

THE OLIVE BRANCH

Holy Week 2021 Brunswick Uniting Church Congregation Worship - 9:30 am

> Holy Week

We travelled the long Lenten journey with Jesus, reflecting on the gifts of the covenant, the rainbow arch of God's love, the promise of descendants, the gift of the Ten Commandments, the promise of healing in the desert and the law of love written on our hearts.

In Holy Week we entered Jerusalem, remembered Jesus' last Supper and travelled the long hard way to the Cross.

On Easter Sunday we gathered at dawn to light the new Christ and candle and later at 9:30 we found ourselves in front of an empty tomb.

Christ is risen!



Lent 2 - the promise of descendants to Sarah and Abraham, the family of God's love within creation.



Lent 4 - the promise of healing in the desert – a reminder of God's faithfulness even in the hard places of life.



Lent 1 - the gift of the rainbow to Noah, the arch of God's love for all creation.



Lent 3 - the gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses, the law of love carved in stone grounding our lives



Lent 5 - the promise through the prophet Jeremiah of God's law of love written on our hearts

> Palm Sunday

On [Palm Sunday, 28th March](#), our worship continued to be inspired by God's covenant... with the signs of God's promise all around us: the rainbow of Noah, the stars of Abraham, the stones of the ten commandments. The snakeskins of Moses' day, from death emerges new life, and the heart – God's commitment written on our hearts – I will be your God and you shall be my people.

As we entered into Holy Week, Jesus' eyes were firmly fixed on the gate, and what lies beyond. The gateway in through the holy city, and the new Jerusalem which is here, right now, and still to come.

Dave welcomed our friends from the Brunswick Baptist congregation and Salvation Army Corp. Mark Payne (BB Pastor) offered the Acknowledgment of Country.

Dave and Ian invited the children to listen to the prophecy from Zechariah, to notice the mention of any animals. They looked at photos of a number of famous leaders who had ridden war horses. Dave wondered if Jesus would need a big strong war horse for his battle in Jerusalem. Ian assured us that Jesus needed a donkey because whenever an important person was riding a donkey it was a sign that they came in peace. Ian reminded us that the crowds loved Jesus, at least at this point.

We joined our Anglican neighbours on the steps at 10am and processed to Christ Church for an ecumenical celebration with our friends from the



Brunswick Baptists and the Brunswick Salvation Army. Our procession was lead by Francesca the real-live, reliable and sturdy donkey and her faithful companion.





We then returned to BUC to conclude the service. Phil Hudson sang a new song 'Brother' which he wrote for Don and all of his other courageous refugee brothers who are still denied their freedom. Phil is a leader in the Love Makes a Way movement and a member of the Brunswick Baptist congregation. Go to 1:05:21 on the second video (see below)



Ian, Sung Sung (Brunswick Baptist) and Paul Trotter (Salvation Army Captain) offered the final blessing, written by Brooke Prentis, a Wakka Wakka Woman and CEO of the Common Grace movement.

The livestream was broadcast from our Facebook Page: [Opening prayers](#) and [Rest of the service](#).

Read the [order of service](#) and the [Ecumenical order of service](#).

Thank you Kirsty Bennett for the photos

> Maundy Thursday

We gathered on [Maundy Thursday, 1st April](#) to pray and remember Christ's last supper with his disciples. This service usually includes foot-washing however due to COVID we decided it would not be appropriate this year. We followed Mark's gospel where there is no foot-washing. Mark brought us to the upper room where the meal is being prepared. We took some time apart to pray, engaging with the symbols of God's covenant love that have filled our worship through Lent.

Saide and Ian offered four stations for prayer:



In the Chapel space under the fairy lights symbolising the promised descendants of Abraham and Sarah we were invited to light a taper and offer our prayers for the world, for all the children of Abraham & Sarah.

In the Gathering space near the entrance we were invited to pick up a stone symbolising the gift of the ten commandments and think of the challenges we are facing, difficult times we have experienced.





In the Gathering space by the font with the snake skins symbolising healing in the desert we were invited to take a leaf and float it in the font, offer our prayers for healing, for new life, for the future.

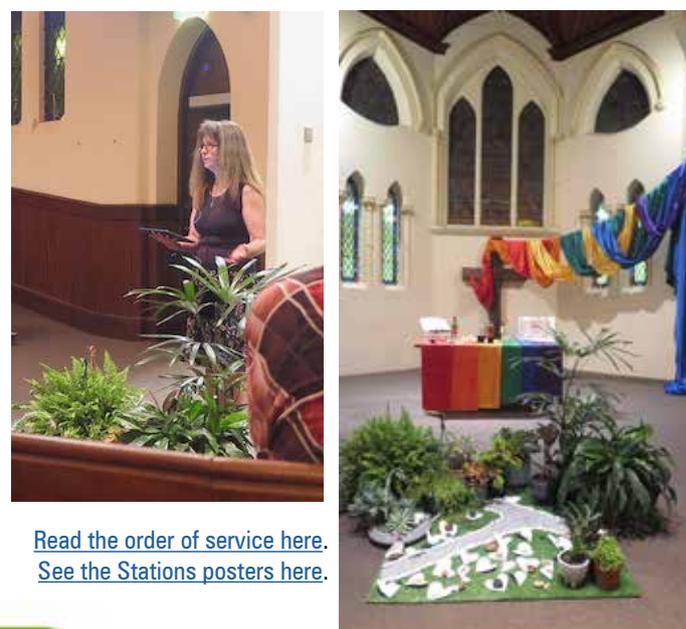


In the Chapel space under the painting we were invited to take a heart and write a prayer from our hearts, reflecting on the feelings that were moving us, things that we wanted to say to God.



Thank you
Helen Burnham
for creating the
Holy Week Garden

After the time of prayer we were invited to move into the Sanctuary, taking our hearts and stones with us to place in the Garden. We gathered around the table to participate in the Prayer of Thanksgiving and received the gift of bread and wine or juice. We listened again to Mark's gospel as Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane before Jesus sent us out into the darkness saying 'Go now in peace to enter the darkness in order to see the light. And may God guide your feet. In the name of Christ. Amen.'



[Read the order of service here.](#)
[See the Stations posters here.](#)

This service was not live-streamed or recorded.

> Good Friday



On [Good Friday, 2nd April](#), we listened to the words of the prophet Isaiah describing the suffering servant of God and shared an extended version of the Acknowledgement of Country. Ian welcomed us to the solemn remembrance of the passion of Christ, his dying. After a time of prayer and lament we listened to the telling of Christ's passion from Mark's gospel. During the telling, offered by many voices, the rainbow cloths were taken down and engaged with before being buried under the table. We sang some new words for 'Were you there' as we listened.



Ian Ferguson, Tonia Beggs, Amelia Ware



(Matilda McClintock) Jesus prays in Gethsemane - Were you there when they crucified my Lord?



(Nick Dubrow) The Betrayal & Arrest of Jesus - Were you there when a kiss betrayed my Lord?



(Sophia Twigg, recorded) Jesus before the Council - Were you there when taunted and condemned?



(Ralph Eduardo) Peter denies Jesus - Were you there when his friend broke down and wept?



(Kirsten Parris, recorded) Jesus before Pilate - Were you there when they shouted for his death?



(Samuel Hall) The Crucifixion of Jesus - Were you there when nailed him to the tree?



Thank you Kirsty Bennett for the carpet rainbow photo!
(see top left)



(Bella Taranto) The Death of Jesus -
Were you there when my Lord breathed out his last?



(Dave Hall) The Burial of Jesus -
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?



Black cloths were brought down the aisles to create the tomb. We prayed again responding 'We mourn, we watch, we hope. We wait, quietly'. Ian invited us to pray at the cross saying 'I invite you now, if you are able and would like to, to come forward and pray at the cross of Christ, touching it with veneration. Bring your story into his story. On your return, take a sprig of rosemary from the baskets here to remember the love of Christ in whom God fully embraced human suffering and dying. Rosemary has been traditionally associated with love, remembrance and peace. At the end of the service, we will take those sprigs outside and place them in preparation for Easter morning.' We processed outside as Daniel Whelan played a lament on bagpipes.



[Watch the livestream recording](#) or [Read the order service](#)
Watch the bagpipes videos [version 1](#) and [version 2](#)

> Dawn Service



We gathered in the garden (on the steps) at dawn for worship on [Easter Sunday, 4th April](#). Ian welcomed us and lit the fire which included the rosemary sprigs from Good Friday. We listened as Saide Cameron offered John's telling of Gospel story and joyfully joined in the Easter proclamation: Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! This is the day that the Lord has made: we will rejoice and be glad in it!



Ian lit our new Christ Candle from the early flames of the fire and we processed into the church singing Alleluia. We prayed and responded to the invitation to join the Remembrance of Baptism by dipping our hands in the baptismal font and tracing a cross on our hand or forehead. Ian invited us to pray saying *'Come let us pray for we are followers of Jesus called to be a covenant community of love. Come as you are ready to light a taper and offer a prayer for the world, for the church, for those you love. Come for today we celebrate the risen Christ.'*

Ian blessed us on our way and invited us to return for our Easter Eucharist.



The majority of the photos on this page are screen shots from the live recording, ie not high quality!

This service was recorded and posted later.

[Watch the recording here.](#)
[Read the Order of Service here.](#)



> Easter Day



We gathered again on the steps for our Easter Eucharist service on [Easter Sunday, 4th April](#), singing 'Were you there?'. A pre-recorded version of this part of the service was prepared for the livestream and later viewers. Ian welcomed us and Kirsty Bennett offered the Acknowledgement of Country. Saide Cameron offered Mark's telling of Jesus' resurrection. Ian offered the joyful proclamation Christ is risen and we processed inside singing Halle, halle, halle.



Saide welcomed us again into the worship space, concluding as saying 'We light the new Christ Candle, first lit this morning at dawn, as a sign among us that Christ is risen.' as Clara Hall lit the candle.

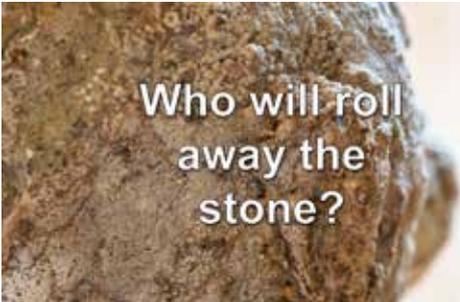


Dave and Ian invited the children to join them in exploring the new things happening in the worship space. We remembered the symbols of Lent and placed them in the Easter Garden. The rainbow was transformed again, streaming out from the cross and the flowers brought into the space. Dave handed out streamers and hoola hoops to accompany our singing of 'Roll the rock'.





The children then helped Ian set the table with the rainbow cloths and the servers brought in the bread and juice for our celebration of Holy Communion.



Ian began his reflection '[The Easter Question](#)' sharing the question from the women at the tomb 'Who will roll the stone away' and after sharing a Zombie Jesus question story went on to say 'that cultural context shapes our questions ... the questions I have are likely to be very different to the questions exercising the hearts and minds of the first generation of Xns for whom the gospel of Mark is written.' Referring to the place and time from which Mark was writing Ian said 'For Mark, the resurrection begins the final completion of the creative reconciling work of love. Make of that you will – I've got some questions about it myself – but friends, I still believe in it. I believe in the love that not even death can

destroy. He went on to put 'put Mark under the interpretive microscope for a moment' offering us the delight of 'gospel grammar time' and in particular 'The perfect tense ... a completed action with lasting results'. Ian reminded us that 'Love will not be contained by our certainties nor by our questions.' He concluded 'Easter does not simply wipe away our questions, our suffering, the injustices of the world – it holds them in the ongoing work of love. For Easter itself is a verb in the perfect tense, a completed action with ongoing results. Thus, we continue to remember the ongoing pain and suffering and loss of love on Good Friday, and we continue to celebrate the ongoing openness of love's final barrier on Easter Sunday, both continue, we cannot have one without the other. And that, friends, is why Easter takes so many days.



Drawing on the Easter Question 'Who will roll the stone our away' we offered prayers of the people holding on to a stone noticing the weight, the shape and the feel of it as we prayed for removal of barriers, for the renewal of the earth and for healing.





We celebrated Holy Communion in the big circle around the church and concluded worship singing 'Thine be the glory' before Ian blessed us on our way.

[Watch the service here.](#)
[Read the Order of Service here.](#)



Thank you Valmai Brunlow for the beautiful Easter Garden flowers



Thank you Ian for the amazing photos used as title slides for both Good Friday and Easter Day.

It has been such a joy and pleasure to compile this special Holy Week edition of the Olive Branch. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the services.
Saide Cameron