



# Anglican Church of Australia

## Diocese of Gippsland

*(Committed in Christ, Connecting in Service & Creative in Spirit)*

### ***Parish of Wonthaggi & Inverloch***

**St. George's,**

**McBride Ave., Wonthaggi**

**The Church of the Ascension**

**4-6 The Crescent, Inverloch**

**Bunurong Country**

**ABN: 18 842 576 826**



## **Palm Sunday – April 13th, 2025.**

### **Morning Prayer**



### **Sunday of the Passion**

It's that time of the year when we remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding on the colt of a donkey.

But it is also the day we hear the crucifixion of Christ read to us for the 1<sup>st</sup> time of many over a week.

### **Why are the 2 linked?**

They are linked because they describe the Passion of Christ, His journey of redemption. He was passionate about what He was doing, for the holy city of Jerusalem, and for the people. He was resolute in the journey needed to redeem us from sin. He travelled from glory to shame to glory - the Passion. Today is the first glory of two.

**Rev. Graeme**

## **The Palm Gospel:**

## **Luke 19:28-40**

### *Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King*

<sup>28</sup> After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. <sup>29</sup> As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, <sup>30</sup> “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’” <sup>32</sup> Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. <sup>33</sup> As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” <sup>34</sup> They replied, “The Lord needs it.” <sup>35</sup> They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. <sup>36</sup> As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup> When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: <sup>38</sup> “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” <sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” <sup>40</sup> “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

### **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:**

Everlasting God,  
in your tender love for the human race  
you sent your Son to take our nature,  
and to suffer death upon the cross:  
in your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will  
and in the glorious victory of his resurrection;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **Hope25 Collect:**

God of Hope,  
you call on us to be your witnesses in this uncertain world;  
by your Spirit awaken in us a true vision of your kingdom,  
a greater certainty of our salvation, and a deeper dedication to your service;  
that through our words and actions the same Spirit may

bring many who are lost to be found,  
and for them to celebrate the hope that we can only have in Jesus Christ,  
in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

## **THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD**

### **Old Testament Reading**

#### **Isaiah 50.4-9a**

<sup>4</sup> The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed. <sup>5</sup> The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears; I have not been rebellious, I have not turned away. <sup>6</sup> I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting. <sup>7</sup> Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame. <sup>8</sup> He who vindicates me is near. Who then will bring charges against me? Let us face each other! Who is my accuser? Let him confront me! <sup>9</sup> It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me. Who will condemn me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up.

*This is the word of the Lord,  
Thanks be to God.*

#### **Psalms 31.9-18**

<sup>9</sup> Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: my eye wastes away for grief, my throat also and my inward parts.

<sup>10</sup> **For my life wears out in sorrow, and my years with sighing: my strength fails me in my affliction, and my bones are consumed.**

<sup>11</sup> I am become the scorn of all my enemies: and my neighbours wag their heads in derision.

<sup>12</sup> **I am a thing of horror to my friends: and those that see me in the street shrink from me.**

<sup>13</sup> I am forgotten like one dead and out of mind: I have become like a broken vessel.

<sup>14</sup> **For I hear the whispering of many: and fear is on every side;**

<sup>15</sup> While they plot together against me: and scheme to take away my life.

<sup>16</sup> **But in you, Lord, have I put my trust: I have said 'You are my God.'**

<sup>17</sup> All my days are in your hand: O deliver me from the power of my enemies and from my persecutors.

<sup>18</sup> **Make your face to shine upon your servant: and save me for your mercy's sake.**

## **New Testament Reading**

### **Philippians 2.5-11**

<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:  
<sup>6</sup> who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross! <sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

*This is the word of the Lord,*

***Thanks be to God.***

### **Gospel**

#### **Luke 23.1-49**

<sup>1</sup> Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. <sup>2</sup> And they began to accuse him, saying, ‘We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king.’ <sup>3</sup> So Pilate asked Jesus, ‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ ‘You have said so,’ Jesus replied. <sup>4</sup> Then Pilate announced to the chief priests and the crowd, ‘I find no basis for a charge against this man.’ <sup>5</sup> But they insisted, ‘He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here.’ <sup>6</sup> On hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean. <sup>7</sup> When he learned that Jesus was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. <sup>8</sup> When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform a sign of some sort. <sup>9</sup> He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. <sup>11</sup> Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. <sup>12</sup> That day Herod and Pilate became friends – before this they had been enemies. <sup>13</sup> Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, <sup>14</sup> and said to them, ‘You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. <sup>15</sup> Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death. <sup>16</sup> Therefore, I will punish him and then release him.’ [<sup>17</sup>] <sup>18</sup> But the whole crowd shouted, ‘Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!’ <sup>19</sup> (Barabbas had been thrown into

prison for an insurrection in the city, and for murder.) <sup>20</sup> Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. <sup>21</sup> But they kept shouting, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' <sup>22</sup> For the third time he spoke to them: 'Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore I will have him punished and then release him.' <sup>23</sup> But with loud shouts they insistently demanded that he be crucified, and their shouts prevailed. <sup>24</sup> So Pilate decided to grant their demand.

<sup>25</sup> He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, the one they asked for, and surrendered Jesus to their will. <sup>26</sup> As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. <sup>27</sup> A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. <sup>28</sup> Jesus turned and said to them, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. <sup>29</sup> For the time will come when you will say, "Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!" <sup>30</sup> Then "'they will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!'" <sup>31</sup> For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?' <sup>32</sup> Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. <sup>33</sup> When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals – one on his right, the other on his left. <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.' And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. <sup>35</sup> The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One.' <sup>36</sup> The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar <sup>37</sup> and said, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.' <sup>38</sup> There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the Jews. <sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: 'Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' <sup>40</sup> But the other criminal rebuked him. 'Don't you fear God,' he said, 'since you are under the same sentence? <sup>41</sup> We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.' <sup>42</sup> Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' <sup>43</sup> Jesus answered him, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.' <sup>44</sup> It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, <sup>45</sup> for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. <sup>46</sup> Jesus called out with a loud voice, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.' When he had said this, he breathed his last.

<sup>47</sup> The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, 'Surely this was a righteous man.' <sup>48</sup> When all the people who had gathered to witness this

sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. <sup>49</sup> But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

*For the Gospel of the Lord,  
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.*

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## **DIOCESAN HOPE 25 PRAYER MEETING**

Diocesan Zoom Prayer Meeting:

**Each Friday at 7.30 pm throughout Lent**

Link can be found on our website or below or through using the QR Code.



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82128269156?pwd=YXauO1CTxSkYCtixgDQveAaiMXUJq6.1>

***Or talk to Rev Susan if you would like to attend but have no Zoom facility.***

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## **ST GEORGE'S & THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION LIBRARIES**

As Christians it is wise to look to the wiser for guidance on the journey towards a deeper understanding and walk with the Lord.

*Our 2 libraries cover most aspects of the Christian life.*

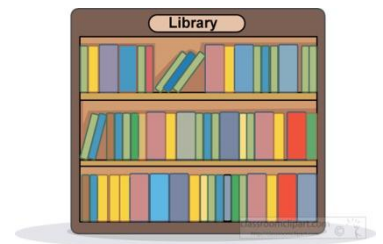
### **Conditions of use**

***Borrowers please enter details in exercise book on the bookshelf.***

**Book Borrow Limit:** No limit **Borrow Time Limit:** No limit

***Please return books as soon as you've finished reading them.***

For further information contact Vivienne McInerney (St George's), & Marcia Smith (Church of the Ascension).



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## **DONATION PARTNER – CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME**

The Anglican Parish of Wonthaggi/Inverloch has been registered with Return-It as a fund raising exercise and if you are returning cans or bottles and would like to donate the funds to the Church our number is C2000057552.

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## **EASTER SERVICE TIMES 2025**

### **Good Friday Liturgy 18 April**

Church of the Ascension, Inverloch – 9:00 am

St George's, Wonthaggi -10:30 am

### **Easter Sunday 20 April – Holy Communion**

Dawn Service at 'The Eagles Nest', Inverloch – 6:30 am

Church of the Ascension, Inverloch – 9:00 am

St George's, Wonthaggi -10:30 am

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## **BIBLE DISCOVERY GROUPS**

**Davies Group**: Thursday, 1:30pm at St George's Hall. Contact John Davies for more details.

**In recess until 24 April 2025.**

**Liersch Group**: Tuesday, 4:00pm at Jill & Alan Price's, Inverloch.

**In recess until after the school holidays.**

**Tonya's group**: Friday, 1.30 pm at Liz Watkins', Inverloch.

**In recess until 2 May 2025.**

***Interested in being part of a Bible Study Group?***

***Then let Graeme, Susan or Leah in the office know.***

***We're hoping to start a new group soon.***



### **Next Men's Breakfast**

**Saturday the 3<sup>RD</sup> May 8am at St George's**  
**Please let Graeme know if you're coming or**  
**register online at**

**[https://www.basscoastanglican.org.au/event-  
details/mens-breakfast-2025-05-03-08-00](https://www.basscoastanglican.org.au/event-details/mens-breakfast-2025-05-03-08-00)**

**Or use the QR Code.**



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## **SAFE CHURCH AWARENESS WORKSHOPS**

### **(Full and Refresher combined) 2025**

**Location: St Mary's Anglican Church, 114 Ridgway, Mirboo North, Victoria**

**Date: Friday 2 May 2025 Time: 6.00pm to 8.30pm**

**Online registration is essential: <https://www.trybooking.com/CZVDA>**

**Enquiries only: 03 5144 2044 or [registryoffice@gippsanglican.org.au](mailto:registryoffice@gippsanglican.org.au)**



## **CONTINUING WAR IN UKRAINE**

Please continue to pray for Alison Giblets (CMS UK) and her safety as she is now home in Kyiv, Ukraine, after some leave in the UK.

### **Her Prayer Requests:**

- Victory for Ukraine.
  - Protection for those who are defending the country.
  - Protection for electrical power stations.
  - For both physical and spiritual strength.
  - That Schools will continue to function well.
  - That many will hear and accept the Word of God for salvation.
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## **PRAY FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY THE CONFLICT** **IN GAZA, LEBANON, SYRIA AND ISRAEL**

Almighty and Everlasting God: thank you for your everlasting love toward us; we thank you for the present cease fire in Gaza and ask that it will continue. We lift up those in the Holy Land who are victims of the current conflict, and ask that you might empower your Church to bring healing to the wounded, relief to the suffering, and comfort to those who mourn; please bring an end to terrorism, and that all will be led to work for justice and lasting peace in the land where your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, first came to bring hope and abundant life to all people; these things we ask in his Holy Name. **Amen.**

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### **SEDER MEAL**

This year's Seder Meal will be held at The Church of the Ascension, Inverloch on Maundy Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> of April 2025. If you would like to attend please book online or

advise the office by phone: 5672 4590 or email:

[admin@basscoastanglican.org.au](mailto:admin@basscoastanglican.org.au) or so that we are able to cater correctly.





## **ON THIS DAY: Paul the Deacon Became History**



Historians owe a lot to Paul the Deacon. Born into a noble Lombard family, Paul was given the best possible education for that largely unschooled day. He became a monk and used his learning to record the history and myths of his people, the Lombards. His book was one of the first German histories authored by a German, although even then it was written in Latin, the language of scholarship. Since most of its sources have vanished, our knowledge would be poorer without it. It was copied and recopied into the fifteenth century.

Early in his life, Paul's skill as a writer caused a duchess to ask him to expand Eutropius' *History of Rome*. Paul added six books to it and this was widely copied during the Middle Ages.

Later his pen may have helped win the release of his brother, who was held captive for his part in an uprising. Paul wrote an elegy to mollify Charlemagne's anger. When this did not seem to work, he travelled North to Charlemagne's court. The great king employed Paul for four years and freed his brother.

Charlemagne made it his policy to encourage Christian learning. He saw Christianity as the glue to bind his empire together. Paul compiled a history of the bishops of Metz in which he declared Charlemagne was a relative of the popular and holy Bishop Arnulf, who had lived a century and a half earlier. This served to legitimize the king and strengthen his ties with popular Christianity. Paul also revised a compilation of sermons of the Church Fathers. This book remained popular for centuries. So did his commentary on the rule of St. Benedict.

Paul died **on this day, April 13, 799**. Many of his epitaphs, letters and poems have survived. Here is how he describes an attack on Italy: "Presently, resenting some aggressions of the exarch of Ravenna, King Agilulf straightway marched out of Pavia with a great army and attacked the city of Perugia, and there for some days he besieged Maurisio, the duke of the Lombards who had gone over to the Romans, and speedily took him and slew him. The blessed Pope Gregory was so sorely alarmed at the approach of this king that he ceased from his commentary upon the temple mentioned in Ezekiel, as he himself declares in his homilies. King Agilulf then, when matters were settled, returned to Pavia, and not long afterward, upon the special instigation of his wife, Queen Theudelinda - since the blessed Pope Gregory had frequently so admonished her in his letters - he concluded a firm peace with the same most holy Pope Gregory and with the Romans..."

*Dan Graves*

[www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/601-900/paul-the-deacon](http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/601-900/paul-the-deacon)

## **Intercessory Prayers:**

***Please pray with us for:***

**Our Bishop:** Richard Treloar & Leanne

**Our Rector:** Graeme & Susan

**Parish of Leongatha:** Graham Knott, Damien King

**Diocese:** Education Programs, Ministry to Young People  
Spiritual Communities, Dispersed Abbey Community,  
Order of St. Luke

**Diocese of Grafton:** Bishop: Murray Harvey

**Special Focus:** International Red Cross, Doctors without Borders  
Legacy - War Widows & Families, United Nations

**Our Link Missionaries** – BCA, Topher & Chica Hallyburton – ‘Alice Springs’  
CMS, Lauren Raiter – ‘Spain’

**Please comfort and heal all those suffering in Spirit, Soul or Body.**

Please give people the courage to face their illness head on and to be assured of their salvation in Jesus Christ.

**Please bring healing and strength to those we have been asked to pray for:**

Bill Peters, Paula, Chris Peters, James, Murray, Doug, Ron & Pam Lawson, Jeffer & family, Simone, Mark, Marie Wilson, Don & Cecily, Robin, Tania, Russell, Hayley, Richard B, Lee, Bev, Elijah, Rodney W, Luke M, Terry, Micah, John G, Phil, Elizabeth, Jenny Rivers, Marnie Fletcher, Matt Fletcher, Barbara Manns, Valerie & Graeme Reid, Susan F, Glenda, Merridee, Florence H, Robert M, Pauline, Jenny, Rita, Betty, Peter, Elizabeth M, Jill, Robert D, Dianne B, Dianne, Alison, Ian & Wendy.

**We give thanks for the faithful departed.** We thank you Lord for the lives of Ian McLennan, Noreen Westley, Kate Sweatman & Thelma Kee and all those who have gone before us.

Please comfort all families & friends who are grieving at this time the loss of loved ones, especially the families of Ian McLennan, Noreen Westley, Kate Sweatman & Thelma Kee

## **INFORMATION**

<b>Readings Sun 20<sup>th</sup> April</b> Easter Sunday	Acts 10.34-43 1 Corinthians 15.19-26	Psalm 118.1-2, 14-24 John 20.1-18
<b>Tuesday April 15<sup>th</sup></b>	10:00 am – Ascension – H.C. – Rev. Graeme 11:30 am - Prayer group – Inverloch	
<b>Wednesday April 16<sup>th</sup></b>	10:00 am – St George's - H.C. – Rev. Graeme	
<b>Maundy Thursday</b> <b>April 17<sup>th</sup></b>	10.00 am – Staff Meeting, St George's. 6:30pm – Seder Meal service - Inverloch	
<b>Good Friday April 18<sup>th</sup></b>	9:00am Good Friday Liturgy – Inverloch 10:30am Good Friday Liturgy - Wonthaggi	

### **Rosters: April 20<sup>th</sup> – Easter Sunday – Holy Communion**

<u><b>Activity</b></u>	<u><b>St George's</b></u>	<u><b>Church of the Ascension</b></u>
<b>Bible Reader</b>	Leah Mesley	Liz Watkins
<b>Sides Person</b>	Rev. John	Ray
<b>Prayers</b>	Robert Mesley	Ray Smith
<b>Service Leader</b>	Rev Susan	Liz Watkins
<b>Eucharistic Assist</b>	Rev Susan	Liz Watkins
<b>Musician</b>	Jan Kershaw	Tonya Hackett
<b>Children's Ministry</b>		Rev Susan

*If you are unable to fulfil your roster position, would you please organise for someone else to take your place.*



### **Inverloch & Wonthaggi Church Working Bees**

Church of the Ascension - The 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the Month @ 10.00 am. The next, tomorrow, the 7<sup>th</sup> of April.

St George's – Normally the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the Month @ 10.00 am however, the next will be Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> of May

If you would like to help give the church a freshening up and enjoy morning tea together this would be most welcome.

*Please speak with Alycia & Liz for more details at Inverloch*

*Please speak with Leah for more details at St George's*

## Ministry Team

**Bishop:** Rt. Rev. Dr. Richard Treloar, Sale 5144 2044

**Rector:** Rev. Capt. Graeme Liersch 0417 513 390 (*Monday-Day Off*)

[graemel@basscoastanglican.org.au](mailto:graemel@basscoastanglican.org.au)

### **Youth & Young Families**

**Minister:** Rev. Susan Liersch 0427 099 391 [susanl@basscoastanglican.org.au](mailto:susanl@basscoastanglican.org.au)

**Pastoral Care Coordinator:** Leah Mesley

**Parish Council +**

**Retired Clergy:** Rev's John Davies 5672 4710, Liam Matthews 0411 339 344,  
& Rev. Canon Amy Turner 0412 727 711

**Rector's Warden:** Alan Price 0407 343 876

**People's Wardens:** Robert Mesley 0416 246 349

Liz Watkins 0404 379 005      Ray Smith 0419 315 198

**Parish Treasurer:** Geoff Boer

**Parish Office Worker:** Leah Mesley 0407 337 236 (2 mornings/week–Wed & Thurs)

**Parish Postal Address:** PO Box 201, Wonthaggi 3995. Phone: 5672 4590

**Welfare Support:** Rev. Graeme

**Food Rescue:** Ron Osborne

**Prayer requests for prayer chain:** Jill Price 0409 745 554

**Parish E-mail:** [admin@basscoastanglican.org.au](mailto:admin@basscoastanglican.org.au)

**Parish Website:** <http://www.basscoastanglican.org.au>

**Direct Debit:** Would you please, if you haven't already, consider giving to the ministry through setting up a direct debit from your account. Thank you!

**Our Bank Details:** Anglican Parish of Wonthaggi & Inverloch

**BSB:** 083-975 **Acc No:** 51 612 6552



*Thank you to all who have already set up this means to support the Parish!*

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## **TODAY!**

### **HOPE 25 OPEN MIC EVENT**

at the Wonthaggi 'Good's Shed'

From **2 – 5pm**

**Free Entry.** Come along - Play Music, Sing or be entertained.

We're looking for a group to sing.

*Speak with Rev. Susan or Ellen Hubble for more info'.*





## MY STORY – MAL FLETCHER

I was born the second child of 6 children in 1949.

Mum sent me to Sunday School at the Anglican Church in Whittlesea where the teacher, Mrs Quinton, made the bible stories come alive – we didn't mess around in her class because it was so interesting, although, along with some other boys, instead of "Jesus Saves – Jesus Saves", we would sing "Jesus shaves – Jesus shaves". Even so, Jesus' beard remained intact.

Anyhow, I learnt a lot about Jesus. As I grew up, I read the Bible in church, got confirmed about 12 – 13, became an altar boy and was part of the Church Youth Group. When I reached the age of 16 ½ - 17, another Minister came, the Rev Fred James, a very caring, spiritual man who wanted people to know Jesus personally. One day we were having a chat in his new HR Holden and he saw in me a very religious youth, who was somehow spiritually empty. So he suggested that I attend, with some others, the 'Youth For Christ' rallies in Melbourne. We went to a few, then, one particular speaker challenged me with Revelation, Chapter 3, verse 20.

It depicts Jesus standing at the door of our lives and knocking. He doesn't force his way in but lovingly and patiently waits for us to open the door and let him in. My response was "Lord Jesus, thank you for shedding your blood on that cruel cross for me – please come into my life – I repent of my sins – forgive me". What a relief. A great burden had been lifted. I went from being very religious, knowing about Jesus, to knowing Him personally as Saviour and Friend. This was when the Holy Spirit convicted and converted me. In other words, I was "Born again". From that time on, when I read my bible, I knew God was speaking to me.

I'm very aware now that my choices in every aspect of living needed to be based on God's Word. When I sin, it is crucial to repent quickly and get on with living for the Lord.

Jesus warns us, "There will be trouble in this world" but he tells us not to be afraid as he will be with us always. I love claiming biblical promises by faith – like, "The Joy of the Lord is your strength".

In 2014 when I retired after 50 years of work, I was diagnosed with having blood-bone cancer, "plasmacytoma", which developed into "multiple myeloma".

It ate part of my vertebrae away, so on Boxing Day of 2014, a dedicated team of Theatre staff at Monash Hospital, Clayton, with an amazing surgeon, cut out what cancer they could without damaging my spinal cord and fitted a titanium cage. It took 9 ½ hours.

Then followed rehabilitation, learning to walk again, radiation, all sorts of procedures, bone marrow samples, a bit of pain and 3 or 4 chemotherapy trials to find one that suited me. But, to be honest, through all of that I was not afraid or worried because I knew that the Spirit of Jesus was with me through it all and working through the many beautiful medical people who were helping me and fellow Christians were praying too. The cancer has been under control now for many years with 3 monthly monitoring – “Praise the Lord”. My GP checked the scar on my back at one stage and said to his nurse “Malcolm is one of the luckiest men alive”. Later on I thought about that and said “am I lucky because I survived”? What if I had died on the operating table, would that make me unlucky? No! Rather, I am blessed beyond the curse of sin and death to be alive; and, even if I had died, I would still be blessed beyond the curse because I would be with the Lord forever.

I’ll continue to follow Jesus, no matter what happens in life. His Grace is sufficient. Even when it is hard I still want to speak Jesus to others.

I neglected to mention that interestingly, the nurse told me as she was pulling out the staples that the tape over my wound was in the shape of a cross and she hadn’t seen the surgeon do that before. The surgeon happened to be Jewish and knew before the operation that I was a Christian. I think the ‘cross’ was a beautiful sign of respect for each other.

Cheers from Mal.

### **Sharing your faith story**

is an important part of evangelism. We are seeking faith stories from members of our church family to put into our newsletter Hope25 insert. Graeme has provided a how-to-write your story video to help you do this. You can find this on our church website:

<https://www.basscoastanglican.org.au/projects-6>



To sign up to the Hope25 email list go to:

<https://www.hope25.com.au/> or scan the QR code.

The next HOPE25 Meeting will be at 2.00 pm, Wednesday 23 April at St George’s, Wonthaggi.