



# HOPPERS CROSSING UNITING CHURCH

*Loving God, neighbour and self  
with heart, mind, soul and strength.*

**Worship at Home  
19<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter**

## THE EASTER STORY

*continued...*

**PEACE BE WITH YOU!**  
**AS THE FATHER HAS SENT *me*,**  
**I AM SENDING *you*.**  
JOHN 20:21

Who did Jesus  
stand next to?



## **We Gather**

*A candle may be lit to symbolise Christ's presence*

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." **JOHN 20:19**

Put away your cares and anxieties.

**God is with us.**

Put away your fears and doubts.

**God is with us.**

God has not forgotten us.

**Praise to you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Love the Lord** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAbefsqLdc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAbefsqLdc)

**I will Trust my Saviour Jesus** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDi-4Gp7By0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDi-4Gp7By0)

### **PSALM 16**

*God is my refuge*

<sup>1</sup>Protect me, O God, for, in you, I take refuge.

<sup>2</sup>I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

<sup>3</sup>As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight.

<sup>4</sup>Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.

<sup>5</sup>The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

<sup>6</sup>The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

<sup>7</sup>I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

<sup>8</sup>I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.

<sup>10</sup>For you do not give me up to Sheol or let your faithful one see the Pit.

<sup>11</sup>You show me the path of life. In your presence, there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

### **PRAYER OF APPROACH AND INVOCATION**

Risen Lord, our hearts are glad and full of rejoicing because of what Jesus had accomplished at Calvary. He conquered death, fear and evil and these no

longer need have any hold on our lives because the resurrection reminds us of the power of God to save. The Psalmist affirmed your love and care, praying 'for, in you, I take refuge'. May this be our prayer as we worship you O God, our refuge. Speak and minister to us your word that we may be transformed and inspired by it and respond by going forth into the world by the power of the Holy Spirit to testify and witness of your love for all. Amen.

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Loving God, Lord of the Church,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word and deed:  
we have not loved you with all our heart  
or served you with all our strength;  
we have been blind to the vision of a renewed world  
and deaf to your call to costly discipleship;  
we have been indifferent to the suffering of others  
and unwilling to forgive one another.  
In your mercy, Lord, pardon and restore us,  
that together in the ministry of Christ,  
we may serve you with joy all the days of our life. Amen.

### **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

We read in the letter of Peter: "Although you have not seen Jesus, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls."  
1 PETER 1:8,9

The good news, therefore, is this: in Jesus Christ, we are loved, and we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Forever** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUH\\_NzfRmbs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUH_NzfRmbs)

### **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you **and also with you.**

### **We Listen**

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet **a light to our path.**

### **ACTS 2:14a, 22-32**

*Peter proclaims boldly that God raised Jesus from the dead*

<sup>14</sup>But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,

<sup>22</sup>"You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did

through him among you, as you yourselves know— <sup>23</sup>this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. <sup>24</sup>But God raised him up, having freed him from death because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. <sup>25</sup>For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; <sup>26</sup>therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover, my flesh will live in hope. <sup>27</sup>For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. <sup>28</sup>You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' <sup>29</sup>"Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. <sup>30</sup>Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. <sup>31</sup>Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, 'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.' <sup>32</sup>This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

## **1 PETER 1:3-9**

*The resurrected Jesus Christ the living hope*

<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy, he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup>and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup>who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup>In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, <sup>7</sup>so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. <sup>8</sup>Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup>for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

## **JOHN 20:19-31**

*The risen Jesus appears to the fearful disciples*

<sup>19</sup>When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." <sup>22</sup>When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." <sup>24</sup>But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>So, the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he

said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

<sup>26</sup>A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” <sup>27</sup>Then, he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” <sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” <sup>30</sup>Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup>But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Lord, may your word live in us **and bear much fruit to your glory.**

## HOMILY

The text for this address is from the gospel of John 20:19, “When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’”

JOHN 20:19

The title of this address is “Who did Jesus stand next to?”

### Who did Jesus stand next to?

Today’s text from John’s gospel tells us that following Jesus’ resurrection; the disciples are in a room with the doors locked. Jesus suddenly appears. He comes to them. He stood among them. He reassures their fearful (doubtful?) hearts with the words ‘Peace be with you’.

We are all too familiar with this story that awaits us at this time of the church year because it follows on from the resurrection of Jesus.

The text states that Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Jesus stood among them.

Hmmm...have you ever wondered whom Jesus might have stood next to?

As you think about this, permit me to say a few words about betrayal.

### The art of betrayal

The Macquarie Dictionary lists several interpretations of the word, betray. Namely:

1. To deliver or expose to an enemy by treachery or disloyalty.
2. To be disloyal to; disappoint the hopes and expectations.
3. To be unfaithful in keeping and: i.e. to betray a trust.
4. To reveal or disclose in violation of confidence, i.e. to betray a secret.
5. To reveal unconsciously (something one would preferably conceal).

Consider some examples of betrayal:

- A spouse arrives home and suddenly announces to the other person they are leaving the marriage of many years because they simply have 'fallen out of love' with him/her and 'fallen in love' with someone else.
- You're a family, a close-knit family; however, those bonds are eroded because a family member has disclosed confidential and sensitive family information to a non-family member. You are a family divided.
- An owner of a company who has spent time, money and resources on an employee, in the hopes that same employee will get the finances of the business back in the black and the long term sustainability of the firm guaranteed, only to discover that same employee you've put your heart and soul into, is in the pockets of their competitors and has been doing so for a long time, working with them.
- A friend who continually gossips and speaks ill will to others about his/her friends.
- You are someone for whom your friends will always rally around to support in your time of need; however, you never seek to return the favour when those same friends are in need.

The instances of betrayal can be many-fold. Needless to say, for victims, the effect of betrayal leaves deep psychological and emotional wounds. Seeking professional care and the process of time can play their part in attending to those wounds.

### **...and the betrayer?**

I want us to ponder another question; how might you feel if you are one who betrays?

If you are open to God, as well as other people speaking into your life, you may come to the realisation of the errors of your way and seek to correct them. You seek to make restitution with your victims and to learn from your mistakes. You long to move on from what seems like a horrible nightmare; however, other people won't let you forget.

Your reputation as a betrayer rings a loud warning to others to stay well away from you, and that you are unreliable, not to be trusted or befriended. The sense of isolation could well lead you to withdraw from others.

It may well be that you hold negatives thoughts about yourself as someone not to be trusted or worthy enough to be in the company of others. Thoughts of self-doubt and inferiority plague your mind.

All of these only compound your misery.

In such times, it is important to have others stand with you.

## **Standing with others**

One of the common features among the four gospel accounts of Jesus' trial and death are of the disciples' betrayal and deserting Jesus when he needed them most. Judas Iscariot betrayed him for money. Peter Simon, of whom Jesus affirmed as being a rock his Church would be built, denies Jesus not once, not twice, but three times. Others are doubtful of him.

We can assume these (except Judas Iscariot, of course) are present in the room. They are probably weighed down with guilt, guilt that is only exacerbated with fears of retribution and persecution from others who are on the other side of the door because they are seen as followers of Jesus. It is why they have locked themselves in the room in the first place.

There is no fear or guilt big enough to lock Jesus out!

Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

Which is why, despite the locked doors, Jesus coming to the disciples and standing among them and speaking peace to them is a powerful symbol of forgiveness and letting go. I don't mean the victims of betrayal must forgive and move on. Their pain is raw, and it is real, and is not for others to determine how they respond. They will arrive at that place in their own time.

## **Renewed hope**

Now, I'm wondering when Jesus appeared in that room and stood among the disciples; he chose to stand right next to Peter. Like the other disciples, could it be that Peter needed the reassurance of Jesus' forgiveness and that he could have faith in him?

Such actions by Jesus will be life-changing for Peter as the text from Acts reminds us.

The text from Acts shows us a very different Peter. From the once pathetic figure weighed down by fear and guilt of betrayal, instead, we find a Peter who is courageous, confident and unashamed of being a follower of Jesus. Boldly, he testifies to the crowds about him.

Peter has discovered what it is to let go of his fears and guilt. As a result of renewed hope, there is the unleashing of conviction, energy, determination, purpose, passion and more. This is what standing with others does.

Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

Friends what about you? Can you hear Jesus' words of peace to you as you wrestle with guilt and fear? Jesus stands with you. Be reassured of this.



Are there others you need you to stand with and speak words of hope-filled reassurance?

Even those who have betrayed you?

Friends, may you be strengthened with God's peace and presence as you do.

Let's pray.

Lord, thank you for these words from the gospel of John, that Jesus came amongst fearful ones, and guilt-ridden ones, and he spoke: "peace be with you". These were words of release, words of forgiveness, words of renewal. And I pray for all my friends that are tuning in, may you also speak your comforting words, may they also experience your presence, sustaining them in this time. And empower them by the power of your Spirit to be your people in the world. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

### **We Respond**

**Oh Lord, You're Beautiful** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBCOw3i-iVg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBCOw3i-iVg)

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.



## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*Take a moment to pray for one or more of the following:*

- countries and nations of the world
- those who are sick and in need
- the Church and our congregation

*After each prayer, a response may be said such as:*

Risen Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

And in the languages of the nation's we pray as Jesus taught...

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us in the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.

## OFFERING

You are invited to contribute financially to support the ministry and mission of the Hoppers Crossing congregation using the following details:

### Bank Transfer

**BSB:** 013-915

**Account Number:** 354 439 707

**Account Name:** Hoppers Crossing  
Uniting Church

**Reference:** 'Your SURNAME'

### Credit Card

[www.HoppersUniting.church/offering](http://www.HoppersUniting.church/offering)

**Lord, I Need You** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuvfMDhTyMA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuvfMDhTyMA)

## **We are Sent**

### **BENEDICTION**

Jesus said to the disciples, 'Peace be with you', so also,  
Jesus says to you, 'Peace be with you.'

Go forth into the world, just as God sent Christ into the world.

Take with you the peace of Christ, greater than the peace this world gives.  
And the Spirit will teach you the truth about God,  
that you may know the joy of Christ in all its fullness.

And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit  
be with you now and always.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**This is Amazing Grace** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPQKj2Zptr0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPQKj2Zptr0)

**The service is ended.**

#### **Acknowledgments**

*This liturgy was constructed with material from the following sources:*

Moirá Laidlaw

Ruth C. Duck

Music – YouTube as linked