



Witness



"He is risen indeed!"

St Ninian's Uniting Church, Lyneham

April – May 2026

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

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Secretary, Church Council	Marion McConnell secretary@stninians.org.au
Treasurer	Gwen Souter treasurer@stninians.org.au
Finance Committee Convenor	Marion McConnell (as above)
Chairperson, Property Committee	Cheryl Wright property@stninians.org.au
Honorary Pastoral Assistant	Julie Gillespie

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

Easter Services

Ash Wednesday: Feb 18th 6:30pm

Palm Sunday: 9:30am

Good Friday: 9:00 am

Easter Sunday: 9:30 am

MATERIAL FOR NEXT WITNESS IS DUE ON: Sunday 28 May

From the Minister

WHY YOU CAN TRUST CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

Trusting in Christ's resurrection is a cornerstone of our belief, and there are more reasons than one to support this trust. From historical evidence to transformative personal experiences, these views share a compelling

case for the resurrection's authenticity and significance.

Historian Josephus, a first century Jew, a diplomat, and a general, writes about Jesus as being a wise man, and he questions if that's an adequate description, who did wonderful works, a teacher who changed people forever, who received truth with pleasure. Jesus drew to him not only Jews but also Gentiles. He was *the* Christ, whom Pilate condemned to the cross. Josephus also acknowledges that

many followed him, stayed with him, and witnessed him alive after his death, just as the prophets had predicted. Josephus also names his followers as Christians from Christ's name and refers to their continuing existence.

Of course, we also have the Gospels describe in great detail the events surrounding his crucifixion and resurrection. What gives them more weight is they were documented within a few decades of the events reflecting the cultural and historical context of the time. What can't be missed is the importance of the inclusion of the empty tomb being discovered by women, quite a significant detail for the era when the word of women was often tested. This detail points to the authenticity of the accounts, as it's unlikely the authors would invent such a story concerning the women's discovery.

The New Testament has numerous eyewitness references of the risen Christ. We know the story of Thomas who doubted what he'd been told until he was able to touch the holes in Jesus' hands. In 1 Corinthians Paul outlines a list of those who encountered the risen Christ, including Peter, the disciples, and even a group of 500 people at once. What validates Paul's writing is at the time of his writing many of those people were still living to verify his writing. This communal experience suggests that the resurrection wasn't a solitary claim but a widely recognised event among early followers.

Straight after the death of Jesus his disciples hid for fear of the authorities. However, a strange thing happened to them after the resurrection. The disciples changed from being fearful into becoming bold proclaimers of Jesus' message, willing to face persecution and even martyrdom. This radical change is best explained by their heartfelt conviction that they had genuinely encountered the risen Christ. It's unlikely that they would've endured any suffering for what they knew to be nothing but a baseless fabricated story.

As Josephus affirms, the rapid spread of Christianity in the years following Jesus' resurrection also point to its truth. The early Christian movement grew in an era of hostility, violence and death where commitment to the resurrection could lead to

persecution or death. The sheer volume of believers, many converting despite the risks involved, speaks to the power and conviction of their experiences. The resurrection was the centerpiece of early preaching, emphasising not just a belief system but an encounter with a living God.

Taking it a step deeper, the resurrection transcends historical evidence, appealing to the spiritual realm. For us, Christ's resurrection is the ultimate victory over death and sin. It offers us hope and the promised assurance of life eternal. It signifies that death isn't the final word, bringing hope in suffering and challenging circumstances. Thinking of Christ's resurrection from this particular aspect provides a deep and personal connection for us as we find meaning and purpose for our birth, life and death in light of the resurrection.

Many who have chosen to follow in the footsteps of Christ testify to how they've changed due to the transformative power of the resurrection in their own lives. Through faith, we share our experiences of joy, peace, and a sense of purpose that is directly attributed to the action and love God has in our daily lives. These personal experiences reinforces our belief that the resurrection isn't just a historical event to be recorded by historians for the future reader, but an ongoing reality that continues to change lives every day even in the 21st century.

In reality we can trust Christ resurrection for our own deep and personal reasons as well as being supported by historical evidence, eyewitness reports, the transformation of his followers, the growth of Christianity, and its deeper theological implications. The resurrection, therefore, isn't just a pivotal moment of history but also a great constant source of hope and inspiration for millions of people around the modern world. Christ's resurrection offers to all of us undeserved grace and love like no other.

In His Service

Rev'd Sharon Cutts

Church Flowers

Sunday Service now on ZOOM

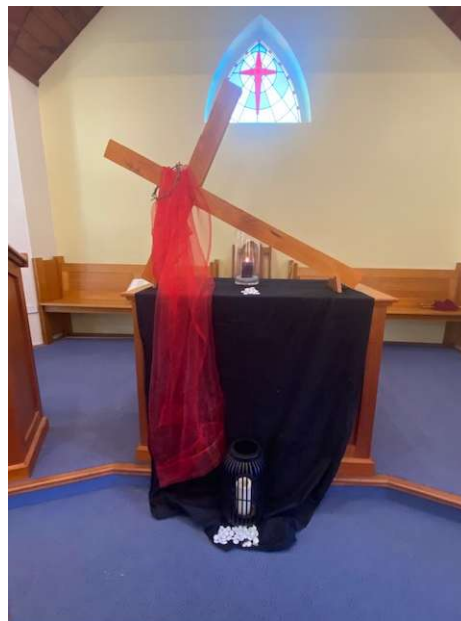
We would like to encourage anyone who cannot attend Sunday's Service in person for any reason - to join us online. Our Zoom connection has recently been improved, making it easier and clearer than before.

If you visit the St Ninian's home page (stninians.org.au), simply click the "Join Us on ZOOM" button. The service will open automatically for you.

We hope this helps everyone feel included and connected, wherever you may be.

We are very grateful to the people on the flower roster for providing beautiful arrangements each Sunday. If you would like to donate flowers on a particular Sunday, for a memorial or a special occasion we would welcome that. Please let us know a few weeks in advance in order to accommodate you. You may arrange your special day with either our minister, Rev. Sharon Cutts on 0424366962 or Anita Hutchinson on 0417693338.

Good Friday at St Ninian's



Easter Day at St Ninian's



[Easter photos, inc the cover, taken by John Cutts.]

Security at St Ninian's.

As you may know, St Ninian's Hall has been broken into again. The Williams Room glass doors may need to be replaced. If you notice any suspicious activity, do not approach, but report it to the police and to Church Council.

In addition, please ensure that all doors and windows are locked when you leave. The hall's glass doors near the church were twice left unlocked overnight in March. Please note that these doors only lock from the inside. They do not latch when simply pulled to.



We can all help to keep our St Ninian's secure.

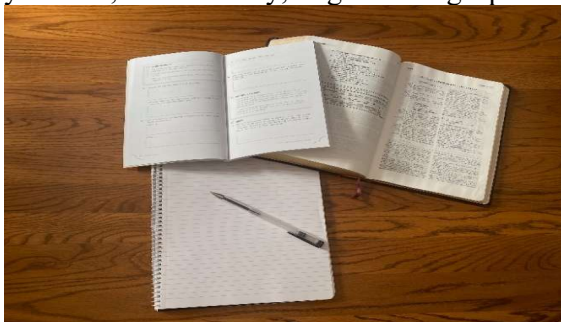
7 Bible Discussions on 1&2 Timothy – continued. 'Guard the gospel' by Phillip D Jenson

The Bible Discussions will be in the small meeting room 2 – 3:30pm

'The two letters Paul wrote to his protégé Timothy were inspired by God for our learning. Nowhere can we get closer to Paul's mind than when he's talking to his true child in the faith; Timothy.

Yet these letters were not for Timothy alone – they reveal God's plan for our lives as well. The context of 1 & 2 Timothy is the Christian mission. Christianity is missionary at heart, so to be a disciple of Jesus is to be a missionary. Jesus himself was on a mission: he was sent by God and 'came into the world to save sinners.' (1 Tim 1:15)

Because all Christians are engaged in the mission of Christ, the letters of the great missionary apostle, Paul, are obviously important to us. These seven studies will thrill and challenge you as you see how to walk through life in a way that pleases God, and as you seek, like Timothy, to guard the gospel.'



Weekly Topics:

Week 1 Thursday March 5th: Christ came to save

Week 2 Thursday March 19th: Men & women of the gospel

Week 3 Thursday April 2nd: Godliness training

Week 4 Thursday April 16th: The great gain of godliness

Week 5 Thursday May 7th: Do not be ashamed

Week 6 Thursday May 21st: Work and life in the last days

Week 7 Thursday June 4th: I charge you....

If you would like to participate in the study, please let Rev Sharon know so you can receive the information. Phone 0424 366 962.

News of People

We think of Robyn Russell as she is now a resident in Southern Cross Care, Garra.

Irene Reid and her daughter Lindsay are in our thoughts as Lindsay has had major surgery in Sydney and was in intensive care for several weeks. Lindsay is now recovering in a Sydney hospital.

Our thoughts are with Kingsley Sutton as he continues treatment. We are pleased to know that the treatment is helping.

Jennifer and Tim Hobson left on Easter Tuesday for overseas, touring for three months.

Catherine and Lionel Davidson say hello to everyone at St Ninian's as they settle in to their new home at Amala Residential Care in Gordon.

Women's Activity Group (WAGs)

No report from WAGS this issue.

Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF)

Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF)

We have been busy this year holding both the AGM and our February meeting on the first Wednesday of that month. We enjoyed getting together after the Christmas break which seemed to pass very quickly. Fund raising began straight away as we participated by selling clothing sale as part of the meeting@themarketplace fortnightly in both

February and March. The sale featuring clothing was more work as we had linen and other clothing items on several tables as well as the clothing racks which are quick to wheel over from storage. The help provided by students of Radford College was very welcome but of course we do not have their assistance in packing up on Saturdays. Although some days have been quiet we are quite pleased with the results and hopeful of improvement.

Our guest speaker for our March meeting was Pat Bourke and she shared with us her experience of being the daughter of a diplomat and his posting to San Francisco. Overseas travel was usually by sea at that time and involved a journey of 3 weeks. Behaviour on the ship was formal and Pat needed the wardrobe to match. Her parents bought her 3 lovely cocktail dresses which she would wear to dinner. On arriving in the United States of America she attended school. This was markedly different to the very strict rules which were in place at the private school she attended in Melbourne where uniforms and hats and gloves were the order of the day. Pat revelled in the new relaxed atmosphere where students wore their own clothes. At home standards of dress were high because of the many guests who visited, dined and stayed at their home. The family were able to travel extensively including visits to Hawaii, Yosemite National Park, New York and the Mexican Border. They returned to Australia on the Oronsay in 1961 but Pat's father enjoyed many overseas postings to such places as Hong Kong, Malaysia, Stockholm and Bahrain before eventually retiring. It was so interesting hearing part of Pat's story, very different to our own experiences growing up, but we were able to see how this contributed to the person she has become.

Lastly, I would like to invite anyone to come to our meetings on the first Wednesday of most months, held in the Williams Room at 1.30pm. We are getting to be a small group and would be very pleased to welcome others.

The next two talks will be
May 6 The Early Morning Centre

June 3 Work Experience for Refugees
(Stepping Stones Cafes)

Pat Semmler

Church Council

Molonglo Uniting Church

The Canberra Region Presbytery is establishing a "church plant" in Molonglo under the guidance of Rev Andrew Smith and has asked each church council in the area to present the following opportunity to people in our congregations and in turn to recommend any members who have the appropriate gifts to offer. The plan is to set up a core group to be the nucleus of the new congregation. Should you be interested in participating, please let Neville Biggs know. You can find more information and some preliminary reading on-line by searching for UCA Molonglo Church Plant.

Choir

CHURCH CHOIR

The choir has been singing again since Sunday 8 February and we hope to continue to present something on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays as we have in the past few years. Mervyn and Heather are back from their European travels and will be with us again for Easter Sunday. Linus will normally be with us on the second Sunday, Sonja on the third Sunday, then we switch to the Hall for the fourth and fifth Sundays when Melda and I will play the piano.

We are down to only 8 members in the choir, but we can still do some harmonisation from time to time. On Lent 1 we dusted off an old favourite and sang the appropriate *Forty Days, Lord you spent in the Wilderness*. On 15 March, Lent 4, we sang a stirring rendition of *Let there be Glory and Honour* with Neville's tenor voice ringing out the descant the second time around and Kay for the last phrase.

I am off to Queensland for two weeks, so we won't be singing again until after Easter. The choir has started to prepare anthems for the last three Sundays in April.

Kay Hahne, Choir Director, March 2026

Safe Church Report

SAFE CHURCH NEW REGULATIONS

Thank you to all of you for volunteering at St Ninian's from Church Council to morning teas, and all the other important roles that are part of who we are at St Ninian's. 'The Christian life is marked by service. Jesus taught about it and modelled it and then commanded his followers to go and do it. He called leaders in his church to be servant leaders. That is to lead, not for their own benefit but for the benefit of those they lead. Therefore, servant leaders must be safe leaders' (NSW/ACT Uniting Church Synod, Culture of Safety Team).

Our community and governments expect us to be safe volunteers and leaders in our churches. The Uniting Church in NSW/ACT therefore has developed a screening policy that applies to all Uniting Church organisations and employees, contractors, all leaders and volunteers. It includes the application, nomination of referees, screening questions and the code of conduct. St Ninian's Safe Church Team (Janice Schroder, John Cutts and Margaret Clark) will each Sunday be available after worship for a brief chat and collection of the completed forms. Due to most of you being volunteers or on the roster list, we will hand out the forms gradually to each group or committee throughout the next month. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or queries.

Janice Schroder Safe Church Contact

Events

MARKET@ THE MEETING PLACE

Market@ The Meeting Place kicked off 2026 on Friday 13th and Saturday 14th February. It was a very successful UCAF Clothing Sale with all proceeds going to UCAF. Look forward to seeing you at The Market@ The Meeting Place on the 2nd and 4th Friday/Saturday of the month.

KEEP BUYING OUR JAMS

I thought it would be interesting to do a tally on money raised from jams sold at church and to others who pop into our hall from time to time and see the basket holding jams and pickles for purchase at a good price.



2023	\$400
2024	\$250
2025	\$200
2026 (til March)	\$135
Total	\$985

This does not include our fete money from the Jams and Pickles stall which is about \$850 each year.

Jan Wansink

RECYCLING

I notice that the hand wash pump containers are disappearing. Please do not throw these out when empty. We refill them. Trying to do our little bit in reducing waste.

Thank you. Marion

MONDAY GARDENING GROUP

The St Ninian's/Benedictus Gardening Group works to create and maintain our own little Garden of Eden. It meets on the first and third Mondays of each month from 9.30 for an hour or so, and then enjoys a cuppa and a chat. There are tasks for every level of skill and fitness: pruning, weeding, collecting mulch and so on.