



St Ninian's in Autumn.

EASTER SERVICES AT ST NINIAN'S

April 13 - Palm Sunday – 9.30am
April 17 – Maundy Thursday – 7.00pm
April 18 – Good Friday – 9.00am
April 20 – Easter Sunday – 9.30am

We extend an invitation to you and your families
to join us in our special Easter Services

St Ninian's Uniting Church, Lyneham

April – May 2025

St Ninian's Uniting Church, Cnr Mouat and Brigalow Sts, Lyneham

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Finance Committee Convenor	John Cutts (as above)
Chairperson, Property Committee	Cheryl Wright
Honorary Pastoral Assistant	Julie Gillespie

Services of Worship at St Ninian's each Sunday at 9.30 am.

MATERIAL FOR NEXT WITNESS IS DUE ON: Sunday 25 May

From the Minister

An Easter Message that Begins with 'Come and See' and Ends with the Light of Christ

The Easter message welcomes us be openminded and curious enough to want to come and see and try to understand the greater mystery of life triumphing over death. This invitation is open to each of us, to encounter Christ's transformative power to walk in the light his resurrection brings to us.

At the heart of Easter is the proclamation that death, which is often perceived as the end, isn't the final word or end, it's the beginning of something new. Christ's death on the cross represents the weight of our sin and suffering, yet Christ's resurrection three days later ushers in a radical new reality – one where hope prevails. The angel's message to the women at the tomb, "He is not here; he has risen," provides our curiosity a reason to explore what this new and vibrant existence marked by life and love might look like.

'Come and see' speaks to our need to look beyond our doubts and fears. As faithful believers we're encouraged to engage with the whole story of resurrection in a meaningful way. It reminds us that faith isn't a passive acceptance but an active participation in the journey towards understanding and embracing God's promises. When we walk toward the tomb, we begin to recognise that the stone has been rolled away, symbolising the removal of the obstacles or barriers that had become the impenetrable wall that stood between our relationship with God and ourselves.

Witnessing Christ's victory of life over death is more than a historical fact; it compels us to live in a way that reflects the hope we receive from God's forgiveness. We receive Christ's resurrection as the bright light of hope that consumes the dark shadows which in turn may also consume our faith. Christ's light encourages us to prayerfully pass our sorrow and despair on to the Spirit so we can live a life filled with purpose and joy.

In my own experiences of ministry, I have witnessed the very peaceful and calm expression on the face of those who have passed into their life ever after, after their pain

and suffering has ended. I clearly recall an elderly gentleman who just before his passing mentioned the great light that he saw and asked me to turn off the light – the light wasn't on – at the point of death of his earthly life he was smiling. Christ's resurrection lights our path, encourages us to move away from despair moving towards a life filled with purpose and joy. In a world often shadowed by difficulties—loss, injustice, and war—walking in the light of the risen Christ means believing that hope lies in our faithful attitudes and actions, extending a Christlike love and compassion to others, and striving for peace.

Likewise, the light of the risen Christ helps us greatly when we're trying to understand our own challenges throughout life. When we gain a greater understanding of the 'why' question we feel empowered to face our challenges and suffering more confidently because we know that, just as Christ overcame the grave, so can also we triumph over our struggles. We are reminded that each day is an opportunity to reflect Christ's powerful guiding light whose presence in our communities is real, as we continue to nurture an environment of love, acceptance, and understanding.

So, you see, the Easter message of "come and see" is an invitation that echoes deeply into our lives today. It encourages us to witness the glorious truth of Christ's promised Resurrection and to boldly and confidently walk in the light of Christ, sharing this transformative experience in our community and the wider world around us. In doing so, we become bearers of hope, reflecting God's promise that life, love, and light can overcome even the darkest of moments in our lives.

Rev'd Sharon Cutts

News of People

Our sympathy to Indy Rehak on the death of her husband Roy.

Our thoughts are with Robyn Brown as she has been in hospital for several weeks.

Women's Activity Group (WAGs)

Our first meeting in February was our annual film and book review where we share some of our holiday reading or viewing. As always there were a variety of topics which generated an interesting discussion amongst our group. This was followed at the end of February with a very interesting talk from Ros Goodwin who works as a volunteer at the Botanical Gardens. She gave a very informative talk on the herbs and plants grown there and the work that the helpers do to make the gardens such a great place to visit. In March we had hoped to celebrate Saku Richard's 90th birthday but unfortunately she was too unwell to attend so instead we used Melda's conversation cards which provided lots of interesting and amusing responses. At our latest meeting we all enjoyed a very well prepared and well crafted talk by Sonja Chandler about a block of land she and her husband have purchased as a retirement project. After many years of working with conservation groups they now have their own piece of land to care for. Sonja provided us with maps of the property and pictures of some of the flora and fauna found there. We were all very impressed with her knowledge of the many species that they have identified and are still discovering. Looking forward, our next meeting is a morning tea at Stepping Stones in Dickson, followed by a talk leading into Easter from Sharon. During May we will have a road trip to the painted silo at Murrumbateman with morning tea at the chocolate factory. At the end of May we will have a talk from my friend, Susie Nelson about her experiences as a contestant on The Chase. Lots to look forward to so please come along, you will be most welcome.

Irene Reid

Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF)

The guest speaker at our March meeting was Pam Rhodda who told a special story about the mission in Nungalinya, near Darwin. This college was erected in 1973 as a means of empowering Indigenous Christians. In 2017

her minister in Mona Vale arranged a visit by a group of volunteers to contribute to the community by offering their various skills and talents. They travelled to the Northern Territory and helped with such things as building and maintenance, renovations, gardening, administration and cooking. They also joined together in bible study, singing and worship. This contribution has continued over time, forging strong connections. It was heartening to see the number of children and young people involved. Pam herself had taken three grandsons with her at different times, each boy had gained a lot through their participation.

Our first clothing sale of the year was held on Friday and Saturday mornings 21-22 March 2025. We were thankful to Rev'd Sharon Cutts who had arranged for a group of students and their teacher, Kath, from Radford College to help bring clothing and linen from the shed on the Tuesday. They were an impressive group and it would have been much more difficult without them. Many items were brought over – and although lots had to be returned on Saturday, it was a pleasing result, \$1,471.60 being raised. Thanks to all who helped, particularly Joyce McGuire, Julie Gillespie and her kitchen helpers, Sharon and John Cutts, and Janette and Bruce Roe.

Meetings - Guest – Speaker - Topic

- Wednesday 2 April 2025 John Marsham
Sorting Lifeline Books
- Wednesday 7 May 2025 Horst Hahne
- Wednesday 4 June 2025 Beth Roberts
Botanical Art

Everyone is invited to join with us at 1.30 in the Williams Room. We have a short business meeting, a speaker or activity, followed by a light afternoon tea.

Pat Semmler

Security at St Ninian's

Since the break-in at the hall, earlier this year, John and Tim have been checking and reinforcing locks where needed. Still, we need to *use* the locks! We sometimes find doors and windows left open and/or unlocked. Please make sure that you close and lock all

doors and windows when you are the last to leave, including those others may have left unlocked. (And of course, turn off the lights [except the security light], fans and air-conditioning.) Thank you.
Elizabeth Smith

Social Action Group

Following Jesus is Political – Common Grace

As we head toward a Federal Election at an unsettling time in world history it is an opportune time to think about our Christian values and how they fit in with politics. It has always been a difficult combination for many. Even at family gatherings the warning goes out - “Don’t talk about politics or religion”. I was pleased recently to be introduced to the 2025 Lent Podcast Series entitled “Everything is Political” - a series developed by Common Grace. Common Grace is a non-denominational movement of people pursuing Jesus and Justice.”

The first episode is based on John 12 and is titled, “Following Jesus is Political” to be found [here](https://www.commongrace.org.au/following_jesus_is_political) or enter https://www.commongrace.org.au/following_jesus_is_political into your search engine.

As Jesus rides into the city, his way of being king stands in stark contrast to the power structures of the world, setting the stage for his journey to the cross. This episode unpacks how following Jesus is inherently political—not in a partisan sense, but in how we engage with power, justice, and the common good. Politics isn’t just about elections; it’s about the way power is used in society, something we all participate in daily. (From Common Grace website)

I liked the juxtaposition emphasised in the podcast of Jesus making a triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding on a donkey, an animal of peace and the Roman soldiers who rode on horses attired for war.

Jesus's message of a Kingdom of God, emphasizing love, compassion, and justice, resonated with the marginalized and oppressed, potentially undermining the Roman Empire's power structure. Bringing a prophetic message is risky but there is joy and wonder as well as risk.

I hope some of you will take time to listen to this podcast. It gives a worthwhile understanding of following Jesus and politics.
Marion McConnell

SAY YES TO REFUGEES

**Palm Sunday Rally
1pm, 13 April
Civic Square**

Near ACT Assembly

Permanent Visas Now!

Church Council

The St Ninian’s Church Council met on 16th March.

A number of significant matters were on the agenda being:

- Futures Direction Committee. Some discussion had been held over recent months as to whether this Committee was required. CC discussed the merits of planning for the future versus just letting it role along. We are reminded of the old saying, “failing to plan is planning to fail” and with that thought firmly in mind the CC resolved to continue the Futures Direction Committee and Chairperson of CC & Congregation, Neville Biggs will convene the committee.
- Finances were also discussed with reports from the new bookkeeping service engaged during February as part of the revamping of the Treasury role following the retirement of Marion McConnell as Treasurer after 5 years of excellent and dedicated service to St Ninian’s. Treasury function is now part of the Finance Committee led by the Secretary, John Cutts with Gwen Suter taking on the role of accounts payable and transferring of information to Balancing Bookkeeping the service engaged by CC. Marion is staying on the Finance Committee and her

assistance and knowledge is most welcome to the group.

- The Meeting Place: The final proposal and application form for a grant from the Synod Futures Fund were tabled at Church Council for approval to present to the Congregation Meeting on 23rd March. The Church Council resolved to receive the proposal and application form and recommend it to the Congregation. As you may be aware, the Congregation Meeting of 23rd March enthusiastically endorsed the proposal and approved the application to be forwarded to the Synod of NSW&ACT. The application and supporting information have been submitted to the Synod prior to the cutoff date of the 28th March. Decision regarding the grant application will not be known until sometime May so please keep this in your thought and prayers for a successful outcome.
- The computer in the office has been giving some issues over the last few months and despite the best efforts of Tim Hobson and Marion to “keep it going” it gave up its spirit and went to computer heaven (or maybe hell). Tim has generously donated a computer which is a very good high specification system that will last for a considerable time into the future. Thank you, Tim, for your generosity.
- The Church Council has extended an invitation to Rev’d Charles Vesely to be a Minister in Association at St Ninian’s UC. This is an honorary role under the regulations of the Uniting Church.

John Cutts
Secretary

The Meeting Place

The following article appeared in the Synod of NSW & ACT Newsletter week of 24th March 2025. The article

closely resembles what we hope to achieve with the St Ninian’s UC “The Meeting Place” project.

Growing Community and Connection For All

24 March 2025 by Aditee Vora

Corrimal Uniting Church's Op Shop is more than a store—it's a space for connection and community. With a mission of 'Growing Community and Connection For All,' the Op Shop offers affordable clothing while building relationships, support, and opportunities for others to get involved in the church's wider activities.

I believe that being a part of a community is essential to our being. It is about belonging to something larger than ourselves. In this expression of camaraderie, everyone has their way of contributing, and Corrimal Uniting Church (CUC) is doing just that.

If you know Corrimal Uniting Church or have ever been in contact with them, you'd know that the key part of any story to do with CUC starts and ends with their mission of 'Growing Community and Connection For All'.

One of the most visible ways they live out this



mission is through their Op Shop. But as Rev. Graham Anson explains, "The Op Shop is not so much a program that we run, as an expression of who we are trying to be in our community." More than just a retail space, it is a welcoming environment where kindness, conversation, and connection are just as valuable as the clothing on the racks.

Unlike many second-hand stores focused solely on revenue, CUC's Op Shop exists primarily to meet people, not to make money. "Clothing ends up being the conduit to us

being there at some very important or even vulnerable moments of our customers' lives," says Rev. Graham. In times of hardship, a friendly conversation and a listening ear can make all the difference, and the Op Shop volunteers truthfully embrace this responsibility.

Through the Op Shop, people also discover the wider community at CUC. It's not uncommon for a shopper to become a student in the Living English classes, share a meal at the Wednesday community lunch, or join the craft group. Some are even inspired by the mission and become volunteers themselves. The sense of belonging flows both ways, with those from other CUC activities becoming donors and customers at the Op Shop.

At its heart, the Corrimal Uniting Church Op Shop is more than a place to find affordable clothing. It is a place of connection, where community grows in the most genuine way—through people caring for one another.

POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH RADFORD COLLEGE STUDENTS

You may have heard me say how important it is that we make connections with our local community and the importance of intergenerational connectivity as we build lasting and meaningful relationships with those around us. At our last clothing sale, we were blessed with the much-needed help from a very energetic group of students from Radford College who want to be involved in community service activities.

Ten students and one teacher arrived on Tuesday morning in the week of the sale, to help with the preparation of the clothing sale. Under supervision they emptied the clothing shed in no time at all and placed the bags on a designated table. It was a joy to hear the banter between the students and their teacher as well as the volunteers from St Ninian's as they emptied the bags and folded the clothes in the piles on the allotted tables and even bought a few items for themselves. Their magnificent help made the week so much easier than it would have been.

A big thank you goes to the students, the teacher and St Ninian's for stepping out into the community. The students will be back to help with the May 9-10 clothing sale.

Rev Sharon

APRIL'S POT LUCK

Our Pot Luck lunch was so successful in January we're having one each season. For the rest of the year the Pot Luck lunch will be on the third Sunday of the middle month. This time it is on Palm Sunday which happens to be the same day as the Refugee March. Our lunch will be finished in time for those who wish to march so you can do both.

We will be having some prizes again and one will be the popular meat tray from a local butchery. We have organised a fun way of winning your prize so please come and enjoy the fun, food and laughter and you never know, you might go home with a prize.

All that's required for you to do is bring a plate of food to share with your family and friends at St Ninian's. If you wish to bring along a friend, please feel free to do so. It's a free activity of St Ninian's Uniting Church and all are welcome.

Rev Sharon



January's Pot Luck Lunch