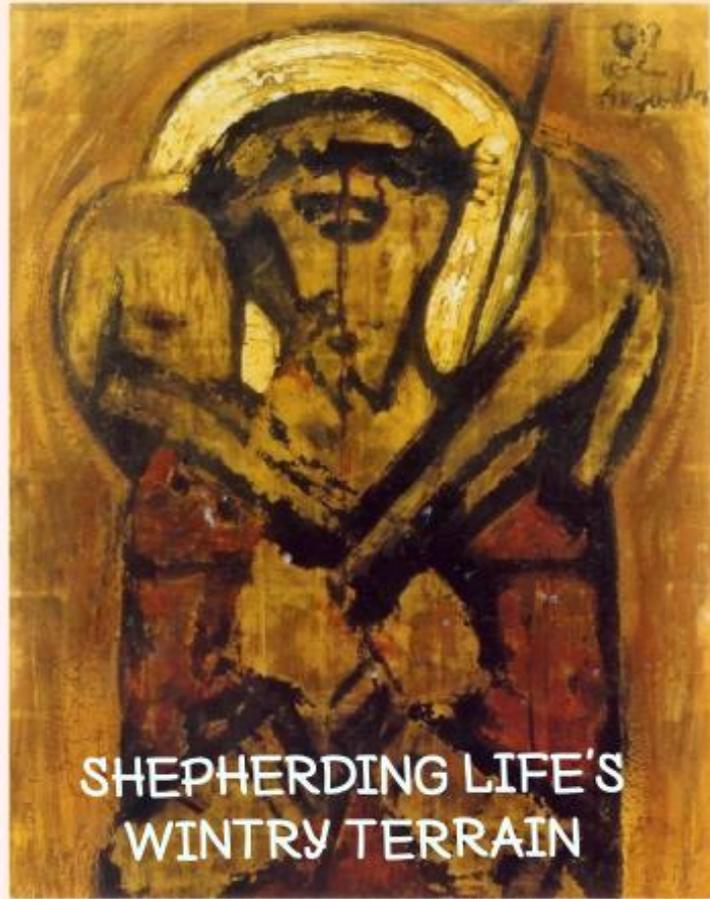


# EASTER 4



SHEPHERDING LIFE'S  
WINTRY TERRAIN

**MAY 8, 2022**



uniting  
church  
in Australia,  
Synod of NSW & ACT

Leigh Memorial  
Westmead  
Uniting Churches



Parramatta  
Mission

Leigh Memorial

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/5199089657>

Meeting ID: 519 908 9657

Westmead Uniting

<https://uca-nswact.zoom.us/j/93615534553>

## WELCOME

A warm welcome as we gather together on this Fourth Sunday of Easter!

## LIGHTING OF THE EASTER CANDLE

Today we light the Easter candle,  
proclaiming the transforming power of God.

Today we celebrate our mothers as brave, compassionate  
shepherds ...

*The candle is lit*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Burramattagal people of the Darug Nation, the first inhabitants of this place, as the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to their ancient culture, their elders past and present and their emerging leaders. We acknowledge the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within this area. We honour them for their custodianship of the land, on which we gather today.

Today we particularly celebrate all the Indigenous mothers since the colonisation of this country: their brave, courageous, persistent, generous care for their families, communities and nations; their unceasing work for justice; we honour their tears, losses as they carry the ongoing trauma they face, the joys they experience.

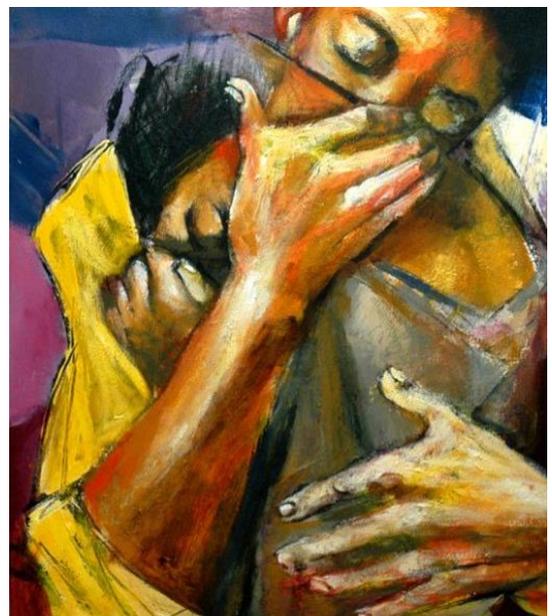
## CALL TO WORSHIP

God with a mother's heart,  
You shepherd us  
through life's wintry terrain  
as your loved children.

*You comfort and hold us  
In your warm embrace.*

When we are hurt your arms enfold us.  
When we are afraid your staff protect us.  
When we are hungry  
You feed us with the bread of life.

*God with a mother's heart,  
Your love surrounds and supports*



God eternal and loving one,  
God with a mother's heart,

***We thank you this day,  
For being part of your family.***

*Adapted: Christine Sinde, godspace.msa.com*

## **SONG OF PRAYER FOR EVERYDAY LIFE**

Cold play, *Everyday Life* (live in Jordan)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qi33gLphV4>

### ***Everyday life***

What in the world are we going to do?  
Look at what everybody's going through  
What kind of world do you want it to be?



Am I the future or the history?  
'Cause everyone hurts, everyone cries  
Everyone tells each other all kinds of lies  
Everyone falls, everybody dreams and doubts  
Got to keep dancing when the lights go out  
How in the world I am going to see?  
You as my brother, not my enemy?  
'Cause everyone hurts, everyone cries  
Everyone sees the color in each other's eyes  
Everyone loves,  
everybody gets their hearts ripped out  
Got to keep dancing when the lights go out  
Gonna keep dancing when the lights go out  
Hold tight for everyday life....  
At first light, throw my arms out open wide  
Hallelujah.....

## PRAYER FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

O God, we pray this day:  
for all who have a song they cannot sing,  
for all who have a burden they cannot bear,  
for all who live in chains they cannot break,  
for all who wander homeless and cannot return,  
for those who are sick and for those who tend them,  
for those who wait for loved ones and wait in vain,  
for those who live in hunger  
and for those who will not share their bread,  
for those who are misunderstood,  
and for those who misunderstand,  
for those who are captives  
and for those who are captors,  
for those whose words of love  
are locked within their hearts  
and for those who yearn to hear those words.  
Have mercy upon these, O God.  
Have mercy on us all.

*(Source: Ann Weems from "Kneeling in Jerusalem," quoted in "Greeting the Day - Morning Prayers and Meditations from Around the World," edited by Brian Wright)*

## HYMN

*Bring many names (TiS 182)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNRoi2wOb0c>

1 Bring many names, beautiful and good,  
celebrate, in parable and story,  
holiness in glory,  
living, loving God.  
Hail and hosanna!  
bring many names!

2 Strong mother God, working night and day,  
planning all the wonders of creation,  
setting each equation  
genius at play:  
Hail and hosanna,  
strong mother God!

3 Warm father God, hugging every child,  
feeling all the strains of human living,  
caring and forgiving  
till we're reconciled:  
Hail and hosanna,  
warm father God!

4 Old, aching God, gray with endless care,  
calmly piercing evil's new disguises,  
glad of good surprises,  
wiser than despair:  
Hail and hosanna,  
old, aching God!

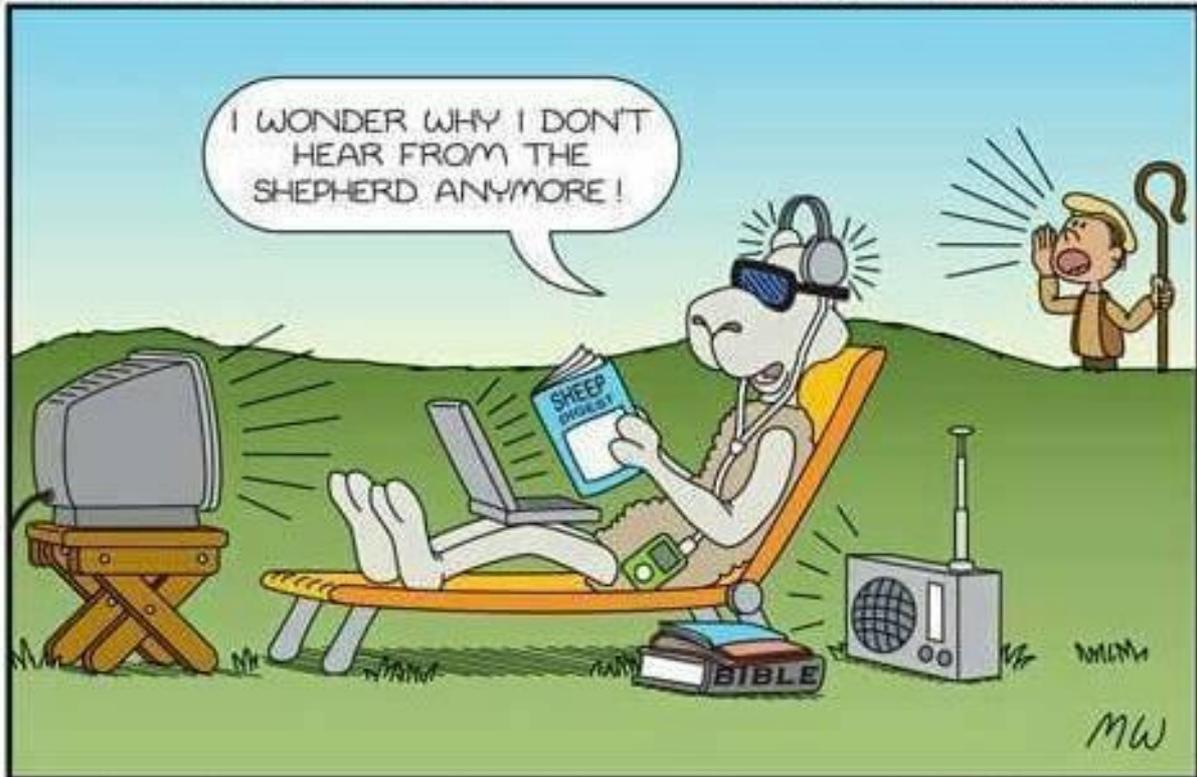
5 Young, growing God, eager, on the move,  
saying no to falsehood and unkindness,  
crying out for justice,  
giving all you have:  
Hail and hosanna,  
young, growing God!

6 Great, living God, never fully known,  
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,  
closer yet than breathing,  
everlasting home:  
Hail and hosanna,  
great, living God!

*Brian Wren All rights reserved.  
With permission OneLicense A-604457  
All rights reserved*

## SHEPHERD'S VOICE

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.  
- JOHN 10:27 NIV

### SCRIPTURE READING John 10:22-30 (Inclusive Version)



22 At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. 24 So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the One sent of God, the

Christ, tell us plainly.' 25 Jesus answered, 'I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Parent God's name testify to me; 26 but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. 27 My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish.

No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 What my Parent God

has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of God's hand. 30 The Parent God and I are one.'

**RESPONSE**

*O God our nurturer,  
may your word live in us.  
And colour our living. Amen!*

**SONG**      **Meet me in the middle of the air**

Paul Kelly & The Storm Water Boys, Foggy Highway

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g34-nB3oym4>

i am your true shepherd  
i will leave you there  
beside still waters  
come and meet me in the middle of the air  
i will meet you in the middle of the air

i will lay you down  
in pastures green and fair  
every soul shall be restored  
i will meet them in the middle of the air  
come and meet me in the middle of the air

through the lonesome valleys  
my rod and staff you'll bear  
fear not deaths dark shadows  
come and meet me in the middle of the air  
i will meet you in the middle of the air

with oil i shall annoint you  
the table i shall prepare  
your cup will runneth over  
come and meet me in the middle of the air  
i will meet you in the middle of the air

in my house you'll dwell forever  
ye shall not want for care  
surely goodness and mercy will follow you

come and meet me in the middle of the air  
i will meet you in the middle of the air

come and meet me in the middle of the air  
i will meet you in the middle of the air

come and meet me in the middle of the air  
i will meet you in the middle of the air  
i will meet you in the middle of the air

## REFLECTION

**HYMN**      *God of the Women (Tune: TiS 547, Slane)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMsEDVm-cT0>

1. God of the women who answered your call,  
Trusting your promises, giving their all,  
Women like Sarah and Hannah and Ruth —  
Give us their courage to live in your truth.
2. God of the women who walked Jesus' Way,  
Giving their resources, learning to pray,  
Mary, Joanna, Susanna, and more —  
May we give freely as they did before.
3. God of the women long put to the test,  
Left out of stories, forgotten, oppressed,  
Quietly asking: "Who smiled at my birth?" —  
In Jesus' dying you show us our worth.
4. God of the women who ran from the tomb,  
Prayed with the others in that upper room,  
Then felt your Spirit on Pentecost Day —  
May we so gladly proclaim you today.
5. O God of Phoebe and ministers all,  
May we be joyful in answering your call.  
Give us the strength of your Spirit so near  
That we may share in your ministry here.

© 1998 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.  
With permission OneLicense A-604457  
All rights reserve

## OFFERING

God of love,  
you abide with us;  
you provide for all our needs  
and guide us in your ways.  
Out of gratitude for your care,  
we bring our gifts before you.  
Use them for your work of caring,  
that all may feast at the table of abundance,  
walk without fear,  
and drink deeply  
from the cup of compassion. Amen.  
*(Mary Petrina Boyd, Ministry Matters)*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PRAYER FOR MOTHERS

O God,  
Both mother and father for humankind and creation!  
We are grateful and thankful today for mothering,  
***For the feminine touch of parenting,***  
***For the special connection of mother and child,***

And thankful for all the women in our lives,  
Who offer care, comfort, encouragement and support.  
***We are grateful for the self-sacrifice of love that is given,***  
***And we offer our love in return.***

We remember the mothers who are.  
We remember the mothers who have been and are gone.  
We remember the mothers who can't be.  
We acknowledge that mothering is hard,  
And not all are able to do so as they would like.  
We acknowledge that we all fall short in life and love,  
And that mothers are no exception in this.

However, today, we honour mothering,  
Especially those who give of their best.  
We pray for mothers all  
And those who offer mothering  
beyond the circle of bloodlines and family.

***For mothers and motherers we pray.***

***Amen.***

*(Source: Jon Humphries, Prayers that Unite)*

**SONG**     *A new commandment (TiS 699)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoWrAgiGak>

A new commandment I give unto you  
that you love one another as I have loved you,  
that you love one another as I have loved you.  
By this will others know that you are my disciples  
if you have love one for another;  
by this shall all know that you are my disciples  
if you have love one for another.

*(Sing twice)*

*All rights reserved.*

*With permission OneLicense A-604457*

*All rights reserve*

**BLESSING**

May you live this day  
Compassionate of heart  
Gentle in word,  
Gracious in awareness  
Courageous in thought  
Generous in love.

*(John O'Donohue)*