



# Oatley Uniting Church

PO Box 73, Oatley

<https://oatley.uca.org.au/>

Mission Statement: Loving, Caring, Transforming  
our community through Jesus Christ.

Easter 6 and Easter 7

5 and 12 May, 2024

## GRACE

*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.*  
(Titus 2:11-14, ESV)

Grace is a thunderous, expansive, powerful, and life-altering word. Other than the word God, there is no more important word that the human mind could consider and the mouth could speak. It is the most transformational word in the Bible that you hold dear.

In fact, your Bible is the cover-to-cover story of God's grace. It is the best of stories, the story of the undeserved redemption of lost ones and rebels. Scripture records for us how God reached into the muck and mire of our sin-broken world to rescue us, not because of what he saw in us but because of what was in him.

Grace is why God sent his Son into this world to do for us what we could not do for ourselves—to transform us from what we are (sinners separated from him) into what we are becoming (Christ-like and with him forever).

John Newton, in his famous hymn, really did choose the best word ever to describe God's grace. There simply is nothing comparable to God's amazing grace.

You could dig into grace every day of your life and not reach the bottom of its power and glory. Grace is the bottomless, treasure-laden mine of divine help.

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## LECTIONARY READINGS FOR 21 April

### Easter 6

Acts 10:44-48 : Psalm 98  
1 John 5:1-6 John 15:9-17

## LECTIONARY READINGS FOR 28 April

### Easter 7

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26 : Psalm 1  
1 John 5:9-13 : John 17:6-19



Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.  
(Hebrews 4:14-16, ESV)

**A Prayer for Today:** *God, would you help me to see with fresh eyes the wonders of your grace? Would you shape and transform my heart into a vessel that continually asks and grasps for the only cure that could ever rid me of the disease of sin? Help me to run to you, fully recognizing that in you alone is where my heart will find all it wants and needs—your amazing grace. In Christ's name, amen.*

Taken from "Wednesday's Word" by Paul David Tripp  
<https://www.paultripp.com/wednesdays-word/posts/grace-is>

**FLOWER ROSTER VACANCY**—Is there a willing person who might fill the gap in the roster. There are boxes of artificial flowers available for your use if the garden isn't blooming.... If this is something that you can do please let Ross Cooper or Pip Watts know. It would be a commitment every 5 weeks.



**OneLove Women's Conference 2024**—is a ministry of Katoomba Christian Convention and is to be held this year at Hillsong Church (no, it is not Colour Conference). Ladies—This is a one day event to be held on 24 August, 2024. The speaker this year is Blair Linne. The topic— "Overcoming Complacency" We've missed the Early Bird rates so the cost is now \$121.00. This cost includes program attendance, printed booklet, conference gift, morning tea and lunch. If you are interested in attending please let me know so we can book tickets. Please look to the website: <https://onelovewomen.com/> for more information. Reignite your devotion to your God. Pip Watts 0403 758 487

**The Bill Crews Foundation—Exodus** Thank you everyone for your generous donations to Exodus. Please continue to give things that are necessary pantry items—long-life milk and non-perishable food items i.e. canned items, rice, pasta, tea, coffee, cereals, biscuits and even personal items—soap, toothpaste, shampoo. These things all go to make home packages.



**SUNDAY  
WORSHIP  
SERVICES**

9.30AM

AND

6.00PM

## Conquering Worldliness—Take up your Cross

Mark 8:34-35

*Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it." (NIV11)*



The crucified person in Roman culture is considered a 'non-person'. To be crucified is to be formally 'cancelled'. Jesus to the Roman leaders was on the wrong side of history. Crucifixion is a crushing of the human soul. Yet Christ on the cross showed us what it is to love and to be a servant to all. Even in that moment on the cross he was denying *self* – he was centred in his love of God, in relationship. There was no *self-hood*. Our *self* wants to be served than to serve, to receive rather than give. If you want to honour God you cannot be self-serving. Our joy is in serving others and not for what we might receive. We need to die to self, our self-serving, greedy, impatient, angry, hurtful self, and nail it to a tree and gain a new God-honouring self. Hebrews 12:2b says that "...For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame ..."

- thoughts taken from Tim Blencowe, Speaker at KEC 2024

<https://www.paultripp.com/wednesdays-word/posts/grace-is>

Three key points from last week's sermon –

- ⇒ You will bear much fruit if you remain in the vine. That is, together with Jesus you can achieve great things.
- ⇒ Apart from the vine we will achieve nothing, non-productive. We are dead branches and we will wither and die.
- ⇒ We need to agree to be pruned. The pruning changes something about us. God is always pruning and the nourishment is from Jesus.



*"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love."*

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**For all pastoral matters** contact Rev Alex Thomas

H: 8411 2383 : M: 0448 35 35 39 : E: alexth@optusnet.com.au

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**Hall Bookings:** Please contact Rosemary Cooper  
– on 0402 428 560 – for all Hall Bookings.

Please also let her know if you would like to borrow any equipment.  
Your prompt return of any borrowed items is appreciated.

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This Church has a loop system for the hearing impaired.  
Please switch hearing aid to "T" switch



◆ ... to a faithful and holy God who loves us immeasurably and who lifted up his Son to die for us; to save us from ourselves. That the name of Jesus will continue to challenge the unbeliever; continue to challenge world views.

- ◆ ... for the family of Shirley Barrow as they mourn her passing. Give them the strength and love they need at this sad time.
- ◆ ... for David & Henrietta, Jenni & David and family as they, too, mourn the passing of Ian Holden.

### Bless...

- ◆ ... our Minister Alex and his wife Elizabeth as they lead and support our church at Oatley.
- ◆ ... Linda and Geoff as they carry out Pastoral Care work.
- ◆ ... all our friends and loved ones in Nursing Homes— Grace & Ian McKay, Noelene Baker and Rhonda wife of Vic Stewart and Marlene Woodham's mum Betty McKay. We thank you that you have also been caring for Rex and Coral Roberts, Joyce Fieldus, Jean Watts and Norma Manwaring. Surround them all with God's peace, love and protection.
- ◆ ... Judy Walsh and give thanks for her continued healing as she rests at home.
- ◆ ... the Church Council.
- ◆ ... each other. Let us be an encouragement and a blessing to each other.
- ◆ ... our congregation that we grow in ministry and seek the will of God in this place.
- ◆ ... the various prayer groups and Bible Study groups.

### Uphold...

- ◆ ... Countries where there is political unrest, natural disasters and wars—Pray for the work of doctors, nurses, aid agencies in these places.
- ◆ ... our farming communities. Help them to remain resilient.
- ◆ ... those doing it tough because they have no home, no regular meals, no job.
- ◆ ... aid agencies who support people in distress like The Wayside Chapel, The Bill Crews Foundation, the Storehouse, Mission Australia...
- ◆ ... our Government—for good leadership, wisdom, discernment, co-operation and collaboration. To stand for the truth and care for the disadvantaged.
- ◆ ... Governments across our world where political leaders offer lies for truth.
- ◆ ... the Uniting Church in Australia—that God's word is not compromised.

Let us allow the Holy Spirit to show each of us how best to pray—and to pray for all these things In the mighty name of Jesus—**Amen**

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### CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Pip Watts—0403 758 487—Please leave a message.

OR Email: [pippa0183@gmail.com](mailto:pippa0183@gmail.com)

Email heading subject: **NEWSLETTER**

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