



**Web:** [athelstonechurch.org.au](http://athelstonechurch.org.au)  
**Email:** [office@athelstonechurch.org.au](mailto:office@athelstonechurch.org.au)  
**Newsletter:** [newsletter@athelstonechurch.org.au](mailto:newsletter@athelstonechurch.org.au)  
**Postal Address:** PO Box 307, Athelstone, SA 5076  
**Office Hours:** Closed  
**Minister:** Rev Linda Driver: Mobile 0458 500 656  
[minister@athelstonechurch.org.au](mailto:minister@athelstonechurch.org.au)  
Linda's Day off: Monday

## Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Greetings and welcome to this week's newsletter.

### A Note from Linda

*Open hearts. Clean hands. Spread calm.*

This simple quote from Brené Brown says so much for the situation we find ourselves in.

*Open hearts:* If we think of our hearts as the place of our emotions and our deepest desires and fears, what do we mean by *open hearts*?

Each of us is experiencing this pandemic differently. Every one of us is experiencing change in some way and that in itself is stressful. Then there are those of us who are facing unemployment, financial stress, physical and mental health concerns, isolation, separation from loved ones, the inconveniences of buying things, doing everyday things and so on. Everything is different. Everything can feel so much harder. It doesn't take much for us to feel overwhelmed. We all feel it to some extent.

Open hearts means being open with our loved ones about how we feel. It means being vulnerable. Open hearts means showing empathy for those around us. Open hearts means extending kindness, grace and love even when we may not feel like it!

*Clean hands:* We each need to take responsibility for slowing down the spread of this virus. Have you heard the expression, 'the virus doesn't move, people move it'? In other words people carry the virus. We each have a responsibility to play our part in not moving the virus on. So please wash your hands often, practice physical distancing, and stay home if you can.

*Spread calm:* We are being bombarded with information, statistics, press releases, announcements, rumours and so on about the virus. Can I please ask that as the people of God we take on the role of peacemakers, spreading calm rather than anxiety. In all your interactions, consider: is what I'm about to say helpful or will it cause further anxiety? Is what I am about to say accurate? Have I checked the source? Let's spread words of peace and encourage each other.

*Open hearts. Clean hands. Spread calm.*

*Blessings and peace,*

Linda

### Electronic Giving

It is important to continue giving generously during this difficult time. If you usually give with cash, please consider electronic giving. Alternately you could place your cash offering into an envelope each week then bring these envelopes to our first gathering when it is time to worship together once more. Regular electronic giving or one off donations can be made using the following details:

Account name: Athelstone Uniting Church Account BSB: 704 095 Account number: 110043

Contact Treasurer Glen Luestner for more information. Phone: 0401-052-842 or E-mail: [glenluestner@gmail.com](mailto:glenluestner@gmail.com)

### Messy Church

Messy Church @ Home is on this week! Together, but apart, we will journey through Holy Week with Jesus. Packs will be delivered ready for Sunday to our regular Messy Church congregation, if you don't regularly attend Messy Church but would like to worship in this way during Holy Week please get in touch with Meg Edwards.

Phone: 0431 030 079 or Email: [meg.foster.01@gmail.com](mailto:meg.foster.01@gmail.com)



### STAY AND PLAY @ HOME

Email resources will be sent out to enrolled families on the dates below.

#### DATES for 2020

Term 2  
5<sup>th</sup> May  
19<sup>th</sup> May  
2<sup>nd</sup> June  
16<sup>th</sup> June  
30<sup>th</sup> June

## Stay and Play @ Home

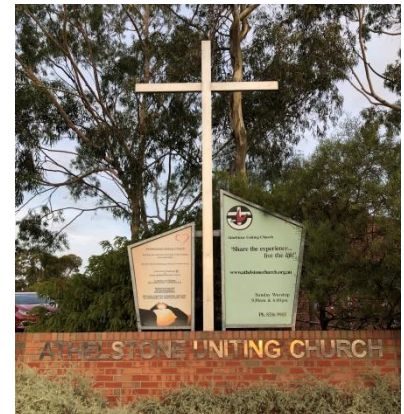
With the cancellation of all face to face activities at Athelstone Uniting Church, Stay and Play @ Home was launched last Tuesday. We are providing a programme of activities via email for all currently enrolled families, to support carers to keep preschoolers happily occupied. Over the school holiday/Easter break carers will receive other activities as well. If you would like to be part of the team to do this, please make contact with Bruce and Joy Stewart.

Phone: 8336 2671 or Email: [bruceandjoy@bigpond.com](mailto:bruceandjoy@bigpond.com)

## Sign

Church Council decided last week to put up a sign at the front of our property which communicates how we are responding to COVID-19. This temporary sign is now in place. We have used this opportunity to try out some words and images that we are developing which have come out of our Planning Day held in February. Please let us know what you think of the look, the words and the message it conveys. Send your feedback to Council Secretary Ann Brown:

Email: [brownanndon@gmail.com](mailto:brownanndon@gmail.com)



## New Times – April/May 2020

The New Times April/May 2020 edition is out now and will be distributed to congregations by this weekend. As you won't be able to collect a hard copy from the church, we encourage you to read the online version here: <https://sa.uca.org.au/new-times/new-times-print-edition/>. You can download a pdf version to read if you prefer. If you are not able to do so, and would like a print copy delivered to you, please let Carol know by email ([office@athelstonechurch.org.au](mailto:office@athelstonechurch.org.au)) or send a text to Linda (0458 500 656).

## Letter from the General Secretary

Attached is a letter from the General Secretary to all of us. Please take the time to read it.

## Lenten Appeal 2020

Each year the Uniting Church of Australia, through Uniting World, carefully selects a significant project of outreach and Christian mission. The 2020 project in partnership with the Protestant Church of Maluka in Indonesia seeks to bring Muslims and Christians together to build peace and beat poverty. Our intention was to have a special offering on Sunday 5th April. As we won't be gathering on that morning, we encourage you to give online. Further information [www.lentevent.com](http://www.lentevent.com)

## Pastoral care

The Pastoral Care Oversight Team are working on ways for us to care for one another during this time. Whilst this provides structured ways of caring for people, we encourage you to still continue to reach out and love and care for one another, as so many of you do so well, within our church community, and also those around us. Please do let us know if you are need of support. Contact a member of our Pastoral Care Oversight Team for assistance:

Rev Linda Driver 0458 500 656

Bob Stevenson 0400 641 242

Brenton Summers 0400 632 829

Ann Brown 0413 581 554

## Prayer Requests

Can we support you in prayer? Here's how:

**Prayer Chain** - send an email to, or call Brenton Summers, who will pass your prayer request on to a group of people who faithfully pray in response to Prayer Chain emails.

**Confidential Prayers** - if the issue is more personal you are invited to contact Linda for individual prayer or one the members of the Pastoral Care Oversight team (Brenton Summers, Ann Brown, Bob Stevenson and Linda). All prayer requests going to the team will be kept strictly confidential within this team.

**Prayers for Others (Sunday Worship)** – While our community is scattered, Linda will include these in a weekly Worship and Prayer resource. If you have something you would like to be included, please contact Linda. “We are all called to pray for one another, and so we are all encouraged to offer to pray for, or with others, especially if they share a concern with you.” (James 5:13-16)

## Ways your Church is responding to COVID-19

Your Church Council, your Pastoral Care Oversight team, the Office team and Linda are all working hard to be proactive in our response to what is happening. We are learning together as we meet online rather than face to face. As you would be aware, the Church building is closed, the Office is closed and activities of the Church have been suspended. Our hirers have also suspended their activities. The Church itself is not closed - we, the people, are the Church, the body of Christ. This is our time to live out that reality as we continue to worship God (in different ways) and care for one another and share God's love with those around us.

We are working on ways to remain connected, ways to resource you in your spiritual journey, ways to support you through pastoral care, and ways to resource you so you can reach out to others with love and grace.

Each week you will receive at least two communications from us: the newsletter and a worship and prayer resource. Please reach out to Linda or to members of the pastoral care oversight team if you are struggling or need support.

A new private Facebook group has been established for keeping members of our church community connected. If you are on Facebook and are not yet part of this group, please contact Linda who will send you an invitation. If you are not on Facebook, or haven't been using it, perhaps this is the time to consider getting connected in this way.

This is of course is only one way that we do this. We can (and do) ring or text each other, email, or drop off notes or care packages to one another. Thank you to everyone who is doing this. It is so important for everyone to feel connected at this time. It is also important that we care for ourselves. Remember our unBusy series and our prayer chair? Now is the time to reconnect with God and ourselves. Take time to be still and to breathe slowly and deeply.

“Be still and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10)

**Practice  
Good  
Hygiene**



**Wider Church news** - <https://sa.uca.org.au>

You can also subscribe to receive UC. E-News personally.

## Website

We encourage you to visit our website: [www.athelstonechurch.org.au](http://www.athelstonechurch.org.au)

## Lectionary readings

You will find these in your copy of the Uniting Church Calendar.

## Newsletter contributions

Please email [newsletter@athelstonechurch.org.au](mailto:newsletter@athelstonechurch.org.au) by 5pm Wed. Lectionary readings - You will find these in your copy of the Uniting Church Calendar.

**Don't forget to light a candle at 9.30 am on Sunday**