



Parramatta
Mission



uniting
church
in Australia,
Synod of NSW & ACT

OUR NEWS

21st March 2021



Our Vision

A Community
Transforming Lives

Our Values

Grace,
Inclusion,
Dignity, Faith
and Hope

Congregational life @ Westmead & Parramatta,
Hospitality, Community and Mental Health
Services across Greater Sydney, Central Coast,
Hunter and Mid-North Coast

Parramatta Mission acknowledges that all of our work and
our 36 sites are on the land of traditional owners.
We pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land on
which we gather, and acknowledge Elders past and present,
and emerging leaders.

Lent 5B, 2021

John 12:20-33

Who Are We Looking For?

Debie Thomas
Journey with Jesus

Our Gospel reading this week begins with desire: “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” The setting is Jerusalem, the occasion is Passover, and the people expressing the desire are Gentiles, visiting the city for its traditional religious festivities. The Gospel doesn’t tell us how many Gentiles come seeking Jesus, or why they’re interested in him. Are they curious about his message and his parables? Are they chasing spectacle — hoping to see a rumored miracle-worker walk on water or heal a blind man? Maybe they’re skeptics or troublemakers, looking to pick a fight with the controversial Messiah. Or maybe they’re just bored and seeking a distraction. We don’t know.

But I’m grateful that the text leaves their motivations a mystery, because when I look at my own life, I recognize the Gentiles’ request in all of these guises. I know what it’s like to want Jesus in earnest — to want his presence, his guidance, his example, and his companionship. I know what it’s like to want — not him, but things from him: safety, health, immunity, ease. I know what it’s like to want a confrontation — a no-holds-barred opportunity to express my disappointment, my sorrow, my anger, and my bewilderment at who Jesus is compared to who I want him to be. And finally, I know what it’s like not to want him at all — what it feels like to shelve all spiritual desire, and allow my faith to fade into the background of my life and consciousness. I cycle between these wants. My heart for Jesus expands and constricts; my desire to see him waxes and wanes, and my motives for seeking him grow clearer and murkier by turns.

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” On its face, it’s such a simple request, but it cuts to the heart of spiritual growth, stagnation, and defeat. Do we want to see Jesus? Where does desire register in our spiritual lives right now? During this season of Lent, are we asking to see the Jesus we’ve heard so much about? If yes, which Jesus do we wish to see? The teacher? The healer? The peacemaker? The troublemaker? Why are we interested?

Or, if we’re not asking and seeking, then the question shifts, and we have to ask it differently: why is Jesus not on our radars? Does “seeing” him feel impossible right now? Uninteresting? Irrelevant? Has he become so familiar to us that he’s faded away entirely?

Immediately following the Gentiles’ request, Jesus launches into a meditation on his death. He says his hour has come. He describes himself as a grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying in order to bear much fruit. He invites his followers to “hate” their lives in this world and keep them instead for eternal life. He admits that he’s afraid: “Now my soul is troubled.” And finally, he describes the cross as a gathering place of agony, glory, unity, and communion: “When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself.”

In a few weeks, many of us will gather online or in person to remember Jesus's death, and keep vigil at the cross. As Covid restrictions allow, we'll meditate, pray, sing, and weep. Alone or with others, we'll kneel, or sing, or chant, or fast — all in the hopes of entering into the deep mystery of the crucifixion. All in the hopes of honoring what Jesus made possible when he was lifted up from the earth.

But for those of us who've grown up in the faith, I fear that the actual scandal and strangeness of Jesus's death has perhaps long faded away. Do we know anymore which Jesus we wish to see? We're used to worshipping in front of a crucifix; we cross ourselves without thinking, or wear tiny replicas of the cross around our necks. But what would happen, I wonder, if we could shake ourselves out of our familiarity for a few minutes, and see with new eyes what happened on Good Friday? God died. Jesus willingly took the violence, the contempt, and the hatred of this world and absorbed them all into his own body. He chose to be the victim, the scapegoat, the sacrifice. He refused to waver in his message of universal love, grace, and liberation, knowing full well that the message would cost him his life. He declared solidarity for all time with those who are abandoned, colonized, oppressed, accused, imprisoned, beaten, mocked, and murdered. He burst open like a seed so that new life would grow and replenish the earth. He took an instrument of torture and turned it into a vehicle of hospitality and communion for all people, everywhere. He loved and he loved and he loved, all the way to the end. "When I am lifted up, I will draw all people to myself."

If we, like the Gentiles, want to see Jesus, we have to be willing to look at the cross. Yes, Jesus was and is many things: teacher, healer, companion, and Lord, and it is important that we experience him in all of these ways. But the center, the heart of who he is, is revealed at the cross. The cross makes true sight possible.

In my own life, I often flinch away from the Jesus of the Passion — the vulnerable, broken Jesus — because I want a muscular, superhero Jesus instead. I want the dramatic rescue, the quick save. I don't want to learn the discipline of waiting at the tomb, in the shadowed place, in the realm where my questions far outnumber the answers. I am impatient for resurrection, and scorn everything that comes before it. I don't think I'm alone in this struggle; many of us wrestle with the Jesus of Holy Week, because he looks so different from what we expect in a Savior. Often, we're not entirely sure who we're looking for.

In the end, what this week's Gospel reading teaches me is that I don't have to strive and strain to see Jesus. As he told those Gentile seekers two thousand years ago, he is the one who draws and gathers all people to himself. He is the one who allows himself to be lifted up, so that what is murky or overwhelming or frightening — God in his indecipherable Otherness — comes close and becomes visible.

In other words, Jesus desires steadily when I desire unsteadily. He loves whether I love or not. It has taken me a long time to lean into this possibility, and it still eludes me sometimes, but I choose to trust this, as best I can: Jesus's longing for me is the ground upon which all of my desire — however abundant or stingy — rests. He wishes to see me — to see all of us — far more urgently than we'll ever wish to see him. This isn't a rebuke. It isn't an invitation to self-loathing or shame. Rather, it is a promise and a refuge. We love

because he loves first. We love because the cross draws us towards love — its power is as compelling as it is mysterious. The cross pulls us towards God and towards each other, a vast and complicated gathering place. Whether or not I want to see Jesus, here he is, drawing me. This is the solid ground we stand on. Stark, holy, strange, and beautiful.

Foster your faith this week

Is 50:4-9a

Ps 31:9-16

Phil 2:5-11

Mk 14:1-15:47 or Mk 15:1-39, (40-47)

PASTORAL MESSAGE

Jesus, you call us to follow,
so we may join you
in serving the broken
of our world.

Holy Week and Easter Services

The following services have been set down for Holy Week / Easter.

The zoom site is: <https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/5199089657>

Monday 29 March	Combined Reflective service	7:00-7:20 pm Online	
Tuesday 30 March	Combined Reflective service	7:00-7:20 pm Online	
Wednesday 31 March	Combined Reflective service	7:00-7:20 pm Online	
Maundy Thursday 01 April	Combined Leigh Memorial Church	7:00 pm.	Onsite online
Good Friday: 02 April	Westmead	9:00 am	onsite
	Leigh Memorial / Leigh Fijian combined	10:00 am	onsite online
Easter Sunday: 04 April	Westmead	9:45 am	onsite
	Leigh Memorial / Leigh Fijian combined	10:00 am	onsite online

Leigh Congregation

COME & JOIN US FOR WORSHIP @ LEIGH MEMORIAL

Please consult the weekly newsletters and emails for updates regarding in person + Zoom worship arrangements and special programming/services. Look out for updates regarding Lent & Easter services – coming soon! For further information or assistance, please call 9891-2277.

LEIGH MEMORIAL ORGAN A GOLDEN OLDIE!

Our amazing Leigh Memorial pipe organ is 142 years old this year and still going strong! It was originally situated in Macquarie Hall, our second Chapel, and then moved into Leigh Memorial when it opened in 1885. Over the years it has been re-built a couple of times, and is still evaluated and repaired on an annual basis. In addition to being regularly played for services by Alan and on special occasions such as ANZAC day by Lucy – last week saw the organ played by David, a member of the academic staff at Western Sydney University's Parramatta campus. David is an experienced organist and

will be playing our instrument for enjoyment on a casual basis. It's wonderful that despite the restrictions imposed on singing and other forms of creative expression by covid, music is still bringing a lot of joy and inspiration within our worship space.

PASTORAL CARE

We continue to hold everyone in our thoughts & prayers, including PM staff, Mission & congregation leaders and congregation members who are anxious, unwell, grieving, separated from us, or otherwise in need of extra care at this time. Our warmest "hellos" are conveyed to members who we haven't seen in a while – and we hope to see you again very soon. Please note that Clive and Vladimir may be contacted for support and assistance as needed.

LENTEN STUDIES

This year's studies, 'Interpreting the Way of the Cross' will be held in person with Rev. Clive on Saturday mornings in the Choir Vestry @ Leigh Memorial (20 & 27 March) and via Zoom on Wednesday evenings (17 & 24 March). Please see the newsletter for further information.



LENT EVENT 2021: *LEARN, LIVE SIMPLY & GIVE...*

Members are invited to check the Uniting World website for information about this year's program, inc. suggestions re participation and donations. NB: Lent Event is about living more simply, learning from our global neighbours and choosing to make a difference in our own lives and the lives of others. Take up a Lent Event challenge in 2021 and be part of a movement to end poverty and injustice in our world. <https://donate.unitingworld.org.au/event/lent-event/home>



REMEMBERING CHRISTCHURCH

We continue to hold the people of Christchurch and New Zealand in our prayers for peace, inclusivity and community strength as we acknowledge the second anniversary of the tragic mosque shooting that took 51 lives in March, 2019. Photo: Revs. Manas, Keith, Clive & Mary with Mr. Neil El-Kadhumi and other representatives of the Parramatta

Mosque, and congregation members at Leigh Memorial for a combined vigil of remembrance following the attacks.

BAPTISM

On 7 March, we had our first Baptism at Leigh Memorial since the covid lockdown. It was a happy occasion and little Macie Louise Trescott and her Mum & Dad and extended family enjoyed their time with our congregation. Macie's



grandad and great-grandad were also baptised at Leigh Memorial in days gone by, so her baptism was part of a longstanding family tradition. Blessings for all.

WESTMEAD CONGREGATION

**JOIN US FOR ON SITE WORSHIP TODAY,
SUNDAY - 21 MARCH AT 9.45AM**

The Service will be led by Rev. Vladimir
Pr. Sarah will bring the reflection

Zoom will be from Leigh at 9.30AM

<https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/5450786355>

ACCESS TO WESTMEAD SITE:

The main entrance driveway from Hawkesbury Road is now open.

BIBLE STUDY - ALL WELCOME!

Mondays 2pm-3.30pm

Zoom: <https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/9504369512>

Rev. Mary is with us Monday 22 March

Rev. Clive is with us Monday 29 March

STAMPS, FIVE CENT PIECES AND FOREIGN COINS

(contact Lorna)

- We do encourage you to keep any stamps you may receive. Jean Mitchel, now living at Uniting, Westmead, is happy to trim and sort the stamps, so all you need to do is to roughly cut the stamp from the envelope, but making sure there is at least 1cm of envelope surrounding the stamp.
- Ministry of the Least Coin - Your five cent coins are always gratefully received. This valuable ministry has enabled support for numerous groups over the years.
- We accept foreign coins or notes. The currency is deposited in the Commonwealth Bank, who then donates to international aid agencies.



A visit to Belinda at Wesley Apartments was enjoyed last week and 6 Welcome Packs from the Westmead Congregation were delivered for families accommodated in the apartments.



We have 4 birthdays to
celebrate this month,
Happy Birthday to
David , Sushila, Colin and Greg

ON SITE ... FACE TO FACE

EASTER SERVICES

Good Friday (2nd April) - 9.00am

Easter Sunday (4th April) - 9.45am

Holy Communion will be included in the Service on Easter Sunday.

(These Services will not be available on zoom)

STATIONS OF THE CROSS – Art Exhibition, 22 March – 4 April

Art Exhibition

Leading artists reflect upon
**Suffering and the human spirit:
Stations of The Cross 2021**

Harrie Fisher
James Drinkwater
Lesley Salem
Toqi Hassan
Jennifer Little
Douglas Purnell
Matthew Calandra
Tony Mighell

Chris Wyatt
Joe Furlonger
Chris Auckett
Jeanette Siebels
John Forrester Clark
Reg Mombassa
Euan McLeod

March 22 - April 4
28 Campbell Street Northmead

Hours, tours, opening night and events please call 0424 444 631

Northmead Uniting Church, in partnership with Northmead High School, is hosting their 13th year of Stations of the Cross.

The exhibition is held at Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School, 28 Campbell St, Northmead.

Further details ... <https://fb.me/e/yIHQSuo3>

Fijian Congregation

1. **Lotu ena sigatabu 21/03** : Na lotu ena sigatabu oqo na veiqaravi tiko kina na matamasuamasu naba 3.
2. **Lotu ena sigatabu 28/03** : Na lotu ena sigatabu mai oqo na veiqaravi tiko kina na matamasuamasu naba 1.
3. **Lesoni ena macawa mai oqo** – Jeremaia.31:31-34; Same. 51:1-12; Ipe riu. 5:5-10; Joni. 12:20-33.
4. **Veinanumi ena Masu** : Kerei meda veinanumi tikoga ena veimasulaki vei ira na nodatou qase Aqriu Rogoimuri, Vilikesa kei Mereoni Kamotu, S Qata, ratou na veiliutaki tiko ena nodatou vavakoso vaka viti kei na veivu vale kece sara ena loma ni nodatou vavakoso. Na nodratou vuli talatala nei Filikesa Kamotu, Samu Sadrata kei Ofa Foiakau. Na nodratou veiqaravi ni Bula Feeding.



**Interpreting the Way of the Cross
During a Season of Covid 19**

Lenten Study 2021

two times, two modes.

Saturday mornings, 10:00 am to 11:30

27th March

On site in the choir vestry, Leigh Memorial

Wednesday evenings, 7:00-8:00pm

24th March

On zoom, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3602745736>

Every year in England the national church puts out a Lenten study. This year Sam Wells, the Dean of St. Martins-in-the Fields in the centre of London, has published *The Cross at the Heart of God*. That title is no surprise. The lectionary gospel for the year is the gospel of Mark. It turns upon a 'journey to the cross': along the way the disciples learn more about who this Jesus is and how he differs from their expectations.

This Lenten season we are able to reflect upon this journey in the light of the continuing presence and legacy of Covid 19. Throughout the past year we have been told what we can do and what we can't do. It has been a time of necessary compliance. The church has often had to respond to pandemics in the past. It has always sought to understand how the life of faith, the gospel, fits into this kind of situation. In our time the Pope and Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, have provided much helpful food for thought.

This study will combine the themes of Mark with how members of the church responded to their Covid 19 equivalent.

다섯 번째 사순절 주일 (5th Lent of Sunday) 2021년 03월 21일 오후 1시 30분

개회 찬송 (Entrance Hymn) 예배를 위한 묵상

예배의 부름 (Calling) 인도자

송영 (Gloria) 새 1 장 통 1 장 만복의 근원 하나님 다함께

사도신경 신앙고백 (The Apostle's Creed) 다함께

찬양/찬송 (Chorus & Hymns) 다함께

새 8 장 통 9 장 거룩 거룩 거룩

새 456 장 통 509 장 거진 세상에서 실패하거든

기도 (Prayer) 주기도문송 새 635 장 하늘에 계신 우리 아버지 다함께

성경 봉독 (Scripture Reading) 마가복음 12:38-40; 로마서 13:14

말씀 (Preaching) - 전현구 목사 사람의 옷, 그리스도의 옷

봉헌 송 (Offertory Hymn)

새 496 장 통 260 장 새벽부터 우리

나눔과 알림 (Announcement & Notices)

1. 전 세계가 전염병으로 힘들 때 주님과 동행하시는 성도가 됩시다.
2. '매일 성경' 말씀으로 주님과 교제의 시간(QT)을 갖고 적용하는 훈련을 합니다.
3. 말씀, 기도, 전도 생활로 하나님이 기뻐하시는 삶을 사는 성도님들이 되시기 바랍니다.

폐회찬송 (Final Hymn)

새 502 장 통 259 장 너 시은아 이소식 전파하라 (1절)

축도 전현구 담임목사

QT나눔 & 성경공부
오후 4:00

수요기도회 : 오후 7시
누가복음 21:5-19

새벽기도회 : 오전 6시
누가복음 20:41-22:23



*Couple and Friends enjoyed having lunch together
last Sunday 14th March*

Prayer Points

The people of Parramatta Mission invite you to pray for

Our Community

- We give thanks that some small gatherings are starting to take place. We give thanks for welcoming cafes and the disciplines we have learnt to help keep us all safe
- We give thanks for coffee, tea, muffins and spiritually encouraging conversations.

PM Westmead

- We pray for all affected by the covid virus and those families who are losing loved ones in the battle.
- We pray for all who grieve the loss of loved ones.
- We pray for all front line workers e.g. doctors, nurses, ambulance workers, police and families of front line workers too.
- We pray for all our dear congregation members who are now in aged care and feeling isolated. We pray for their improved health and comfort and safety as they are cared for. We especially pray for Henry who is not so well at present, and for Vita.
- We pray for Lyn and her Dad as his health is deteriorating and changes need to be sought. Also for Lyn's friend Amy as she recovers following a serious accident.

PM Korean Faith Community

- We pray for the Korean community in Western Sydney and for Rev Hyung Goo and Hannah.

PM Leigh Memorial

- We pray especially for those whose health is not the best. We ask for calmness for people having treatments for illnesses and for the courage of their carers
- We particularly remember - Betty E (who is doing well and singing along to Songs of Praise on Sunday mornings) Himmi and family, Liz and family and Jolame.
- For those who are experiencing anxiety around home, work or life changes, we pray for supportive community. We continue to pray for those unable to gather, community members who are unwell, people who are unable to work and those who are lonely or depressed.

Prayer Points

PM Fijian

- We pray for those who are going through transitions from school to beyond.
- We pray for the Synod Pulse Team and Ofa's role as a newly commissioned Pastor in the Team, resourcing youth ministry across NSW/ACT.
- We pray for the guests at the Bula Feeding Ministry and Meals Plus and our wonderful volunteers. We pray for those who are unable to meet because of rain or storms and for those who have been sleeping rough.

Wider Work

We pray for Carlingford Uniting Church.

1. Wisdom as we enter into discussions with West Epping regarding the establishment of a possible Ministry Hub whereby mission and ministry directions are coordinated and shared respectively;
2. Encouragement for families of pre-school children to join in the mainly music program as Covid restrictions are eased (in a Covid safe environment); and
3. Sense of fellowship will continue to grow amongst the ladies participating in the Women on Wednesday program which, among other projects, supplies quilts to Wesley Apartments for distribution to families as they leave the complex.

For Our Combined Parramatta Mission Team

May God guide all our workers and volunteers to live out our values of grace, inclusion, dignity, faith and hope.

Rev Vladimir, Rev Mary, Rev Clive, Chaplain Sarah, Robert, Coral, Rev Hyung Goo - and their families, as they support us to serve in mission.

We ask for God's help to bless the world. AMEN

Pastoral Contacts

Prayer Points may be sent to
wecare@parramattamission.org.au

For a conversation or to contact a Minister, please call
Parramatta Mission Reception (9am-3pm)

119 Macquarie Street Parramatta NSW 2150
9891 2277

Leigh Memorial Church

119 Macquarie Street Parramatta NSW 2150
9891 2277

Westmead Church

175 Hawkesbury Road Westmead NSW 2145
9891 9354

IN TIME OF PASTORAL NEED

Our two ministers, Clive Pearson and Vladimir Korotkov are available to each congregation and members and your friends; their contact details are listed below.

Rev Vladimir Korotkov (Interim Lead Minister) 0431 759 573
Rev Dr Clive Pearson (Supply) 0409 523 024

YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT THESE PEOPLE FOR PASTORAL ISSUES

Rev Hyun Goo Jun (Korean Faith Community) 0433 320 588

Pr Sarah Bishop (Children's Hospital) 0429 912 943

Anare Vocea (Fijian Vakatawa) 0432 772 852