



**2 APRIL 2023**



## Palm Sunday

### Welcome

Welcome to worship, we hope you enjoy being with us.

### Easter Services

Good Friday	7th April	9am
Easter Sunday	9th April	9am

### Easter Sunday Flowers

On Easter Sunday morning, the bare cross will be transformed with fresh flowers. If you are able, please bring along some flowers from your garden. During the service we will all have a chance to bring our flowers forward to transform the cross.

### Happy Birthday

In celebration of Dorothy turning 70 on Monday, Dorothy's family and friends will be having a small get together at Central Gardens, Merrylands on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April.

They will be on the Merrylands Road side of the park and will have a gazebo with balloons up and will be there between 11am - 2pm.

Feel free to drop by and say hello or stay for cake at about 1pm.

### Lectionary Readings

**This week 2 April, 2023  
(Palm Sunday)**

Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Philippians 2:5-11  
Matthew 21:1-11

### Holy Week Readings

#### Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14  
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19  
1 Corinthians 11:23-26  
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

#### Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13- 53:12  
Psalm 22  
Hebrews 10:16-25 or  
Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9  
John 18:1-19:42

#### Easter Saturday

Job 14:1-14 or  
Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24  
Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16  
1 Peter 4:1-8  
Matthew 27:57-66 or  
John 19:38-42

#### Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43 or  
Jeremiah 31:1-6  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
Colossians 3:1-4  
John 20:1-18 or  
Matthew 28:1-10



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## **Gail's Message**

Over the last few weeks we have heard and reflected upon several key texts from the Gospel of John. As I mentioned last week in worship, John includes these narratives because he wants us to be sure about Jesus' identity before we hear about his arrest, his death and his Resurrection. In each key text there is an important theological statement; the Samaritan woman learns that Jesus offers us living water because he is the Messiah (John 4), the man born blind sees Jesus as the Son of Man (John 9) and Martha identifies Jesus as the Son of God, come into the world (John 11).

This week, prompted by a recent online discussion about Evangelism, I noticed something else in these texts, people are all motivated to go and tell others about the things they have seen and heard. The Samaritan woman becomes one of the first Evangelists, inviting the people of her village to 'come and see', the man born blind stands up to the Judean religious authorities giving testimony to what he knows is true, and the witnesses to the raising of Lazarus take their accounts of the miracle back home with them to Jerusalem. We are told that some of them believe, others go and stir up trouble by telling the Pharisees. All of these characters openly express their eye witness accounts of seeing and hearing Jesus. We, on the other hand, are often reluctant, embarrassed and extremely hesitant about sharing our own testimony of faith. There are many reasons for this and as we journey together we will explore this aversion to evangelism. Through that process we will learn how to evangelise with gentleness, honesty, vulnerability and respect.

NCLS research includes Faith Sharing, which is a less nuanced, gentler word for Evangelism, as one of the nine core qualities of church vitality. The researchers note that "Jesus calls his people to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19, 20). The Acts of the Apostles shows that, for the early church, fulfilling this mission involved a readiness to proclaim the Good News about Jesus in anticipation of the conversion of people to the faith and their inclusion in the fellowship of believers. Our research has found that church attenders are involved in outreach to varying degrees. For some, this involves an active engagement, taking part in the outreach activities of their church or initiating discussion at home, work or on social occasions.

This Easter may we be filled with wonder, awe and gratitude for the great thing God has done and may that spill over into our lives so that we are inspired to go and tell. **Amen.**

(For further reading here is the link to the NCLS nine core qualities of church vitality: <https://www.ncls.org.au/articles/nine-core-qualities/>)