



ALKING POINT

Worship Service Times:	
Traralgon:	9:30 am
Glengarry:	11:00 am
Rosedale:	10:00 am
	(2nd & 4th Tuesdays)
	2:00 pm
	(3rd Sunday)

Our Mission: Sharing God's presence and reconciling love.
Our Vision: More wholehearted, more compassionate,
more abundant life shared in our neighbourhoods

SUNDAY, 21st April 2024

Volume 30 Issue 13

Psalm 23

Submitted by Maree Henderson & Jill Hunter, Avoca UC.

The Lord is my shepherd
I shall not want
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures
He leadeth me beside the still waters
He restoreth my soul
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness
For His name sake
Yea though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death
I will fear no evil
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me
Thou prepares a table before me in the
presence of mine enemies
Thou anointest my head with oil
My cup runneth 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.

That's relationship.

That's supply.

That's rest.

That's refreshment.

That's healing.

That's guidance.

That's purpose.

That's testing.

That's Faithfulness.

That's Discipline.

That's Hope.

That's Consecration.

That's Abundance.

That's Blessing.

That's Security.

That's Eternity.



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Traralgon District Uniting Church

Incorporating: Traralgon, Glengarry & Rosedale.



AT HOME WORSHIP - ORDER OF SERVICE

SUNDAY 21st April 2024

Welcome to Worship at Home

Come, let us worship God.
In pastures green,
The Good Shepherd leads us.
Beside still waters,
The Good Shepherd leads us.
Through darkest valleys and turbulent times,
The Good Shepherd leads us.
Let us meet the Good Shepherd
here in this moment together.

-Psalm 23

Light the candle

In Christ, the Risen One, the light who has come,
we meet the Good Shepherd.
The one who comes to lead and guide us.

Acknowledging



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress

As we gather, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these unceded land and waters. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. As First and Second Peoples walking together, we commit ourselves to be people of the covenant, listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.

Sing The Lord's my shepherd Tis 10

Prayer of confession

In adoration and confession, let us pray:
God, who is the Risen Christ,
You are our cornerstone.
In you we live and breathe and have our being.

In becoming one with us,
you opened the way to learn more about you,
your magnificent creation, ourselves,
and about the way you invite us
to love one another,
taking part in the world with you.

In teaching new ways,
you inspire and encourage us
to care for those in the margins.
Those who fall through the cracks
in our society and systems.
Opening ourselves to loving without reservation,
even when that seems difficult.
Challenging our understandings,

in the same way Jesus
challenged views of the day.

In dying and rising you created for us a new way.
A new chance to meet you afresh,
reminding us of the gift we have received
in and through you.

Yet sometimes we get so caught up in moment,
that we forget everything you came for.
We forget all you taught us about loving one
another, living in community, the delights of your
creation and the gift of your eternal grace
and divine love.

We lose sight of the life you call us into, and the
invitation to participate
in your mission in the world.

God of the new promise,
the one who shepherds us.

Open our eyes to see you afresh.
Expand our love for those around us.
Enable us by your grace to live out your
teachings, so all whom we encounter
may meet you through our words and actions.
Amen.

Assurance

In Christ and through Christ we are united with
the God who loves us. Therefore know that you
are loved and forgiven.

Read: Acts 4: 5-12, Psalm 23, John 10: 11 - 18

Reflection "Soul restorations"

Readers of classics and film buffs will be familiar with the opening scene of Thomas Hardy's 'Far from the madding crowd'. Gabriel Oak is an up-and-coming sheep farmer. He lives close to the animals and cares for them. His workmate, a faithful old sheep dog, has a pup who, one night, drives the whole flock off a cliff to their deaths. I think the story is old enough not to need a spoiler alert. The tragedy sets the plot in motion. We get an earthy glimpse of life and death consequences in shepherding. But we aren't in 19th century England, or David's Israel, from where we hear:

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul."

This Psalm is one of the most beautifully faceted gems in all of scripture. For

generations the 23rd Psalm has been memorised and recited, sought out for comfort and reassurance.

But many have trouble with this psalm today. The image of us as sheep is not flattering. We might picture a Shepherd-Lord figure with cute clean lambs, like the Sunday School prints, but that was never honest. Sheep aren't very clean, they smell and do what they want. The Lord is my shepherd; but we can have trouble translating the ancient imagery into our time.

A "good shepherd" is more alien in Australia than he would have been in 1st century Israel. We like to romanticise shepherds as simple rural labourers. But rulers of the Ancient Near East were sometimes called shepherds. As a core economic business in those days, flocks could number in the tens of thousands. Shepherding required a considerable skill set. Travellers to the Middle East still see shepherds that are a bit rough in appearance and often rough with their sheep. The first modern shepherd I saw was swatting sheep on the rear end with his stick, yelling expletives. It's an earthy life-stained image, not the one on the serene pictures.

Then, the image of a Lord is not popular with many now either, let alone the picture of a Lord who seems to want to make people lie in the grass. But thankfully there are a number of images and we can find things that work for us.

'He leads me beside still waters, he restores my soul.' I like the surf and running waters as a preference, but the idea of restoring our souls has some currency for us.

Our changed world means we need to think in new ways if we are to have a hope of benefiting from ancient texts and then of passing the benefit on to others.

We lived for some years in a seventy year old home that had some problems. The pressing need for renovation became clear very quickly! Sinking stumps, gaps opening, mould yes, that's the way it goes isn't it. As you get used to a place, as it ages or as the needs change, we need to restore and renovate.

I think if God were to use real estate vernacular to describe the collective state of our souls, the phrase would be something like, "souls with potential, in need of development, renovators delight!"

Psalm 23 tells us directly that God is in the business of soul restoration! We often need to be restored. For many, the soul is a forgotten and ill-treated part of our humanity that we largely ignore. Or perhaps we under-nourish our souls on a diet of randomly selected tidbits from the supermarket

shelves of popular culture.

This gem of a psalm affirms the astonishing truth that God wants to restore our souls, restored to the glory they were intended to have. God wants to nourish us, wants to set a lavish table to feed us, so that our cup runs over. You, me and for everyone!

This inviting image tells a needy generation that there is food for the soul, that there is a God who wants to lead us all in ways that will restore our spirits even in the face of the darkest things our world can throw at us. New hope is coming, it says.

Even in the darkest valleys of hopelessness, fear or depression - the God of all goodness and mercy is with us, is our comfort and our strength. If our souls are presently a "renovators delight", then God is the one who delights to restore us!

God gives rest and refreshment for the soul beside renewing streams of living water, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation. "I am the good shepherd", says Jesus. We are known and loved by the one who gives his all for us.

Then, if the body of Christ is a shepherding body, perhaps we need to think, not so much of how we are being shepherded like sheep, but how we together are engaged in shepherding - nurturing, restoring and feeding?

It's God's grace that continues the ongoing work of restoring our souls - bringing us healing and wholeness, enabling us to be part of the shepherding work as well, to the delight of the restorer! Amen.

Lord's prayer

Sing Be still my soul TIs 123

Blessing

Go forth into the world, be strengthened by Christ who is our Cornerstone.

Walk in confidence, knowing the guiding hand of the Good Shepherd leading you.

Go in the joy of the Resurrected One, the ever expanding love of the Creator and may the Spirit be your constant companion on the journey. Amen.

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Wattlebird Ministry Team - Warragul*

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Guest contributor - Friend of the Fig Tree*

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Winter Appeal



Thank you to all who have already made contributions to our annual WINTER APPEAL. As the weather turns colder by the day, there is an amazing opportunity for us to support our friends in need in our community.

Whether you are knitting, crocheting or buying new blankets, beanies scarves and gloves, every bit helps.

Our WINTER APPEAL dedication service will be on the 5th May.

Your wonderful contributions can be left in the office.

Thank you.

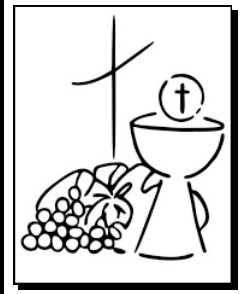


mainly music
Thursday
@ 9:30 am

Music Group
Fridays
@ 5:00 pm



Afternoon Service
The next monthly
Afternoon Communion
Service
will be Wednesday,
1st May
@ 2pm
All are welcome



Playgroup
Monday
@ 9:30 am




Heartstrings



Get Together
will meet again on
Wednesday, 1st May
at 10 am in the church foyer.



This is a time when you can meet and chat with others over a Cuppa.
We invite you to come along and bring a friend. All are welcome.

Sunday APRIL 21 7pm TRARALGON UNITING CHURCH

Having performed more than 400 concerts across Australia, New Zealand and also Canada, Hayden is now an international violinist. He is passionate about bringing real live music to churches and communities around the world. The connection is greater, the experience is deeper than the online dynamic. Come along and bring a friend to enjoy a truly uplifting and unique experience.

Tickets: \$25 ADULTS, \$20 CONCESSION/UNDER 18, \$10 CHILDREN UNDER 12
CD'S,DVD'S, USB'S AVAILABLE



Scan to book or register

<u>Scripture</u>				
21st April	Acts 4:5-12	Psalm 23	1 John 3:16-24	John 10:11-18
28th April	Acts 8:26-40	Psalm 22:25-31	1 John 4:7-21	John 15:1-8

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