

Holy Week: Less is More

Damien Tann (PWV Kaniva – Serviceton)



After the year I've had as the sole pastor of an isolated community, (at least in Victorian terms), I'm wondering whether Easter is the last thing I need right now. In 2020 March seemed to last 310 days, rather than 31; in 2021 March seems to have taken 3.1 days and suddenly I'm writing a service for Palm Sunday even as I'm taking down the last of the tinsel. If we could postpone the crucifixion for a few weeks that would be good, at least until Anzac Day is out of the way.

But then, maybe Easter is exactly what I need right now. Reading ahead in the lectionary to the first weekend in April I have been struck, paradoxically, by how low-key the events are for Jesus himself. Yes there is the hoopla of Palm Sunday, and the table-smashing of Monday, and the Pharisee-baiting of Tuesday, and everything rising to a crescendo on Thursday night's arrest and Friday's...well we all know what happened on Friday; but I am struck by how "in control" Jesus is all the way through. Jesus is not rushed. Jesus does not lag with laziness at the overwhelming week ahead of him, (but then Jesus doesn't have three funerals at which to preside and a parish consultation to organise): Jesus goes about doing The Father's work in The Father's time, even as far as allowing himself to be led to an illegal court and then to an unjust death. That he wept and sweated blood is a physiological response to stress, but for him the stress was a painful death, and not an over-flowing diary. Jesus had some very stressful appointments in that holy week, but he took them one at a time, and he took Wednesday off, and that's a good model for me.



With Easter taking place in private in 2020 I am excited to be back in church this year. I am leading Kaniva's ecumenical Good Friday service, at which the Churches and Christ and Uniting Church will be joined by as many Roman Catholic, Anglican, Salvationist, and Presbyterian people as wish to attend; I see this as a great privilege. Additionally I see it as a great opportunity to speak of **Jesus' own calm, even in the anguish of his latter days, and of his trust in God to provide sufficient grace to him.** Let's not rush too quickly into the festival of buns and eggs, or even of solemnity; when Christ gave all we are required to give nothing, this holy week let us remember to stand aside from what we cannot do, and receive what God alone can do for us.

Holy Week

A tale of two presbyteries...

David Carter

PWV Chairperson

Meredith Lake in "The Bible in Australia" begins with tales of convicts tattooed with biblical motifs, images and words. Their core conviction was in their skin.



It got me thinking about what I might choose if - and it's a long shot - I wanted to be inked with a statement of faith this Holy Week.

We all have favoured biblical texts - testaments, books and passages. Song is a powerful way of expressing deep faith. The text I would choose for some inky artist is the hymn in Philippians "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus ..."

This invitation is a reminder that disciples of Jesus are called to build a community of one another's that has at its centre and circumference the Man who chose to be a Servant in life and death.

Bruce Watson

PPW Chairperson



Transitions A transition is the process of changing, or a change from one form or condition to another.

In a recent Sunday service at Trinity Uniting Church Altona, members of the congregation shared some stories of the transitions they had experienced during their life. I had mentioned that I was to begin my transition to retirement.

We all experience transitions during our lifetime and it helps to pay attention to what is going on and reflect on how we are impacted by the changes in our circumstances. Sometimes we do not realise the importance of the changes on our thoughts and feelings, and we wonder how we managed to end up in such a situation.

During Lent we are reminded of some of the transitions of the people of God and are encouraged to follow in the way of Jesus. May we be alive to the new life God gives this Easter!

Lenten Huddles Idea—Resurrection Eggs

Buy or make at home. Fill an egg carton with symbols of Easter. Plastic eggs can be found in variety stores and fill them with symbols of your choosing : Bread, sponge, string-whip, cross, silver coins, one is left empty, stone, palm leaf, thorn circlet, towel, strips of cloth, spear etc. For activity handout see... <https://biblegamescentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Resurrection-Eggs-Cards.pdf> . Use the eggs on Easter Sunday and hide them around the sanctuary or church. Ask the kids to find them. Older kids and adults can sought the symbols into the Holy week order and tell the story of Jesus. Have a picture book handy to help them. A they hand the plastic eggs back you can swap them for chocolate eggs.



EDITORIAL NOTE:

Hi everyone. For those who noticed the typo, Craig Mitchell's Book was \$39.95 at Media Com. Next Edition is out in **3 weeks on April 8th 2021** on the theme of Easter. **Linley Liersch** Contact: linley.liersch@ppw.victas.uca.org.au

Mental Health Matters

REV. FI BOTTCHER (SUNSHINE MENTAL HEALTH)

When my son Jack is overwhelmed with sadness, he sobs. A gentle sob from deep in his chest that begins with a quivering bottom lip as his eyes fill with tears. As the first audible sobs begin to rise, the tears roll down his cheeks. It is utterly genuine and utterly heart-breaking to witness, and nothing tears my heart open more.

Jack doesn't have language, or words, to express his sadness and we rarely know what it is that may be the cause, although we can't help trying to guess. Perhaps something that someone did or said? And when you can't name the sadness there's no way of fast tracking it - no empty platitudes that will make it go away, no sore knee to rub or kiss better.

Jack's sobs are Easter Saturday sobs. They are totally consuming even though I know they will end. And not only will they end, but from experience they're usually followed by smiles, even laughter, and an arm that reaches out for a hug.

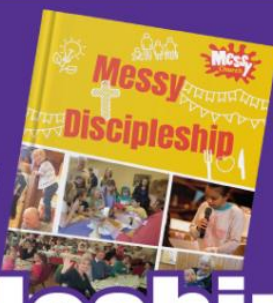


There is no genuine Easter Sunday without the fullness of Easter Saturday. We sit opposite Jesus' tomb (Mat 27:61) and we wait, in the depths of sadness and hope.

The **Ministry Formation Committee** of the Presbytery PPW is looking for a new member who can fulfill the role of **secretary**. Ministry Formation committee deals with people who are discerning their call to ministry within the church. They oversee people doing their Period of Discernment and candidates who are in formation for a specified ministry within the UCA. The committee meets monthly on Thursday afternoons from 2.30 – 4pm and other times when it is necessary to speak candidates. If you are able to help the work of the Presbytery in this way please contact: Rev Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga via temukisa.av@gmail.com.



Messy Discipleship Book Launch



Visit the launch and join a book club 1:30 pm on May 27, June 24th, 22nd June on Zoom.

THURSDAY
22ND
APRIL 2021
🕒 1:30PM TO 3PM

Education Events



Fri 19th March 9:30am Pastoral Care Session 3



Fri 19th March 7 pm Uniting Youth on Discord Trivia Night



Sat 27th March 6pm God Send App Launch—Australian & NZ Version

Fri 16th April 9:30 Pastoral Seminar 4



Thu 22nd April 1:30pm Messy Church Matters—Book Launch

22nd April 6:30pm Pastoral Seminar 4



22nd April 1:30 pm Messy Discipleship Book Launch

NEW GODSEND APP

Australian—NZ Version

Saturday 27th March (6pm Eastern) Online
Launch can be booked at: <https://TIX.YT/7WB>

There is a video that provides more information that can be viewed here <https://vimeo.com/515753743>

Do you need coaching in mission and outreach?

Do you desire to grow in confidence in sharing your faith in Jesus with family, friends and colleagues?

Are you seeking to try new ways to be Christian Community?

Do you want to hear ministry ideas that are forming disciples?

