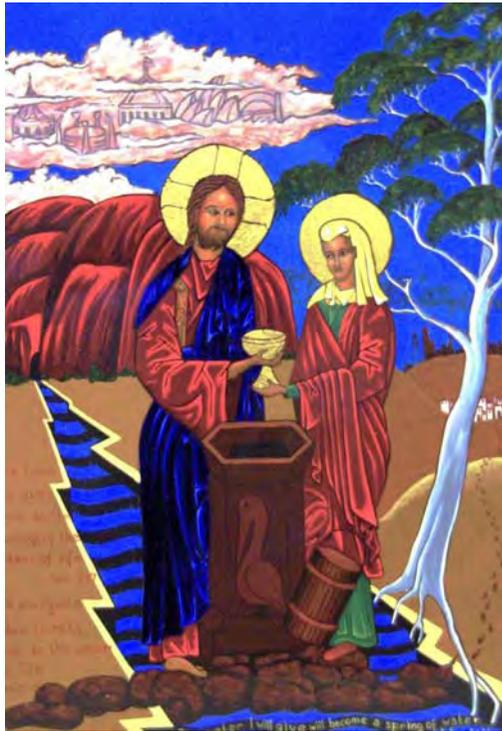


The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist

Lent 3A – 8 March 2026



An icon of the Jesus and the Woman at the Well by Rob Gallacher

Welcome to this service of worship at Mark the Evangelist.
Today's service is being live-streamed for the participation of those
who cannot join us physically today.

A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

Prelude

The Gathering of the People of God

Processional

We stand as the Scriptures are brought into the worship space:

Call to Worship

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

O come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

For the LORD is a great God,

and a great King above all gods. [Psalm 95:1-3]

Prayer of invocation

Hymn 577 *Come, let us to the Lord our God*

Greeting and Welcome

The Word Spoken: Scripture and Preaching

Cantor

The grass withers and the flow - ers fade, but the word of the Lord lasts for -

Congregation

-ev - er, the word of the Lord lasts for - ev - er.

Word: The Testimony of Scripture

First Reading Exodus 17:1-7

Psalm 95 *TIS 53 Come, sing praises to the Lord
above*

Second Reading Romans 5:1-11

Gospel John 4:5-42

This is the gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Word: In Preaching

*The sermon text will normally be available
after worship and online*

A 'sermon of stillness' – a moment for quiet reflection – usually follows the preaching

AfterWord: Confession

LORD HAVE MERCY

The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for 'Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.' The second staff contains the melody for 'Christ have mercy, Christ have mercy, Christ have mercy.' The third staff contains the melody for 'Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy.' The lyrics are written below the notes.

Lord have mer - cy, Lord have mer - cy, Lord have mer - cy.

5 Christ have mer - cy, Christ have mer - cy, Christ have mer - cy.

9 Lord have mer - cy, Lord have mer - cy, Lord have mer - cy.

Lord, have mercy; (3x)
Christ, have mercy; (3x)
Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Declaration of Forgiveness

(Please stand if you are able)

...hear, then, Christ's word of grace to us:
Your sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

The Apostles' Creed

***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 Intercession

Offering

(We remain seated as the offering is brought forward)

Many members now make their offering by electronic transfer; the plate will be passed for those who prefer to make cash/envelope offerings. The prayer dedicating the offerings 'captures' the full range of gifts. We set the offering at the foot of the cross, with the whole of ourselves.

Hymn 499 *Lord Jesus, joy of loving hearts*

The Visible Word: Eucharist

(If you are able, please remain standing until after the Lord's Prayer)

The Invitation

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(The prayer continues...)

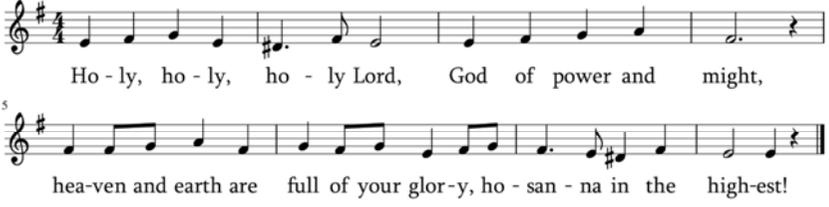
...And so we praise you

with the faithful of every time and place,

joining with choirs of angels and the whole creation

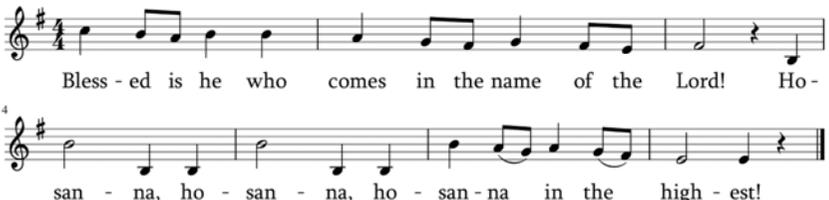
in the eternal hymn:

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
5 hea-ven and earth are full of your glor-y, ho - san - na in the high-est!

BENEDICTUS



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Ho -
4 san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

(The prayer continues...)

Great is the mystery of faith...

CHRIST HAS DIED

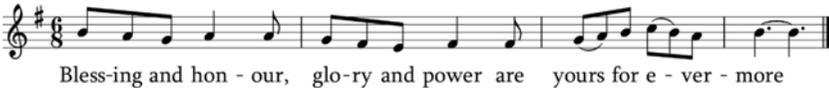


Christ has died, Christ is ris - en, Christ will come a - gain

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

(The prayer continues...)

BLESSING AND HONOUR



Bless-ing and hon - our, glo-ry and power are yours for e - ver - more

***Blessing and honour, glory and power
are yours forever more.***

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 from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.*

(The people sit)

The Breaking of the Bread

The gifts of God for the people of God....

...Let us receive what we are,
let us become what we receive
The body of Christ

The Communion

The Uniting Church recognises this Table as the Lord's and, so, open to all who would normally commune in their home congregations.

GATHERING: *We'll gather in a circle around the table for the distribution of the elements; please wait until all have received and the prayer is said before returning to your seats.*

If you can't stand or walk to the front but would like to receive communion, please raise your hand if the celebrant has not already noticed you.

Post Communion Prayer

Notices

The Sending Forth of the People of God

Hymn 580 *Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us*

Word of Mission and Blessing

Postlude

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION All music printed in this order of service and live-streamed is either in the public domain or is covered by the congregation's CCLI licence (#449158) or its ONE LICENSE with license (#737505-A). All rights reserved. Psalm responses from PCS are used with permission from The Psalter, 1993.

We'd love to hear your feedback on the service.

Our email address is:

enquiries@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

Our website is:

<http://marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au/>

NOTICES

FAITH AFTER FAITH

Craig publishes weekly on *Faith after Faith*, a Substack site. You can subscribe to receive email updates of recent posts (avoid the paid subscription invitations!). Use the QR image here to check in, or see faithafterfaith.substack.com for more info. Recent posts include:



- Recent Sermons
- Music for congregations
- New Theological Fragments (110-115): The unnecessary God

People to Commemorate: Perpetua & Felicitas, martyrs

Few women have shaped the Christian spiritual tradition like the young North African martyr and visionary, Vibia Perpetua. She has inspired people of different centuries, countries, and cultures. Her story, told in *The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas*, is a “dazzling text”, one of the most gripping accounts of martyrdom from the ancient church. Virtually from the moment of its writing in an early third-century Carthaginian prison, Perpetua’s story has played an important part in Christian spirituality. It is “timeless”, according to the medieval historian, Joyce Salisbury, meaning that it speaks to the human heart across the centuries, societies, and cultures.

An unknown figure first saw the potential of Perpetua’s story. He framed her story in such a way that succeeding generations of readers (or listeners) would treat it almost like Scripture. He saw in her visions a demonstration of the unceasing operation of the Holy Spirit and a witness for the glory of God and the good of the Church. The popularity of Perpetua and her companion Felicitas soon spread beyond the North African church. By the late fourth century their feast day was honoured in all the early calendars and martyrologies and their names were regularly remembered in Sunday worship.

By the early fifth century, Perpetua and Felicitas, were among the most venerated of African martyrs. Augustine loved these saints and drew inspiration from their life and witness. We know, for example, that Augustine preached at least three sermons in honour of Perpetua (after whom his sister was named). In Augustine’s first sermon he describes how upon hearing the story of the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas read in church, the congregation joined in a “celebration of universal devotion”. In his second sermon, Augustine elevates the merits of Perpetua and Felicitas above all other martyrs. And in the third sermon, he names Perpetua and Felicitas as a model for all those who suffer for the faith.

The overwhelming reason for the popularity of Perpetua in recent times is her importance for women’s religion. She gives an intimate view into the mind of a third-century woman, which, for centuries, has been a great source of inspiration for women struggling with questions of identity and meaning. Given the degree of silence that has surrounded women throughout history, Perpetua’s story is astonishingly rare and precious. She may well not be the first woman to have put her thoughts on paper; she is, however, one of the first of whom we have any real knowledge. In her writing we can hear a voice too little heard. It is an extraordinary voice. She has given the Church – especially women – a role model and a positive example of empowerment.

Contributed by William Emilsen

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

See above for more details on these events

LENTEN STUDIES!	Wed/Fri till the end of March
Church Council	Tue April 7 7.30pm Online
Hotham Mission Board Executive	Fri Mar 20, 3pm hybrid
The Passion Narrative (Palm/Passion Sunday)	March 29, 10.00

People to commemorate this week

Perpetua & Felicitas, martyrs

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

Ireland; United Kingdom: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales

Lectionary Readings | March 8 2026

1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

A Parish Mission of the UCA, MtE is responsible for Hotham Mission

Contact: Rev Dr Craig Thompson, 0408 389 751

minister@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

www.hothammission.org.au | www.marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au