



THE OPEN DOOR MAGAZINE



April 2026

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The Vicar's Letter

Dear all

I hope you have had a peace filled and joyous Easter. I share with you on this month's magazine the Easter sermon preach on Easter morning.

Easter means many things to us as Christians. It's too big a miracle to mean just one thing. Of course, Easter clearly means that Christ is risen. It means that Jesus has defeated death - meaning that eternal life is real, that death doesn't end our life with God. That all who live and believe will never die. But that stone, that was rolled away from the tomb. I've been thinking about that stone this year.

All four gospels record that the stone was already rolled away by the time the women arrived – and I think this tells us something else about Easter that I think is quite significant. It tells us that Easter is also about the ways in which God removes obstacles in our life, those obstacles that try to keep us from God, and try to stop us from living the life that God has called us to live.

Today is a good day to reflect on the large stones in our life. Those obstacles that are keeping us from living the full abundant life with Christ, here and now. Think about

those challenges that are trying to keep you in your tombs, so to speak. Those battles that paralyze you with fear, that trap you, that try to stop you from living, really living. And then think about what Easter teaches us about how God plans to remove those stones.

Let's start with Peter and the other men who were following Jesus, his first disciples. Notice that they don't appear in our gospel readings for Easter Day? They're not going to the tomb to help the women remove the stone as you'd imagine they would need to. No! They're all locked away in a room, afraid for their lives. They'd created a tomb for themselves and put a stone of their making over it. The last thing they wanted was for



that stone to be rolled away. And that even includes the leader of those disciples, Peter. Peter is the one who denied even knowing Jesus, after Jesus was arrested. And now, it seems that he's still denying knowing Jesus.

Peter, a name given to him by Jesus which literally means rock or stone - Peter is supposed to be the stone, the rock on which Christ will build his church. But that first Easter morning, the leader of the disciples is locked away with the other disciples, cowering in fear.

You might say, in Peter's case, that the stone Peter needs rolled away is himself. Sometimes that's true for us, isn't it? We get in our own way. We create our own tombs. And the stone covering the tomb is our very own self. Who will roll away that stone?

Well, after Jesus was raised from the dead, HE did as HE promised. He showed himself to the disciples. Jesus entered the upper room, he rolled away their stone, he freed them of their fear, and he helped them to proclaim the good news to the world.

That's part of the Easter miracle for us, too. The risen Jesus enters our lives, and even our tombs, and rolls away the stones that are keeping us from being all that God wants us to be. He frees us from fear and helps us proclaim his message to the world.

The women, it seems, didn't need Jesus to come to the upper room - well done women! They had the courage to go to the tomb themselves. Even though they didn't know what they would do when they got there - how on earth would they be able to move the stone? And that, too, teaches us something, doesn't it? That sometimes we need to leave our tombs; we need to step out in faith; and we need to trust that God will be there for us and help us in our need. The women knew they couldn't roll that stone away, but it didn't stop them from going. If Easter means anything, it certainly means that God will be with us, always, and especially when we need God to be.

The story of Jesus' resurrection is one that is so filled with the message of hope and possibility. But how can we be sure it actually happened? What proof do we have of the resurrection – other than the stories left to us in the four gospel accounts?

Well, for me, there is none that is more convincing than this: That Peter and the disciples, who were cowering in fear in their locked room, became transformed men and the most fearless witnesses to the resurrection that you could ever imagine. Most of them end up dying for their belief, from the moment they met the risen Jesus they were unafraid, and unwilling to deny what had become the cornerstone of their faith: that Christ died, rose again, and promised one day to return.

No one was more fearless than those first disciples. And no stone that this world rolled in front of them could stop them now. Not prison, or threat of death, or anything else in this world. Isn't that in itself a miracle?

Easter is about an empty tomb, and so much more. It's about the risen Jesus, who is with us always, rolling away the stones and obstacles in our lives. It's about God helping us to live our lives without fear, following Jesus wherever he leads us, and helping to usher in God's reign.

Easter means that there is no tomb that God cannot free us from. There is no stone that God cannot roll away. Regardless of how we got there, God doesn't want us to stay there. God wants to free us from whatever it is that's keeping us from the new life in Christ that the miracle of Easter offers to us all.

So, do not be afraid. Trust in God. Believe in God's Son. Rejoice in God's love for you. And do not worry about who will roll away the stone for you, whatever that stone may be. For Christ is risen. He is risen indeed.

Alleluia!

Every Blessing

Fr Stephen



SERVICE TIMES

April 2026

**Sunday 29th March
PALM SUNDAY**

10 am Combined Eucharist

**Sunday 5th April
EASTER DAY**

**6am The Paschal Mysteries
10am Easter Eucharist**

**Sunday 12th April
EASTER 2**

**8am Said Eucharist
9am Contemporary Eucharist
10.30am Sung Eucharist**

**Sunday 19th April
EASTER 3**

**8am Said Eucharist
9am Contemporary Eucharist
10.30am Sung Eucharist**

**Sunday 26th April
EASTER 4**

**8am Said Eucharist
9am Contemporary Eucharist
10.30am Sung Eucharist**

Meditation Thursday 8 – 8.45am.

Mid-week Eucharist Wednesday 10am.

MAKING OUR PALM CROSSES

A very productive morning saw 450 palm crosses made by our intrepid team. Many thanks to: Bec James, Sheridan, Julie Carrol, Wendy Crow, Susan Bedford & Angela.

PALM SUNDAY



The service started in Moorak Park, where we experienced the Liturgy of the Palms. In our reading we remembered the triumphal entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem, marked by the crowd waving palm branches. We



were given a palm cross which will be blessed as part of this liturgy.

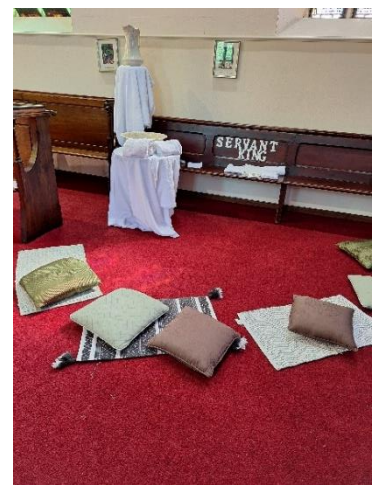


At the conclusion of the Liturgy of the Palms, we then processed down the street and crossed over and headed back to the church for the Eucharist.



EXPERIENCE EASTER

In the days leading up to Easter Day we were delighted to have welcomed over 400 children to engage in our interactive and immersive experience of the Easter story. Over three days students from The Geelong College, Bostock House and The Geelong Baptist College, were immersed in the stories of Jesus entering Jerusalem, remembered on Palm Sunday: Jesus sharing a meal with his disciples in the Last Supper: Jesus washing the disciple's feet: Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemene with his disciples before his arrest: Jesus dying on the cross in the crucifixion: and his subsequent rising from the tomb three day later.





Listening *in Lent*

Saturday 28 February 2026 - St. Cuthbert's Grovedale

This was an opportunity to meet our new Archbishop Ric and his wife Louie. They both spoke a little of their background and inspiration to take on new challenges, including making the move to Australia.

The focus for this "Listening in Lent" is 'creating space for prayer, conversation, and shared discernment.'

<https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/listening-in-lent>

In order to create space for conversation and discernment, we grouped into eleven tables of eight to ten people, from various parishes of the Geelong region with a large blank sheet of paper.

Our tasks were to imagine the church in 2035 - at which time it had flourished representing faithful, hopeful and fruitful ministry. After a brief time of silent prayer for the person next to us and for their church, we were tasked with first imagining how this would look, embodying our hopes and dreams for the church family. Second, we were to imagine what had happened to get us to this point: How did we get going? - How did we start? What did we stop? What did we refine?

Each table elected a scribe to record our thoughts on the large sheets of paper which were then posted up on the walls - for us all to peruse and ponder. Many took photos of each paper to contemplate later.

Archbishop Ric pointed out the many similar themes. He noticed the common themes of the importance of:

sharing our faith, stop hiding in the building, prayer, shift into inviting, stop trying to do it all, start being very intentional, try different things more than one form of service, the power of sharing testimonies

stop focusing on property and management, working together

stop tribalism, stop thinking it's all too hard but step into a place of faith

There then was a time of silent prayer, listening for God's direction and a time of group prayer. The Listening in Lent aims to give a voice to all in the congregation. In order to assist in this aim, postcards were made available with a QR code to scan that takes one to an individual questionnaire. All Saints has some of these cards but it can also be accessed from the link cited above. It was suggested to create helpers for those unfamiliar with computer technology and QR codes.

We finished with a blessing for Bishop Brad, as he prepared to leave us to take up his new post as Archbishop of Adelaide, and prayer for God's direction in our efforts.

Archbishop Ric is keen that we all should consider the questions raised in Listening for Lent and complete the survey. We will distribute in church some hard copies to be taken home and thoughtfully completed.

Individual Survey – Listening in Lent:

**<https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/listening-in-lent-resources/>
Submit by 15 April**

Many of the issues raised will be useful thinking topics for our future use as a parish.

Cathy Cameron

Vicar's Warden - on behalf of Parish Council

Food Sharing Program

By Stephen Yewdall



All Saints Newtown has long supported a Food Sharing Program whereby non-perishable foods are placed into a wicker basket located adjacent to the font, inside the Church.

The Food Sharing Program was initiated by All Saints 15-20 years ago. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for parishioners to make a donation of non-perishable foods to those persons and families that are in need.

For the past 4 years or so, parishioner Mary Lewis collected the donations and passed them onto other community organisations in Geelong, for use and appropriate distribution. It is also appropriate to acknowledge the work of Lloyd Gray who delivered the food parcels for many years, prior to Mary Lewis taking it on.

The current beneficiaries are shared between St Andrew's Anglican Church
140 Bacchus Marsh Road, Corio FoodShare Program:

(<https://standrewscorio.wixsite.com/home/foodshare>) and Christ Church Geelong's

Community Meals Program, Moorabool Street Geelong:

<https://www.christchurchgeelong.com.au/Ministries/ChCh%20Special%20Community%20Ministries.html>).

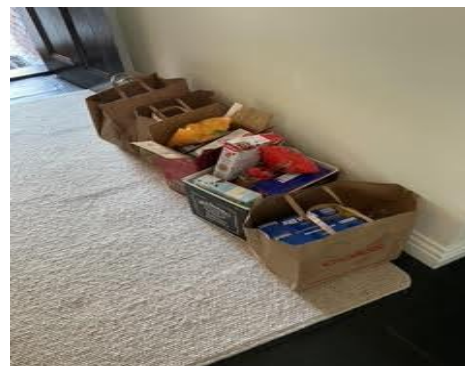
Both of these outreach programs have been operating for many years and provide a valuable service to the community of Geelong. The distribution of the foods to these agencies has been undertaken on an alternate basis. Mary has recently relinquished this role and this has been picked up by Patricia and Stephen Yewdall. It is not an onerous task, just a matter of collating the items, placing them into appropriate manageable packages (Coles/Woolies paper shopping bags) and taking them to the above sites on an alternate fortnightly basis.

I recently took a number of these packages to St Andrews Corio, where I met with its Vicar, Rev David Milford and a number of their volunteers who operate both an Op-Shop and its FoodShare Program. They were most appreciative of the support of All

Saints, Newtown. Similarly, Jan McGowan at Christ Church asked for her appreciation to All Saints be passed onto its Parishioners.

Some particular foods sought after by these organisations are UHT long-life full cream milk and tins of baked beans & spaghetti although all non-perishable foods are well received.

Also, during the weekly church services, the basket is now being carried by a parishioner, along with those who take up the collection to the altar, as part of the offertory procession and acknowledged by the Vicar. This 'carrying of the basket' was recommenced during the month of March.



The Food Sharing Program is a most worthy opportunity for all parishioners and friends of All Saints to participate in a meaningful way to support persons in the wider Geelong community.

Mervyn Napier Waller

The Annunciation & The Crucifixion

There are 2 major art works in All Saints Newtown located on each side of the sanctuary arch which have a direct connection to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. These are original art works by Mervyn Napier Waller or just Napier Waller as he is better known. The art works are titled The Crucifixion on the left and The Annunciation on the right.

As per a report in the newspaper, The Melbourne Argus dated Thursday 28 February 1929 (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/3987906>): "Beautiful oil paintings have just been completed by Mr Napier Waller for All Saints Church Geelong. They have been presented to Canon Wheeler by a fellow member of the Melbourne Savage Club. The panels will be placed on either side of the sanctuary arch facing the nave." The article included photos of the two works.

Canon Rev Alfred Wheeler was Vicar of All Saints from 1909 to 1937, the longest serving Vicar in the history of All Saints Newtown. Napier Waller was a member of the Melbourne Savage Club at the time.
(<https://www.melbournesavageclub.com/cms/history/>)

This Club still operates at 12 Bank Place Melbourne and was established in 1894. Its membership is related to those in the Arts.

Mervyn Napier Waller, born 1893 to Sarah Napier and William Waller in Penshurst Victoria began studies in art in 1913 at the National Gallery under the tutelage of Frederick McCubbin.
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napier_Waller).

Come WW1, Mervyn Napier Waller enlisted in 1915 serving in France and Belgium. On his Attestation Papers he recorded his trade / work as Artist. Being severely wounded in May 1917, it resulted with his right arm being amputated at the shoulder. Napier Waller remarkably then learned to draw and paint with his left hand.

Returning to Melbourne, he continued his artistic work specialising in murals, mosaics and stained glass with themes based on mythology, religion and his military experiences. His key works in stained glass is at the Australian War Memorial where in 1950's he was commissioned to design and execute the stained-glass windows, mosaics and the magnificent dome ceiling of the Hall of Memory at the AWM.

In addition to the art works previously mentioned at All Saints, Napier Waller designed the Wilcox Memorial-stained glass window, which is a memorial to Maud and Edward Wilcox, parishioners of All Saints in the early last century. Maud Wilcox's sister was Ethel Gillingham who is listed on the WW1 honour board for her service to nursing.

Napier Waller also has his works displayed at St Marks Anglican Church Camberwell, St Peter's Church Eastern Hill Melbourne, in addition to the State Library in Melbourne and at the University of Western Australia. Napier Waller died in March 1972 at Ivanhoe Melbourne after being recognised with the awards OBE & CMG.

The following is a description of these two-art works, as recorded in the All-Saints Record of Church Furnishings 2010:

The Annunciation

This work depicts the Archangel Gabriel in the centre of the painting looking down on the seated Mary. He is wearing a much-pleated white gown with a folded waist tie. There is an orca cloak draped over each shoulder reaching down to his bare feet. Gabriel's outstretched wings appear feathered in mostly ochre with touches of pale blue and red in his under feathers.

His right hand holds a reed in the lowered arm. His left arm is raised. He appears elevated, floating above Mary who gazes up at him, whilst working with her wools. Mary wears a mauve gown with a green trim. Her head is mainly covered by a white wimple.

There are a tall cypress tree and a crescent moon behind her and beside her is a potted lily with three opened white flowers. On the left of Gabriel is a column with a grapevine. The background sky is dark blue at the top grading to a paler blue at the horizon



The Crucifixion

Christ is shown elevated on the cross in the centre of the work. He is depicted naked save for a draped loin cloth. Prominent nails are seen in his feet and his hands. His head is covered in a crown of thorns. Atop the wooden cross is nailed a white sign with INRO in red Roman caps. In the left foreground stands the disciple John, a bowed bareheaded figure draped in a full clean cloak over a brown gown, wearing sandals on his feet. Behind him is a Roman centurion holding a flagpole in his right hand, wearing a helmet, cloak and tunic with an armoured breastplate. In the right foreground is Mary, mother of Christ, with her head bowed kneeling at the feet of Christ, wearing a dark grey hooded cloak and sandals. Behind her is Mary Magdalene looking up at Jesus with her hands folded to her chest. She wears a light grey gown and ochre cloak and wimple.



Another cloaked woman with a bowed head stands behind Mary and a kneeling woman in a red cloak looks up at Jesus. In the far-right background is shown another Roman soldier holding a flagpole. There is also a banner bearing the letters SPQR in Roman caps visible above an indistinct crowd of heads. The sky is dark red at the top grading to a paler red at the horizon.

Both paintings are covered with a clear Perspex protective cover. The donors have previously been referred to as Friends of Canon Wheeler. Both works are measured as 160cm in height and 113cm wide.

References: Wikipedia, Australian Dictionary of Biography, Australian War Memorial (a. Guide Book 1968 & b., Trove,)

PASCHAL CANDLE FOR 2026



The theme for this year's Paschal Candle, 'The Light of the World' came about from a discussion with Fr Stephen.

The different size and colour tone inspired me to think of stained-glass windows which are illuminated by light. Just as we are lit by the light of Jesus and his message.

The symbol at the base is the Agnus Dei (The Lamb and Flag) It is a

Christian symbol representing Jesus Christ as the 'Lamb of God' who takes away the sins of the world. It signifies sacrifice (the lamb) and victory over death (the resurrection flag).

At the top of the candle there is the Sun to represent the light of the world that fills our natural world.

At the back of the candle is the dove of peace which is surely needed now more than ever and is shown flying free rather than within the confines of a window to highlight its importance universally.

Dr Mary-Jane Walker

Mary-Jane is an artist, curator, and scientist whose works focus on our relationships with the natural world and the contemporary issues of climate change and biodiversity and our role in dealing with them. She is the founder and director of the School of Lost Arts, Newtown, Geelong.

www.theschooloflostarts.com.au



EASTER DAY CELEBRATIONS

Our Easter celebrations were particularly poignant this year as it would be the last Easter we celebrate with our vicar, Fr Stephen, before he moves onto his new position in the Diocese of Perth.

The celebrations began with the traditional Easter Vigil at 6am as we gathered outside church in the darkness. The Easter fire was lit, from which we lit the new Easter Candle which was then processed into the empty and dark church. This was to represent Christ's resurrection from the dead, symbolised by the light overcoming the darkness in church, flooding it with the light of other candles, all lit from the central light of the Easter Candle.

Fr Stephen then sang the Easter Exultet before we sat to listen to the Scriptures outlining God's work and plan from the very beginning of time, through to the death and resurrection of Jesus.

As the Scripture readings concluded all the lights were turned on in church whilst the organ played a magnificent fanfare. People rang bells, shook tambourines in joyful noise, all coinciding with the raising of the morning Sun. Jesus has risen. Alleluia!! Following the renewal of baptism vows those present made their first communion of Easter Day.

At 10am we continued to celebrated Easter Day as more people were able to come and make their Easter Day communion. At this service we had our intrepid choir singing for us. All told we had around 120 worshipping at All Saints on Easter Day





This striking image of the tomb was captured by the vicar as he came to lock up the church one evening.

He is risen. Alleluia!!

The Australian
Welsh Male Choir

Sunday 19 April 2026 – 2:00 pm



Côr Meibion Cymreig Awstralia

Glorious harmonies and ensemble power
in the spirit of the Welsh valleys

Musical Director: **Tom Buchanan** OAM | Special Guest Artist: **Oscar Wang**

All Saints' Anglican Church
140 Noble Street, Newtown

Tickets – Single: \$35 | Concession: \$30
Available at the door and online at Humanitix (QR code)

www.awmc.org.au



ANZAC EVE CONCERT

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

PRESENTED BY SPARROW PARK BRASS
MUSICAL DIRECTOR JOHN COLLINSON

Featuring The Choir of All Saints Newtown
Musical Director Dr Terry Norman

All Saints' Anglican Parish of Newtown and
Geelong West

113 Noble St NEWTOWN 3220

FRIDAY 24 APRIL 2026

7PM

*This is a free community event
No ticket required*

