

Good Friday  
29 March 2024

“Holding the pain of the world”



Minister: Rev Dr Margaret Mayman

Music: The St Michael's Singers  
& Rhys Boak (Organ)

## Welcome to St Michael's

St Michael's is a vibrant, progressive, inclusive church with a long tradition of nurturing the spiritual well-being of the human person and working for the common good.

As a congregation of the Uniting Church in Australia, we are committed we are committed to the Covenant with First Peoples and to social and ecological justice. We hold foundational Christian values of the worth of every human being, the need for integrity in public life, and concern for the welfare of the planet and its peoples, irrespective of race, creed, gender, sexuality, status, or age.

### Minister

Rev Dr Margaret Mayman

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**Deputy:** Catherine Jones

#### Mission Coordinating

**Chair:** Ann Kinnear

Jess Hand

Chris Phillips

### Organist and Manager of Music

Rhys Boak

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### Church Office

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Please send eNews notices to the office by 5pm Wednesday

♥ Open hearts. Open minds. Open Hands! ♥  
Sunday Gatherings are offered Online and In-Church.  
<https://www.stmichaels.org.au/>

## Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

As we gather, we acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We honour their elders past and present who have cared for country and carried the tradition and wisdom from generation to generation.

*Wherever you are on your spiritual journey,  
wherever you have come from, wherever you are going to;  
whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe;  
you are welcome here.*

## Hymn

## How could a God whose name is love?

How could a God whose name is love  
seek blood to pay sin's price?  
Are torture, shame, and senseless death  
a holy sacrifice?  
Each violent crime is tragic loss;  
how could it be God's will?  
How can we glorify the cross  
when victims suffer still?

Did Jesus come as God's own child  
to share each human tear?  
Did Jesus die in speaking truth  
that rulers will not hear?  
If Wisdom hangs upon a tree,  
what, then, are we to do?  
Must we, like Jesus, risk our lives  
for what is just and true?

In Jesus Christ we meet a God  
whose love embraces all,  
who weeps when children are abused,  
who hears each sparrow fall.  
When grace is ancient as the earth,  
we need not worship death.  
So let us live in tender care  
for all whom Love gives breath.

*Words: Ruth Duck (1947-)*

*Tune: Kingsfold from an English and Irish traditional melody*

*Coll. Lucy Broadwood (1858-1929)*

*Harm. and arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)*

## Prayer of Awareness

### The Journey to the Cross

The choice facing Judas

John 18: 1-6

Reader: Chris Phillips

## Response

Will we choose to be bystanders  
or will we take risks to stand in solidarity?  
As with Judas, the choice is always before us;  
to trust or to betray.

**We want the world to be different  
but often we fail to choose the way  
of nonviolent resistance.**

**May we find the courage to choose truth-telling  
over power.**

## The choice facing Peter

John 18: 7-11, 15-18, 25-27

Reader: Ian Cox

### Response

Will we choose to be bystanders  
or will we take risks to stand in solidarity?  
As with Peter, the choice is always before us;  
to advocate for the vulnerable, risking our own security,  
or remain on the sidelines.

**May we build-up in ourselves and one another  
the strength to stay true.**

### Music for Contemplation

Ave Verum – W.A. Mozart  
The St Michael's Singers & Rhys Boak (Organ)

## The choice facing Pilate

John 18: 28 –19:13; 19:17-22

### Response

Will we choose to be bystanders  
or will we take risks to stand in solidarity?  
As with Pilate, the choice is always before us;  
to stand firm for what is right,  
or to try and please everyone.

**May we find in ourselves the resolve and resilience  
to do what is right.**

### Music for Contemplation

'Prayer to Jesus' – R.R. Terry  
The St Michael's Singers

## The choice facing the Crowd

John 19: 14-16

### Response

Will we choose to be bystanders  
or will we take risks to stand in solidarity?  
As with the crowd,  
the choice is always before us;  
to call for justice,  
or condemn those whose lives we do not understand.

**May we practice the compassion and empathy the world needs.**

### Hymn

### A man of ancient time and place

A man of ancient time and place  
with foreign speech and foreign face,  
reveals the glory, power and grace  
of costly, unexpected love.

By teasing word and healing deed,  
a leper touched, an outcast freed,  
he bears the fruit and plants the seed  
of costly, unexpected love.

The cost we barely can surmise  
when, lifted up before our eyes,  
the face of God we recognise  
in crucified, unfathomed love.

*Words: Brian Wren (1936-)*

*Tune: Tallis Canon*

*Shortened form of melody by Thomas Tallis c. 1505-85*

*From Thomas Ravencroft's 'Psalmes', 1621*

## The choice facing Mary and John

John 19: 25-27

### Response

Will we choose to be bystanders  
or will we take risks to stand in solidarity?

As with Mary Magdalene, Salome,  
Mary, the mother of Jesus, and John  
the choice is always before us;  
to respond to the call to love  
or to walk away from it.

May we choose to offer hospitality and compassion  
to each other, to all we meet, and to the world.

*Remain seated to sing*

Hymn

O love that will not let me go

O love that will not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe,  
that in thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be.

O joy that seekest me through pain,  
I cannot close my heart to thee;  
I trace the rainbow through the rain,  
and feel the promise is not vain  
That mourn shall tearless be.

Words: George Matheson (1842-1906)

Tune: St Margaret

Albert Lister Peace (1844-1912)

At the cross

John 19: 17, 28-30, 38-42

Reflection

Rev Dr Margaret Mayman

“Searching for meaning”

At the Cross

## Music for Contemplation

'O Sacred Head sore wounded' – Johannes Brahms  
Rhys Boak (Organ)

## Prayers of Solidarity

God of grace and goodness,  
before the stark and shocking reality of the cross  
we are mindful this day of all who are numbered with Jesus  
in their alienation, rejection, suffering and pain.

For all who are homeless on our streets,  
and for refugees and asylum seekers who are homeless in our world.  
For people who live with violence in their homes  
and for people who live with the scourges of poverty and war.  
For those of us struggling to be understood,  
seeking a meaningful place in society,  
battling illnesses of body, mind or heart.

**We pray for the human family.  
May our solidarity with the way of the Cross  
be a gift of healing  
and sign of radical inclusion.**

For the natural world, this glorious creation,  
still used, abused and taken for granted,  
struggling to breathe fighting for long-term survival.

**We pray for the fragile, precious earth.  
May our solidarity with the way of the Cross  
be a gift of healing  
and sign of realistic hope.**

For fellow creatures, great and small,  
pushed aside by “progress,”  
pursued by needless killing and threatened by disease.

**We pray for all creatures of the earth.  
May our solidarity with the way of the Cross  
be a gift of healing  
and sign of respectful love.**



*In silence, we pray particular prayers for  
people and places where needs are known to us.*

In the many names of the Sacred we pray.

**Amen.**

## The choices facing us

In the face of all our decisions,  
all our denials and betrayals,  
In the face of our own terror,  
our fear and shame,  
our brokenness and loss,

**the Creative Source of Life empowers us to choose.**

**The Divine Presence will never leave us or forsake us.**

**The Holy One calls us forth to the light of Easter day.**

## Hymn

## A body broken on a cross

A body broken on a cross,  
with watching women's helpless grief,  
and men in heedless, headlong flight,  
through fear, despair or disbelief -  
    in this, though still we find it strange,  
    are life, and hope, and power to change.

A people weaponless and weak,  
not many wealthy, great or wise,  
but women, labourers and slaves,  
absurd to Greek and Roman eyes,  
    their Caesar's rages could forgive,  
    out-die, out-suffer, and out-live.

And still today, abroad, at home,  
from suburb or from shanty-town,  
the Spirit's new, surprising word,  
in ours or others faiths, or none,  
    our sad routines will disarrange  
    with gospel-hope of power to change.

When disillusion chains our feet  
and might and money turn to dust,  
when exile, desert, or defeat  
have left us nothing else to trust,  
    at last our spirit understands  
    the strength of peaceful, nail-scarred hands.

A nation drifting in decline  
can turn to just and loving ways,  
and people empty, bruised, ashamed,  
can find rebirth to joy and praise,  
    and churches, wakened, can exchange  
    a huddled death for power to change.

*Words: Brian Wren (1936-)  
© 1989 Hope Publishing Company  
Tune: Melita. John Bacchus Dykes (1823-1876)*

## Sending out and Blessing

Go out into the world  
in the power of the spirit of Christ  
to walk through shadowlands of uncertainty  
towards the joy of Easter Day. Go in peace.

May the hand of God be stretched out to meet you,  
the courage of Christ carry you beyond the known way,  
and the Spirit gather you up in the solidarity of love.

**Amen.**

*The people depart in silence.*

## Postlude

When Jesus on the Cross was found – J.S. Bach  
Rhys Boak (Organ)

## Acknowledgements

Art: “Black Cross, New Mexico” by Georgia O’Keeffe.

“Journey to the Cross” is based on a liturgy by Rev Dorothy McRae-McMahon with responses revised by Margaret Mayman.

Bible readings are from the Jesus Seminar translation, *The Five Gospels: What Did Jesus Really Say? The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*. HarperOne, 1996.

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## Giving

Offerings and donations enable us to continue the mission and ministry of St Michael’s. Your generosity is appreciated.

Information about ways to give is available on our website.

[stmichaels.org.au/giving](http://stmichaels.org.au/giving)

## Music for contemplation

Ave Verum – W.A. Mozart (1756-1791)

The ancient text, Ave Verum, has been set by many composers over many centuries. The text tells the story of Christ's suffering on Good Friday.

The St Michael's Singers & Rhys Boak (Organ)

'O Sacred Head sore wounded' – Johannes Brahms (1822-1896)

Based on the hymn 'O Sacred Head sore wounded' also known as the Passion Chorale, this short work for organ comes from a set of 11 similar pieces Brahms composed as an act of faith at the very end of his life.

Rhys Boak (Organ)

'Prayer to Jesus' – R.R. Terry (1865-1938)

This simple anthem, sometimes known as 'Richard de Castre's prayer to Jesus' is a humble setting of a prayer from the middle ages written in the Dorian mode. The prayer recounts the narrative of Good Friday.

The St Michael's Singers

## Postlude

When Jesus on the Cross was found BWV 620 – J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

This short work comes from Bach's Orgelbuchlein, a collection of choral preludes for all the days of the church calendar. The text of the choral this prelude is based upon is "When Jesus on the Cross was found, His Body pierced with many a Wound, With Torture very bitter; The dying Words, which He then spake, With a still Heart consider."

Rhys Boak (Organ)

## Musicians

You can find biographical profiles of St Michael's Guest Musicians on our website. <https://tinyurl.com/St-Mic-Musician-Biographies>