

M U C

Magazine

The News and Views of the
Murrumbeena Uniting Church



To make Christ known by preaching the
gospel in word and deed

CONTACT DETAILS

Church Office: 9568 8177

E-mail:

office@murrumbeenauniting.org.au

<http://murrumbeenauniting.org.au/>

117 Murrumbeena Road,

Murrumbeena, VIC 3163



The Uniting Church in Australia
MURRUMBEENA UNITING CHURCH

February – March 2021

MINISTRY TEAM

REV. JAY ROBINSON

Minister
jay@murrumbidgeeanauniting.org.au
 0410 465 836



PASTOR KELLY SKILTON

Pastor for the Young Adults and the Sonder Collective.
kelly@murrumbidgeeanauniting.org.au
 0432 714 758



ZAK HANYN

Families' and Children's Ministry Coordinator.
zak@murrumbidgeeanauniting.org.au
 9568 8177



CHURCH COUNCIL



CHAIR:

Alison Campbell
Rate
 0438 569 690



TREASURER:

Greg Pressey



Doug Faram

Also responsible for Pastoral Care
 0422 033 283



Jo Petzer



Rachel Dart
 Minutes Secretary



Margaret Reid



Dave Robinson
 Correspondence Secretary

ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS

Community Garden
 Craft Circle
 Drop In
 Adult Fellowship
 Friendship Fellas (Men's Group)
 LIFT (Women's Group)

THE CHURCH

Adult Bible Studies
 Pastoral Care
 Worship Band
 Lending Library

YOUNG ADULTS (18-35)

Getaway
 Sonder Collective
 Studies
 Sunday Brunch

YOUTH (13-17)

Camps
 Youthy

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Families
 » F.E.A.S.T
 » Family Craft Days
 » Family Movie Days
 Kids
 » Countdown to Christmas
 » Kids' Time
 mainly music

GLENDAL LEIGH

Culture of Safety contact person
 9568 8177



I mentioned in my Editorial for the December/January MUC MAG that I believe we will be living in a COVID-restricted manner for many years to come. The recent evidence of the outbreaks in Japan and Korea make it clear that we must never become complacent, thinking that we are doing okay and we know what to do. We can never return to the "good old days" for how we (particularly as a church) used to do things.

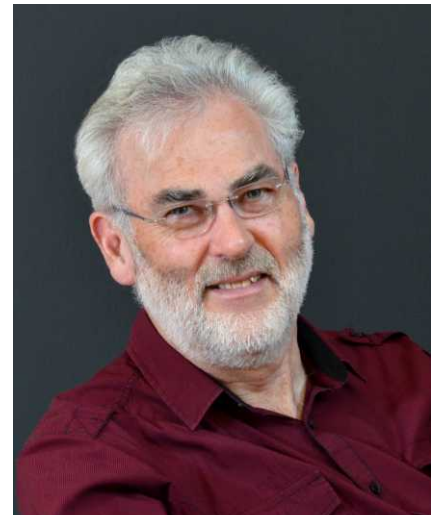
Consequently, Murrumbeena Uniting Church is embarking on a course of action which will lead to a new plan or roadmap for the direction we should take, what our priorities should be, how we can best be an instrument of God in our community, and how to make the best use of the resources we have. Jay has spoken about this each week during January to encourage us to put our thinking caps on and contemplate these sorts of questions, to voice our thoughts and also listen to what others have to say.

Already during 2020 we have demonstrated that we can adapt to changing circumstances and continue to be a living witness to Christ Jesus. We have learnt new skills and developed new ways of doing things. Let us take the time now to listen carefully for God's calling, so that we continue to make Christ known by preaching the Gospel in word and deed.

I know you were expecting an Editorial which would pique your interest for reading the articles in this edition, but instead I swapped hats for my "Chair of the Congregation" to seek your thoughts and inputs to our new mission plan.

Roger McCowan

Please e-mail articles to: triumphguru@gmail.com, or hand them to Roger on a Sunday, preferably no later than 14th March.



CONTACTS

With the easing of COVID19 restrictions, some group activities are resuming (all need approval of Church Council before re-commencing). If you wish to find out a bit more about any one of the groups, the contact details for the various groups that host these events are given here.

Friendship Fellas

Roger McCowan 0439 711 381
Geoff Edwards 0409 568 206

Lending Library

Anne Don 9578 4217

LIFT

Mary-Lou Keur 0409 937 727
Roz Franklin 0403 762 695

Murrumbeena Community Garden

Kay Pentland
Glynis Ramsay 0407 506 662

Murrumbeena Uniting Afternoon Fellowship Group

Anne Don 9578 4217

Women's Bible Study

Alison Campbell Rate
0438 569 690

Thursday Pancake Drop-In

Pam Wight 0459 226 070

mainly music

9568 8177

Knitting and Craft Circle

Glynis Ramsay 0407 506 662

Sonder Collective

Kelly Skilton 0432 714 758

Youth Band

David Robinson 0439 610 960

As well as our own website at <https://www.murrumbeenauniting.org.au/> you might find the following links of interest (if you haven't already).

facebook.com/murrumbeenauniting/ - Live stream of 10:00am Worship and Service

murrumbeenauniting.online.church - Live stream of 10:00am Worship and Service

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-v0xIBPkGfZJcOl062yCjg/> - recorded Service

FROM THE MINISTER...

Welcome to the first edition of our 2021 MUC Mag. Thank you to all who have given articles and pieces to this edition, and of course thank you to Roger for putting this all together.

I want to share a bit about our theme for this year.

Over the last couple of years our overarching theme has been Grounded as God's People. We've used this theme as we've explored what it means to be grounded as the people of God in this place and at this time. I don't need to remind you how important that grounding was during the last 12 months, and as we come out for, at least for now, immediate COVID restrictions into whatever COVID normal is going to look like our connections, live streaming and recording, delivery of printed material, phone calls and emails have all kept us grounded.

As we move into a new year, and into whatever it may be that this year brings, the opportunity to move our overarching theme came to be.

A step forward to our being grounded as God's people was to abide or dwell in God. We've needed to dwell in God during 2020 as we've put our trust in God. Our focus on Christmas morning of God with us really told the story of 2020 for most of us. There are many scripture passages that talk of God being with us, Emmanuel, and the image of the vine and branches is but one of these. So, as we considered our theme for 2021 "I am the vine and you are the branches" came to into being.

As you will have heard during worship, or read in the pewsheets, or watched on Facebook, or any of our other media forms, we have some decisions to make regarding our mission and directions forward. We are blessed with bequests that have enabled us to continue what we have been doing but those bequests will only last a certain length of time. Our lack of income during 2020 has also impacted our financial situation and so we need to take stock of where we are, where we are being called to, and how we are going to do it all.

Now, I'm not a gardener. In fact, I am better known for killing plants than making them thrive, but that's ok because Bruce more than makes up for my lack of skill and patience. Within the congregation of Murrumbidgee UC we have a number of different people with a number of different skills who are all needed as we continue to be God's people at this time and in this place.

One of the things I like about the theme of "I am the vine and you are the branches" is the knowledge that vines and branches grow. They reach out to find solid structures to grow, and they have fruit that gives nourishment and life to others. Even though I am not a gardener I do that know vines and branches need fertiliser, water, sunshine and care to grow, but they also need to be pruned from time to time to encourage more growth. So, at this time for us we need to be seeking to grow our gifts, skills and people but also be prepared to prune things that are not working or helping us grow.

As the year continues there will be opportunities to get involved in our "bunches", groups of connection and fellowship, there will be opportunities to gather for bible study and other discipleship activities and there will be opportunities to connect with our community more.

I hope and pray that you will join this journey of discovery as we continue to explore ways in which we can "Make Christ known by preaching the gospel in word and deed."

Taking the journey with you....

Jay



LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY/MARCH

You might have noticed that at the beginning of last year we moved to using the NRSV translation of the Bible. A change from the Good News Bible and a move to a closer translation to the originally written language. The NRSV is the translation that most biblical scholars use in their study. If you don't have a copy of this translation and would like one just let Jay or Kelly know and we'll get you one for home.

February and March bring us through the season of Lent into Easter. A time to reflect and be challenged and that is exactly what will happen. We're going to use this time of Lent to reflect and explore our mission and financial ability to fund that mission. The season of Lent is traditionally a time to give up something, to prepare for Easter and take the time for reflection. We'll also create time for our Lenten Bible Study/s with the hope that Rev

Heeyoung Lim will lead us through this series. There will also be the possibilities for a joint event with Coatesville and Leighmoor on Good Friday - we'll see. Our bunches should also be up and running and we look forward to sharing fellowship together in these groups.

31 st January	Luke 6:1-16	Healing on the Sabbath
7 th February	Luke 7:1-17	Raising the widow's son
14 th February	Luke 9:28-45	Transfiguration
17 th February	Luke 9:51-62	Ash Wednesday - Jesus turns to Jerusalem
21 st February	Luke 10:25-42	Lent 1/Good Samaritan
28 th February	Luke 13:1-9, 31-35	Lent 2/Lament over Jerusalem
7 th March	Luke 15:1-32	Lent 3/Lost sheep, coin, son
14 th March	Luke 16:19-31	ent 4/Rich man and Lazarus
21 st March	Luke 18:31-19:10	Lent 5/Zacchaeus
28 th March	Luke 19:29-44	Palm/Passion Sunday
1 st April	Luke 22:1-27	Maundy Thursday
2 nd April		Good Friday
4 th April	Luke 24:1-12	Easter Sunday/Communion

**MORE
INFORMATION
TO COME**



**MURRUMBEENA
STREET PARTY**

**MUSIC, FOOD,
FACE PAINTING,
COMMUNITY & MORE**



SAVE THE DATE

MARCH 7 • 4PM - 8PM

BUNCHES

I am sure that there are some curious mumbles around the church when the ministry team keeps talking about 'bunch groups'. As the weeks go on I hope that they're becoming clearer. If you have missed the updates, we have been journeying toward smaller groups for us as the community of Murrumbeena UC. These groups, we hope, will help us grow in faith and offer a place for the whole congregation to speak and be heard. The ministry team has prayerfully looked over lists, friendships and families so that people will not feel alone but can also get to know members of the Murrumbeena community.

Our aim is for the congregation to be able to meet together in six different groups. We will be sharing these names in the coming weeks, but the groups we have created have taken time and thought, including the name that we have chosen for them: Bunches.

These bunches not only are about a group of us 'bunching' together, but emphasises one of Murrumbeena's most beautiful features - our beautiful grapevines. It has been these vines that have brought us to our theme for this year: 'I am the vine, you are the branches'. This theme is a reminder we get from John 15 and who we are in relationship and connection to God. What a perfect year for us to grow closer together with these groups across the church.



Each group has a colour, and these are based off different varieties of grapes that grow. Whether you are in Red, Purple, Yellow, White, Black, or Green, we hope that these groups can help our faith and community grow, be fruitful and continue to abide in God.

Kelly

COUNCIL CORNER

MONEY FOR MISSION

Council received three responses from members of the congregation about the Money For Mission Scheme. Thank you to those who submitted their questions and comments. A subcommittee (Rachel Dart, Jo Petzer and Heather Welsh) is liaising with Presbytery representative Elizabeth Adam to gather further information and look at 159 and 113 Murrumbeena Rd in detail in relation to the scheme and what steps would have to be taken if we were to proceed. We will also continue to gather information from Uniting about the possible use of 159 for social housing so both options can be compared.

MUC members will be given updates on the progress of these investigations. Any proposed decision about property will go to a meeting of the congregation for voting.

Alison Campbell Rate

Chair, Church Council

CONTRIBUTIONS, SERVICES, FINANCES AND VOLUNTEERS

When you take a large look at the Murrumbeena community there are countless groups, events and gatherings that make Murrumbeena Uniting Church home. Whether it is Outreach, Evangelism, Teaching, Mission, Facilities... the list goes on... our aims all revolve around Reaching our community, Giving to those in need, and Growing our faith.

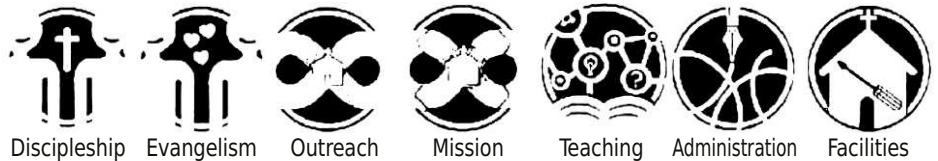
Some of us are involved by being part of every group and volunteer team we have here at MUC. For others their expression of church is coming along to a group outside the church and giving time to the community. Then there are those who help with time and who give financially so that all people are able to experience the love and understanding of Jesus. No matter what group we find ourselves in, there are three main things that keep these group ticking:

- » Reaching,
- » Giving, and
- » Growing.

If you have ever wondered what the Ministry Team gets up to outside of a Sunday morning, we spend our time finding ways we can help people and connect community together. We spend our time connecting volunteers, creating a safe environment for all people, training individuals, administration and advertising, resourcing and networking for those in our community to grow, making sure that we have budgeted and financed appropriately so that people's money goes straight to helping Jesus be known. It is a lot of work, and the Ministry Team and Church Council continues to work hard into 2021, where we are all hoping to get a wider voice in the areas we are moving as a church community.

We have spent some time sharing where these functions are across the church and we hope that these images and descriptions will help us, as the whole community, be able to understand where our finance and volunteer capacity goes. We will be looking at these areas as we lead up to the AGM, and we hope that these snapshots help share a bit more about the areas of Murrumbeena where we Reach, Give and Grow.

Kelley



Discipleship Evangelism Outreach Mission Teaching Administration Facilities

LIFT

The LIFT breakfast recommenced in December with a feeling of joy to share a conversation and some food with the LIFT ladies who had not met since early 2020.

I must admit it was a wonderful feeling to be out of lock down and enjoying a cup of coffee in a real cup.

This year 2021 the group will be meeting monthly on the 4th Saturday of the month at 9am to share thoughts and discuss some new themes. Next meeting we will be focusing on resilience and what this has meant in lockdown to us all. I invite all to come along on Saturday the 30th at Cafe Del Mar, hope to see some new faces as well as the participants of 2020. Please reach out if you have any queries on my mobile 0401282640.

Blessings and let's continue to stay safe,

Mary-lou Keur



Hello people of Murrumbidgee Uniting Church,

I do hope you are all well and have had an enjoyable summer break. As I am writing this, Christmas is drawing to a close but as you read this the new year will have dawned and we will have Blessed the wearers of the backpacks on their return for school.

What a year 2020 was, it had its challenges and Blessings. However, it was such a joy to gather together for the period of advent and to celebrate Christmas, the birth of Christ, God in flesh who is with each and every one of us.

I have spent the afternoon reflecting on things we learnt from 2020 and pondering what is to come for 2021. Countdown to Christmas finished yesterday and I am very grateful to all those who were

involved and willing to go with the flow in what very much was an event of uncharted waters. While our numbers were lower than usual, we were grateful for the participation of two new families to Countdown and the visit of Reverend Heeyoung Lim, from Leighmoor Uniting. We are excited to welcome Heeyoung to our neighbouring Church and look forward to getting to know her and Ministering with her. Our prayers are with you and Leighmoor.



Following Countdown I spent the afternoon undertaking a Spring (or should I more accurately say a summer) Clean of the movie room, Countdown to Christmas Room and the kids room. There is something very therapeutic about clearing out what was and preparing for what is. I can understand the appeal of the idiom that cleanliness is next to Godliness. There was a clarity of mind that came with the reorganisation of these sacred spaces, while the sorting and the cleaning was a tad arduous the joy intermingled with speckles of anticipation that came at the thought of our return to Kids Ministry in 2021 was what kept me going.



I also tidied my office (it is amazing what has piled up over the year) and in doing so, plugged in the phone on my desk for the first time. I hope it is a sign of more outward connection and sharing of the faith in the New Year. Plugging in the phone, gave me pause to think and wonder what could be.



The calls that would come in and the calls that would go out, the people that would come in and us the people that would go out and the prayers that are sent out will hopefully return to us in there God altered state.



I asked Kel, to write a question mark on the chalk board in the kids room, as I that is the space I am



sitting in. Questioning, wondering and planning for what 2021 may hold, I have ideas floating round my head, but I would love to hear where you all want to go. So bring your ideas, plans, dreams and visions about what you want to do with Murrumbenees and let's explore together in the new year.

I look forward to the New Year being ushered in, on the wings of a coloured dove. (see photo for reference)

May the God of mess, cleanliness & newness be with you all as you read this and always,

Zak.



FRIENDSHIP FELLAS

Resumed Friendship Fellas get-togethers have already proved good COVID-era therapy.

Breakfasts resumed at Del Mar Café, Carnegie, in November, and our photo captures a moment from revived dinners, a December meal at Paradai Thai, Carnegie.

For months, most members were locked in homes under government restrictions, and several spent time in hospitals. Shared regular phone calls were stress relief.

Many things changed during COVID, including the way eateries manage their facilities and finances.

The next breakfast for 2021 will be at Brew Bar, Hughesdale, at 8am Saturday 13th February, and brekky-goers will be able to pay individually. This is a previous Friendship Fellas venue.

A dinner will be on Tuesday, 23rd February, at a venue to be decided.

The January dinner was on 26th January. Australia Day was not be the same as past years, with Victoria scrapping the annual city parade and toning down other traditional activities. This dinner was our celebration.

Friendship Fellas, with around 14 members, is open to men, of all ages, who wish for regular camaraderie, laughs and sharing.

Breakfasts are usually every second Saturday in the month, and dinners every fourth Tuesday.

*Geoff Edwards and
Roger McCowan*



THE MURAL CROSS – RETURNED TO THE SANCTUARY

In the little Chapel to the south of the original Church entrance, among the historic windows and other items, there is a plaque which reads:

THE CROSS
WITHIN THE CHURCH
WAS ERECTED
TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN MEMORY OF
ALL THE SAINTS

In 1960, the Minister of the then St Giles Presbyterian Church, Rev. W.B. Howden, asked Neil Biggin, one of the younger members and an architect, to design a Cross for the Sanctuary wall. At that time the Sanctuary was at the western end of the Church.

The Cross, made of blackwood with gold paint inlay was a waxed finish, was dedicated on Sunday 29th April, 1962 by Rev. Howden. It was held high and central on the plain wall above the Pulpit, Communion Table, Organ, Choir Stalls and Baptismal Font, as a focal point for worship and a constant reminder of our faith in God's love and Christ's Resurrection. According to *The Church Record* of that time, Mr Howden defined THE SAINTS "as all (especially those within our Church) who had taken up their crosses daily and followed Christ."

In 2003, the four congregations of Neerim Road, St David's, Tara Grove and St Giles became one, worshipping on this site as Koornang Uniting Church, Murrumbeena. Then, in 2006, the Church building was redeveloped. The Sanctuary was changed to the southern side and the Cross was relocated to the south end of the Church's east wall, behind the pews.

This year, on Sunday 17th January, the Cross again faced the congregation from the Sanctuary as people entered and were seated. It is now raised up behind the Communion Table, between two older pairs of stained glass windows, both dedicated to the Glory of God. The pair on the left are in memory of Rev. Aeneas Macdonald, Minister of the Presbyterian congregation here from 1923 to 1945. The two on the right are in memory of his wife, Margaret, who died in 1943.



Our thanks go to Doug Faram who was responsible for this relocation.

Anne Don

Information from Church records and memories.

CHRISTMAS EVE CAROL SERVICE



SONDER COLLECTIVE 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

As odd as it sounds to share the highlights of 2020, there were some amazing things that happened through the Sonder Collective community. At the beginning of the year we ran a Trivia Night to raise money for the Bushfire Appeals, raising over \$1600.00 for those in need. It is amazing to think how quickly our focus changed from February to March, as though none of us forgot about the traumatic impact the fires have had across the country, the focus shifted to staying safe in the face of a global pandemic. We have all been wondering how to stay connected as a community over this time, but for the youth and young adults, though meeting online was different and difficult, it wasn't new.

In 2019 we had set up an online region for Sonder Collective, called SonderCloud. We realised that SonderCloud allows us to continue to connect with one another, but also interstate and globally for games nights, movie nights and Bible studies. This region became a centre point to 'Stay Connected and Start Connecting'. We met across many platforms like Zoom and Discord, including games like Jackbox, Among Us and even online bingo nights.

In April The Sonder Collective was able to be a part of the very first OmegaCon Gaming Camp. It ran online and it was a great experience to meet a whole bunch of new people and partner with this Christian Gaming community as we shared in faith and fun - we get to do this all over again in 2021.

The Embody Mission Network launched a podcast called 'Mission Unplugged' where they interview young people from across Australia who are actively doing mission on the ground. I was super excited as they asked me to be the very first episode sharing about my life experience, starting The Sonder Collective, and of course sharing about how Murrumbeena UC blesses this ministry to 35 churches. If you want to know where you can find it, speak to me and I can connect you through.

One other thing that we tried to do is find new ways to continue to connect with the youth community, and in doing so we realised that there is no Australian-made Christian magazine aimed at youth and young people - because of this we have started a little mag called 'The Skinny'. Every month it releases a new edition, focusing on bible study tips, devotions, games, leader testimonials, game reviews, resilience tips and ways to do social justice from home. It started as a way to connect with the young people at Murrumbeena UC, but at the moment it goes out to 30-40 people, so we will continue to share with those who need.

The other regions of Murrumbeena, Bayside and Yonder quietened down a lot due to the nature of the pandemic, though for 2021 we are excited and have some new things planned:

- » We are looking at creating a Committee for the future running of The Sonder Collective (if this interests you, get in contact!).
- » We are finding new ways to connect together via social media.
- » The Bayside region has found a home base, which is going to bring exciting opportunities.
- » Our focus is going to be on camps where we can gather together in a safe manner.
- » A website update.

And of course we will continue to pray together, and I cannot be thankful enough for the region coordinators, volunteers, supporters and those who continue to champion The Sonder Collective across Victoria.

Kelly Skilton



CALENDAR - FEBRUARY/MARCH 2021

Date	Time	Event
Wed, 3 Feb	7:00pm - 9:00pm	Church Council & Elders
Fri, 5 Feb	10:30am - 11:30am	Coffee with Jay
Sat, 6 Feb	2:00pm - 5:00pm	Craft Group
Sun, 7 Feb	10:00am - 11:30am	Worship (Holy Communion)
	5:30pm - 7:00pm	Sonder Collective
Fri, 12 Feb	10:30am - 11:30am	Coffee with Jay
Sat, 13 Feb	8:00am - 9:00am	Friendship Fellas' Breakfast
Sun, 14 Feb	10:00am - 11:30am	Worship
Wed, 17 Feb	7:30pm - 8:15pm	Ash Wednesday Service
Fri, 19 Feb	10:30am - 11:30am	Coffee with Jay
Sun, 21 Feb	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship
	5:30pm - 7:00pm	Sonder Collective
Tue, 23 Feb	5:45pm - 7:30pm	Friendship Fellas' Dinner
Fri, 26 Feb	10:30am - 11:30am	Coffee with Jay
Sat, 27 Feb	9:00am - 10:30am	LIFT Women's Breakfast
Sun, 28 Feb	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship
	11:30am - 12:30pm	Library and Lunch
Wed, 3 Mar	7:00pm - 9:00pm	Church Council
Fri, 5 Mar	10:30am - 11:30am	Coffee with Jay
	7:30pm - 8:30pm	Elders' Meeting
Sat, 6 Mar	2:00pm - 5:00pm	Craft Group
Sun, 7 Mar	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship (Holy Communion)
	4:00pm - 8:00pm	Murrumbeena Street Party
Fri, 12 Mar	10:30am - 11:30am	Coffee with Jay
Sat, 13 Mar	8:00am - 9:00am	Friendship Fellas' Breakfast
Sun, 14 Mar	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship
		Deadline for submission of articles for MUC Mag
Fri, 19 Mar	10:30am - 11:30am	Coffee with Jay
Sun, 21 Mar	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship
	5:30pm - 7:00pm	Sonder Collective
Tue, 23 Mar	6:00pm - 7:30pm	Friendship Fellas' Dinner
Fri, 26 Mar	10:30am - 11:30am	Coffee with Jay
Sat, 27 Mar	9:00am - 10:30am	LIFT Women's Breakfast
Sun, 28 Mar	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship
Mon, 29 Mar	7:30pm - 8:15pm	Holy Week Service
Tue, 30 Mar	7:30pm - 8:15pm	Holy Week Service
Wed, 31 Mar	7:30pm - 8:15pm	Holy Week Service
Thu, 1 Apr	7:30pm - 8:30pm	Maundy Thursday Service
Fri, 2 Apr	9:30am - 10:30am	Good Friday Service
Sat, 3 Apr	2:00pm - 5:00pm	Craft Group
Sun, 4 Apr	10:00am - 11:00am	Worship, Easter Day (Communion)