



Bathurst Uniting Church

Sharing God's love by connecting people to God;
people to people; and people to community.

Newsletter

April 2026

Reflection

We celebrate that Christ has risen!

Easter begins with the celebration of the raising of Jesus Christ from the grave. The shout goes out in churches across the world, "The Lord has Risen. He has risen indeed."

This year Easter is on April 5. It changes each year because the date is related to the timing of the full moon. Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring after the equinox, which is approximately March 21. So, Easter can be anywhere between March 22 and April 25 each year.

Many churches across the world hold adult and infant baptisms and confirmations on Easter Sunday. It marks that in Christian baptism the person is joined to Christ in his death and has the promise of rising with him to life.

It is usual for churches to also include a congregational reaffirmation of the vows of baptism. So, the entire congregation is called to remember the founding event of the passion, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, and our being joined to Christ in baptism.

Some churches light a new candle that will be used on every occasion of worship through the forthcoming year until the following Good Friday when it is extinguished for the last time.

The colour of the season is white. It represents purity, grace and the resurrection of Christ.

Of course, Easter is on a Sunday. It marks the first day of the week. Every Sunday of the year is a "little Easter." Which means that on every Sunday of the year the Christian worship includes the underlying theme of the resurrection of Christ. Given that the resurrection follows the crucifixion, every Sunday includes a theme of the passion and death of Christ.

Easter is also a season. It is a season of 7 Sundays that leads to Pentecost. The meaning of Pentecost can be kept for another time. During the early weeks of the season of Easter the Bible readings – which always include a reading from the Acts of the apostles – connect directly to the themes of the resurrection of Christ and life in the resurrected Christ. Towards the end of the season the Bible readings begin to turn towards the theme of the Holy Spirit.

Many but not all churches follow a lectionary of readings across the Bible that mean we read most of the Bible in a three-year cycle. We are in the year of Matthew, which means most of the Gospel readings for the year are from Matthew. There is no year of John. The Johannine readings are spread across the three years.



I made a decision at the start of Lent that this year I would use the gospel of John for the 6 weeks of Lent, through Passiontide and then through Easter to Pentecost. We heard Matthew three years ago. It means we are hearing readings from John that we may not have heard before, or rarely have heard. From Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday, we shall hear (join the week-day zoom prayers 7-7:15 on the Bathurst UC zoom) from John 11-13. Across Easter we shall hear from John 18-20. We shall hear some of the chapters 14-17 through the season of Easter.

For Christians, Easter is the core event. Each of the gospels moves towards resurrection day. They confess that Jesus is more than a good idea. He is more than a good guy. In him is life. Life in its fullness.

Easter reminds us that even in the current time of carnage and destruction across the world, carnage and destruction that is increasingly impacting upon each one of us, the risen crucified One is there. And those who believe in Christ have hope. Angela Daynes, a former staff member of mine in another place often spoke of how we who believe in Christ hold hope for those who have lost hope. And in engaging with the other, being beside the other, listening to the other and expressing acts of service – like a metaphorical or real foot-washing, never giving up on the other, we offer the hope of Christ. Just imagine if every Christian in the world did that! We can't speak for others, nor can we force others to do things, but we can do something. We can begin by putting our trust in the risen crucified and ascended One. We can be Christ's people to others, as the living Christ in us works through us touching the lives of others. We can be "neighbourhood saints."

We can make a difference, in the way suggested by Pope Leo XIV during Lent 2026. Pope Leo encouraged the church to begin by "disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement." "We can abstain from words of hatred in order to make space for words of hope and peace. He said that "every conversion begins by letting God's Word touch our hearts, so that we may renew our commitment to follow Christ in the mystery of his saving passion, death and resurrection."

My prayer is that we shall all be renewed in our faith, and our hope sustained. That whatever fears and darkness that we might carry, shall be lifted, transformed by the light of Christ. That we might be given a sense of God's mercies; our hearts full of thanksgiving and our mouths and our lives full of worship and praise to God our Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory for ever. Amen.

Keith Hamilton



Please bring some food to share for supper after the service.

Please Note The Bathurst Uniting 5pm service will be held as usual but will be short to allow people to go to Laneway Church if they wish.



Holy Week and Easter

Palm Sunday morning - 29 March 9.30am. We will hold a procession commencing at the front of the 1837 Hall, moving into the church with palm branches and other branches and blankets.

Holy Week Monday 30 March to Thursday 2 April
morning prayers on the Bathurst UC zoom, 7-7:15 am

Maundy Thursday 02 April 6-7:30pm

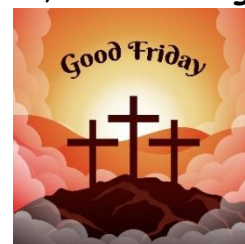
Worship in Activities Hall

We remember the Last Supper of Jesus: Soup & damper, Holy Communion, foot washing

Good Friday 3 April 9.30am

Worship in the church and on Zoom

Followed at 11.15am with Hot Cross Buns and coffee at the Hamilton's
Bring Hot Cross buns to share.



Easter Saturday 4 April - Working Bee & Morning Tea - 9.00-10:30am

Bring your cleaning cloths etc, dust down the pews upstairs and downstairs, polish the tableware, put up Easter day banners, flowers, etc, share morning tea and prayer

Easter Sunday 5 April - Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

9.30am – Worship in the Church and on Zoom

Congregational reaffirmation of baptism & Holy Communion

Note: There is no 5pm service on Good Friday or Easter Sunday

BUSS and Community Easter BBQ

This Sunday 29 March 12-2pm

Under the trees at the back of the church

Plenty of food, great live music and wonderful fellowship



THE LIBRARY AT THE NEAR EAST SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, BEIRUT, LEBANON

Even while destruction is going on around them, Christians in Beirut, Lebanon continue to witness and with audacious faith, raise up people to be Christian leaders.

How can you help? Read about the support the Uniting Church's Camden Theological Library at the Centre for Ministry, North Parramatta, and Friends of the Middle East are providing for staff and students in the ecumenical theological college in Lebanon. Even a small donation of just a few dollars can help to keep this service going. Check the link: <https://www.fmeorg.au/librarysupport>

BUSS UPDATE



THANK YOU!

A big thank you to Mt Panorama Lions Club who donated long life milk and money to help us continue supporting people.

Homelessness in Bathurst - Reprinted from the June 2025 newsletter

Earlier in the year BUSS invited a number of relevant agencies, service clubs, local council and interested individuals to see if there was interest in forming a homelessness Coalition for Bathurst. 27 people attended and there great discussion and interaction between everyone.

After getting overwhelming support to go ahead and form a homelessness Coalition we had our first meeting on 23rd May. The group determined some Terms of Reference for what they would do and how they would operate. The name of the group will be the Bathurst Regional Homelessness Coalition (BRHC) and the new Chair is Kate Hook. BUSS will be providing admin support for the group (thanks to a donation by Daybreak Rotary). It's very exciting to see community organisations coming together to look at this vital issue in Bathurst.

Fast forward to 2026 – In late 2025 Bathurst Regional Council issued orders for a number of homeless people who were camping in Berry Park to move on. The Homelessness coalition was able to assist most of them to find places to go. Read the Western Advocate article at <https://bit.ly/47dIXDe>



2026 Congregational Retreat

Our annual Congregational Retreat took place on Saturday 21 March this year at Perthville Community Hall. It was led by Denise Wood, the Chairperson of Macquarie Darling Presbytery. It was a great time of fellowship as well as being a challenging and rewarding time in which Denise turned our attention to the words we use, pointing out how some of them affirm and empower others, while others do the opposite and should be avoided.

With the changes to Presbytery structure taking place Denise is extremely busy, and I find the fact that she took the time to lead us on this day itself affirming. A big thank you to those who did the organising!

Andrew



February 2026

Broken Hill Flying Patrol

A ministry of the Uniting Church of Australia, Synod of NSW & ACT



The February 2026 update from the Flying Patrol is attached with the newsletter. A really interesting read!

Staying Connected

For pastoral support, please contact your Pastoral Partner, or one of the Elders, or email BUConnect@gmail.com and we'll put you in touch with someone.

You can also contact our minister, Rev Keith Hamilton on 0417487446 or email keith.hamilton.bathurstuc@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE

The newsletter email address is bathurstucanews@gmail.com. Please send items by 9pm on the last Wednesday of the month

Please send news or information for the website to allanwray@hotmail.com

Mowing Roster

4 April Aisea
18 April BUSS and Brian

Worship Services

9.30 am in the church

5 April Rev Keith Hamilton Holy Communion Easter Sunday

12 April Brian

19 April Rev Keith Hamilton

26 Rev Keith Hamilton

3 May Rev Keith Hamilton Holy Communion

'Sunday @ 5'

At 5pm – contemporary, informal, all ages worship in the Activities Hall.

On the first Sunday of each month there will be Holy Communion and a shared meal.

Please note: There will be no 5pm service on Good Friday or Easter Sunday.