly love. The crucifixion is the very essence of costly love. Not only did Jesus lose his earthly life, but he lost his good name and the loyalty and comfort of his friends.

He freely gave up his "Godly powers" and submitted himself to the very worst evil. But in doing this Jesus was able to show that God is greater than all evil.

The cross gives us hope in the midst of despair. The worst happened and the darkness did not prevail.

A prayer to read out loud

In the shadowy depths of night, under a cold, hard moon. When friends are at hand but hopelessly distant in the time of anticipation of terror.

There is love which gives nothing but everything.

The sun arrives in the clear night sky. It is invisible, masked by desolation, chaos and violence. The birdsong of hope is drowned by clamouring ridicule.

There is love which gives nothing but everything.

In the gathering warmth of the morning on a dusty road, going uphill. The burden becomes undeniable.

There is love which gives nothing but everything.

The heat of the day musters its strength the flies swarm and cannot be stopped, finding every weakness, miserable death.

There is love which gives nothing but everything.

In the clammy cool of evening the wall of complete darkness underground emptied of life, emptied of God.

Even here, is love which gives nothing but everything

Hymn

When I survey the wondrous cross

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me

most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Easter Day

Sentence

The Lord is risen indeed, alleluia!

Prayer of the day

Glorious Lord of life, by the mighty resurrection of your Son you overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, who celebrate with joy Christ's rising from the dead may be raised from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Readings

Acts 10:34-43, Hymn of the Risen Christ (page 6 Prayer Book), Colossians 3:1-4, Matthew 28:1-10

Reflection

The faithfulness of Mary Magdalene and her friend who come to see the tomb of Jesus on that first Easter morning is rewarded. Just as they have faithfully stayed by the cross and then watched over the tomb, so they come now on the first day of the week.

Jesus is crucified by destructive forces and now the power of God is shown to be greater than any human force. The earth shakes, a dazzling angel appears and the soldiers fall down in a dead faint. Human power is always destructive - the bomb, the sword, the missile.

God's might is the unstoppable power of Life. Evil has ultimately been overcome by good.

The angel speaks to the women "Do not be afraid" and then commissions them to "go tell". They run, not in fear, but with great joy and on the way, they meet the risen Christ.

The Easter message is a message for our world. We live among contending nations and in the midst of dark, devastating powers, as much at this moment as ever.

Matthew declares God's greater power. You and I live to worship the risen Christ and tell the good news of God's great love and power.

Hymn

Jesus Christ is risen today

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
who did once upon the cross Alleluia!
suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing
Alleluia!
unto Christ our heavenly King,
Alleluia!
who endured the cross and grave,
Alleluia!
sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

But the pain which he endured,
Alleluia!
our salvation has procured; Alleluia!
now exalted he is King, Alleluia!
and the angels ever sing. Alleluia!

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