Greystanes Grapevine
The weekly newsletter of Greystanes Uniting Church

15 MARCH 2026

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

Lectionary Readings

This week 15 March, 2026

1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 23
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

Next week 22 March, 2026

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

Ministerial Leave

Rev Gail is still on leave for another week. If you have any pastoral concerns during this time, please contact one of the ministry team or Sue in the office.

It's our Birthday!!

The Op Shop turns 25 this month and you get the presents!

To help celebrate we are having a half-price sale starting on Monday for the next few weeks.

We're open 9.30-3.30 Mon-Fri and 9-12 on Sat at 37 Dell St Woodpark.

A PSALM OF DAVID

PSALM 23

The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever.

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Lent 4: Seeing Clearly at the Cross
Readings: Psalm 23; John 9: 1-12, 30–41; Mark 15:16–20

What does it mean to see clearly?

In Mark's Gospel, we are taken into the Praetorium. The soldiers gather, they mock, strike and spit on Jesus, it's organised humiliation and a spectacle for the crowd. And here is the irony: they think they see clearly. They believe they know exactly who he is, a threat neutralised, a false king. But in truth, they are blind. Blind to the nature of real kingship. Blind to the presence of God standing in front of them. Blind to the love that does not retaliate.

Which brings us to John 9 where Jesus heals a man who has been blind from birth. The physical miracle is remarkable, but the longer story is not about the physical eyesight, it is about spiritual sight. The Pharisees question him, they interrogate him & they judge him. But John's Gospel gently asks us: is it possible to hold conviction and still remain humble about what we cannot see? Spiritual blindness is not about lack of intelligence. It is about the assumption that we already know it all. The soldiers at the cross think they know who Jesus is. The Pharisees think they know how God works. And yet the truly sighted one in John 9 is the man who says, quite simply, "Lord, I believe.", he speaks with simple trust.

And that brings us to Psalm 23.
"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Psalm 23 is not the language of certainty in self, it is the language of trust in another. It assumes vulnerability.

At the cross in Mark 15, Jesus embodies Psalm 23 in a way we might not expect. He walks through the darkest valley. He entrusts himself to the Father. The Shepherd becomes the one who walks into the valley first.

And perhaps this is the quiet invitation for us this Lent.
Not to pretend we have not heard these passages before, or to manufacture novelty, but let's allow them to examine us differently at this stage of life.

Where might we still be blind? Blind in our judgements? Blind in our assumptions? Blind in the way we assess others, perhaps other generations, perhaps those who see the world differently? Spiritual maturity is not about accumulating answers. It is about deepening trust.

So what does it mean to see clearly?

I think it is about seeing more clearly through our faith and knowing that:
Faith is not about closing our eyes, but trusting the Shepherd when we cannot see the whole path.
All of us, though our lives, will walk through valleys we did not anticipate. We have and will experience loss, illness, change, uncertainty about the future, of church and even society.
Psalm 23 does not deny the valley. It promises presence.
And at the cross in Mark, we see how far that presence goes.
The Shepherd does not stand at a distance and call instructions. The Shepherd enters the valley of humiliation, injustice, suffering.
The crown of thorns reveals not weakness, but a love that refuses to abandon.

- Ayesha