

# ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday 8 May 2022

Doxology #709  
Praise God

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn 165  
Join all the glorious names

Young at Heart  
Christine Bradbeer

Welcome and Notices  
Session Clerk: Keith Ferres

Offering and Dedication

Hymn 509  
Jesus, Master, whose I am

Bible Reading: John 12:1-11  
Amanda Fairs

Sermon  
Sisters: doing it for others.

Prayers of Intercession  
and  
The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 435  
Come, Thou Fount of every blessing

Benediction



# NOTICES

8 MAY 2022

**Wednesday 11 May** 1.30 pm Prayer Meeting

**Sunday 15 May** 11 am Divine Worship.

The Greeks' Question

All Welcome!

Whitehorse Churches Care are working together with the police to deliver care packs to people on the Community Support Register. If you would like to contribute/participate please let me know. The plan is to have packs ready for delivery from the week beginning June 20th. Packs are made up of contributed mixed food items.  
Thank you, Graham.

**For your prayers this week:**

Congregational member: **Amanda FAIRS.**

also

**Rob and Teresa** (no image). Pray for the growing number of connections to the U community in Melbourne and for the U people of East Asia.



GARDENIA ST  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

53 Gardenia Street,  
Blackburn 3130



Minister: Rev Graham Bradbeer  
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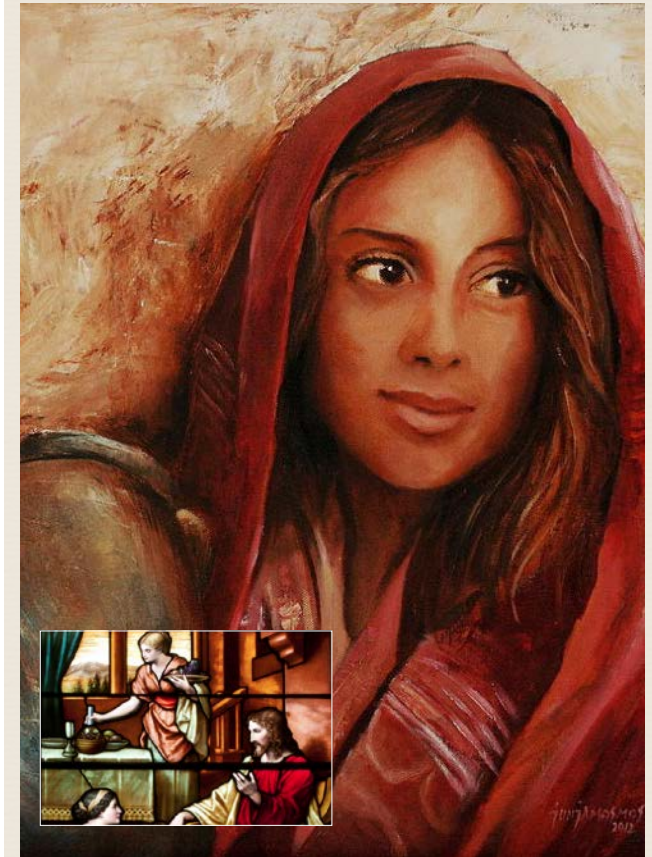
Session Clerk: Mr Keith Ferres 98305466

Treasurer: Mr Vic Ansell 9436 7196

Electronic Banking Details: ANZ Forest Hill,  
Account name: Blackburn Presbyterian Church  
BSB: 013-328. Account number: 2970 40694

# GARDENIA ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BLACKBURN

8 May 2022



Mary of Bethany, The Falls Church Anglican, VA,  
Inset: Stained glass of Jesus, Mary, and Martha.  
Photo courtesy Odyssey Networks.

# WELCOME

Russia  
for your  
Prayers



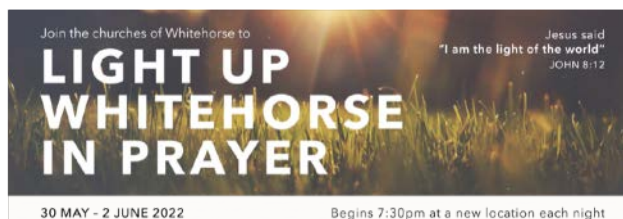
The rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly were routinely violated. Public assemblies organised by the political opposition were almost completely prohibited. Legislation on “foreign agents” and “undesirable organisations”, together with prosecutions on trumped-up charges and other forms of pressure, were widely used to suppress dissent.

Amnesty International 2021/22

Much of the pressure on Christians in Russia comes from the government imposing restrictive legislation. Since the implementation of the anti-terrorist Yarovaya laws, the level of surveillance of all non-Orthodox Christian churches has increased. As a result, Christian activity is often under state surveillance, and church services are sometimes raided by security forces.

Christian converts in the radicalised Muslim region of Caucasus face immense pressure from family, friends and local community to renounce their faith. Out of fear, converts do not even attempt to go to church meetings. Some have been forced to flee or find refuge in safe houses.

Open Doors 2022



Sisters: doing it for others.

John 12:1-11

### The approaching crisis

Jesus, despite being on the blacklist of the Jewish leadership (John 11:45-57) was determined to be in Jerusalem for Passover. He knew pain and death were on his horizon, yet he ‘earnestly desired’ to share Passover with the disciples before he suffered (Luke 22:61).

Jesus and the disciples were with friends, Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, in Bethany, not far from the city. Jesus had evidently prearranged his transport to Jerusalem the next day.

### Lazarus

Lazarus was a source of great interest.

He had been raised from death and that very fact was a challenge to the Sadducees (who included the priests) because they denied there could be any resurrection. They wanted Lazarus dead (12:10).

Jesus, in particular, spelt trouble for the ruling classes, if he caused an insurrection the Romans would come down hard on them. ‘It’s better’, said Caiaphas, ‘that one man die for the people’ (John 11:50).

### Martha

Martha was busy. She loved Jesus and he was guest of honour in her home (Luke 10:38). Responsibility for such hospitality will busy up anyone, especially a hands-on person. The little we know of Martha fits precisely with this business-like busy-ness. ‘Martha served’ the meal.

### Mary

‘Mary took half a litre of perfume’. In this Mary too is true to character. She had previously ‘sat and

listened’ (Luke 10:39) while her sister was distracted with busy-ness. Now she takes centre stage in an unselfconscious but extravagant act of devotion to Jesus. Notice three things:

1. Mary’s hair - shocking and unselfconscious
2. Mary’s devotion - such prodigal love?
3. Jesus’ feet - not his head, humble

The treasured perfume was perhaps an heirloom. It was of great value, about a year’s wages. We know this because Judas remarked on it.

### Judas

Judas was the treasurer of the band of disciples. He had presumably been entrusted with this role because he was good with money. He knew the great value of the ‘pure nard’; a precious perfume.

He even suggested an alternative use for the valuable commodity; sell it and be generous to the poor. This would comply with the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 15:11).

But Judas was insincere. John gives an insight into his ulterior motive. He pilfered the funds. Helping the poor could, and should be done anytime, but showing love to Jesus could only be done before the cross.

Mary sensed the urgency; it was now or not at all.

Judas wants discipleship on his own terms. He wants a share of Mary’s generosity and devotion.

Aiden Kimel, a Christian scholar comments:

“Who is not guilty of the greed of Judas? Every time I attempt to offer to the Lord a selfless sacrifice, I abruptly reclaim it as my own; every time I attempt to surrender my heart to Christ, I quickly rein it in. The prodigality and surrender of Mary seem to be beyond me.”