

The Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.



Term 1: A journey filled with joy

Mrs Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

Term 1 has truly been a journey filled with joy. Our learning, wellbeing, outdoor education, sporting and co-curricular programs across the whole school have been action-packed and vibrant. Our girls and their teachers have settled into a fabulous rhythm of great teaching and learning, both within and beyond the classroom.

When we look back on this term, so much has been achieved. Our girls have given their best in so many areas: in the classroom, in the Senior School House Choir, the Junior and Senior School Swimming and Cross Country Carnivals, the IPSHA Swimming Carnival and the IGSA Swimming Carnival, where Abbotsleigh placed fifth, at Saturday sport, and in the Tildesley Tennis Shield, where Emilie Chen (Year 11) won the Singles Final, Abbotsleigh won the Spender Cup and the School was placed second overall. This has been our best result for many, many years!

Abbotsleigh is such a vital learning community with so much on offer, and our girls, it seems, are involved in everything! A few examples of the myriad activities in which our girls, Pre K-12, have participated this term include: CRU, Music, Debating, Dance, Gymnastics, STEAM, Mana Allawah, Model United Nations, Service and Environmental clubs, Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Robotics. In Drama, girls performed in the Senior School student-directed play and the Senior School Shakespeare Festival. Many girls are preparing for the Junior School Production and the Senior School Musical. Our girls across the School are certainly flourishing as



they 'Journey With Joy' and weave the next scene of Abbotsleigh's rich and unique historical tapestry together.

Very soon, though, in fact partway through next week, it will be time to rest. I encourage every family to take time out, to read books (yes, the printed variety), to stay away from screens and to explore the outdoors – Australia is truly beautiful at this time of the year. Please take the time to enjoy it.

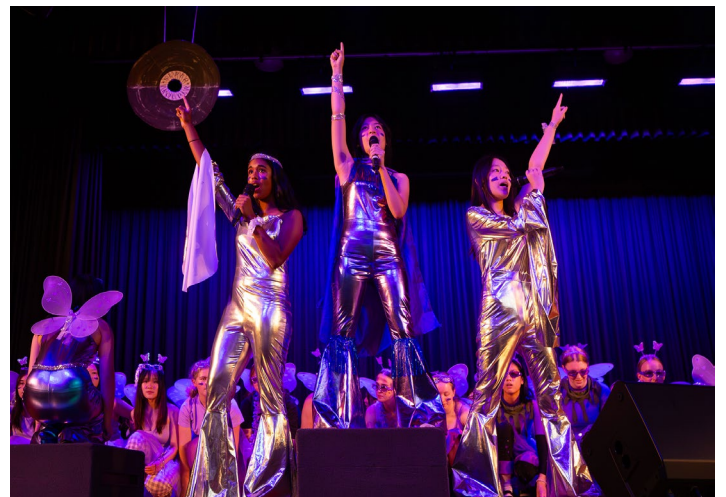
Having Easter fall at the beginning of the school holidays is wonderful, as we can use this time to really reflect on what God's Son, Jesus Christ, has done for us. This week, our Senior School girls celebrated Easter in their final Chapel service for the term, and next Tuesday, our Junior School will be celebrating Easter in our beautiful School Chapel. I encourage every Junior School parent to come to these services and every family to celebrate Easter



together over the break. Our Senior Chaplain, Rev Sarah Hobba, has written an excellent article on Easter, which I warmly commend to you.

As we look forward to our term break next week, I would like to thank every member of staff for their very hard work in ensuring that our girls are given the best learning experiences and learning environment possible; I would also like to thank every parent for your incredible support of Abbotsleigh.

I wish all Abbotsleigh families a very special Easter and a safe and marvellous holiday. I look forward to seeing our girls, staff and parents again at the beginning of Term 2, commencing on Tuesday 21 April. We will continue to follow our tradition of superb teaching and learning, as well as fostering completely respectful and positive relationships.



Joy and the Easter Journey

Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies



One of my favourite Pixar movies is *Inside Out*, especially because of the personification of the emotions of *Joy* and *Sadness*. *Joy* spends a lot of the movie trying to make sure her human, Riley, is happy and dismissing *Sadness* from any influence. A favourite scene (spoiler alert – though it is over 10 years old now) is *Joy*'s realisation that one of Riley's core memories actually grew out of *Sadness*, a moment when others came to support her through something difficult. This epiphany leads to a new core memory where both *Joy* and *Sadness* coexist, shaping Riley as she understands the complexity of her world.

In many ways, this mirrors what researchers are discovering. Joy is not mere happiness or constant positivity, but a complex and deeply nuanced reality. Some who study joy describe it as a basic positive emotion, the experience of personal human flourishing, vivid pleasure or intense responses to meaningful experiences. Despite the complexity in these definitions, joy can consistently be viewed as a rewarding feeling, often associated with belonging, unity and harmony.

When we come to think about Easter, it's easy to associate joy with the simple pleasures of chocolate eggs

or relaxed time with family and friends. What is harder is holding that joy in tension with the deep darkness and sadness at the heart of the Christian story, namely the brutal treatment of Jesus on the cross. There is nothing joyful in violence, injustice, cruelty or greed and in what Jesus endured. It is a stark picture of humanity at its worst. And yet, within that Easter sorrow, there is also great joy.

Joy is easily seen in the two bookends of Easter, firstly at the very beginning of Holy Week, celebrated this Sunday with Palm Sunday (and the following Sunday for Orthodox believers). As Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, voices burst with joy, hailing him as a king and rescuer. The crowds '*began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen. "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!"*' (Luke 19:37-38). We see joy again at the other end of Holy Week, at Jesus' resurrection remembered on Easter Sunday, where in Matthew's gospel it says, '*So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.*' (Matthew 28:8). Whilst the bookends are helpful, the question remains: what do we do with the deep sadness in between, at the cross? Jesus' suffering reveals that true joy is not found by escaping sorrow or hardship but by moving through them with God's presence.



From this Easter journey, several meaningful takeaways emerge:

- **Joy is grounded in being profoundly and deeply loved**
The Cross reveals the great love of God, choosing to enter the darkest parts of humanity to restore it. As Jesus said the night before his crucifixion, *'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.'* (John 15:13) There is great joy in the love that Jesus demonstrates to us at the Cross.
- **Joy can coexist with hardship**
Joy is not naïve positivity but confidence in God's presence and love in all times. Whilst we may suffer, we know that Jesus also suffered, and yet that was not the end of the story. The resurrection doesn't erase the cross but transforms its meaning. Times of trial can produce perseverance and character, as written in James 1:2-4, *'Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.'*
- **Joy is grounded in hope**
At the darkness part of Jesus' death, God was bringing about the redemption of all who turn to Him in faith. Through Jesus dying in our place, we are assured of God's rescue for us, offering us forgiveness and the great hope of eternal life. To grasp this hope is to discover a great joy that cannot be taken away. As 1 Peter 1:3-4 says, *'In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.'*
- **Joy of belonging**
The grieving disciples and women at the tomb became the first witnesses to Jesus' resurrection, and soon after formed a community shaped by Jesus. Their joy in belonging to this family of faith, formed by Jesus' great love and sacrifice, extends into Christian communities today. This joy reminds us that we do not walk through difficulties alone, but with others who journey beside us. As Romans 12:15 says, *'Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.'*

It seems crazy to think of times of trial as something that can coexist with joy. Mostly, we hope to avoid these seasons, or at least for them to end as quickly as possible. Yet, if you speak to many (or read their stories – including

Jesus' story found in the Gospels), the very times that stretch us are often the ones that shape us most deeply. They can help us see more clearly who we are, who God is and what truly matters. Sometimes that kind of reflection occurs during these times; also, it is often clearer in hindsight.

This is where the Easter story speaks powerfully, reminding us that joy doesn't require a smooth journey but instead, invites us to discover joy grounded in God's love in Jesus. It is a joy that is honest, resilient and real. It is a joy that Jesus offers, that meets us where we are, carries us through what we face and reminds us that because of the cross and resurrection, our journey can be filled with hope.

Resources for further reading:

King, P E, & Defoy, F (2020). Joy as a Virtue: *The Means and Ends of Joy*. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 48(4), 308-331.
Lewis, C S (2010). *Surprised by joy: The shape of my early life*. HarperCollins Publishers. (Original work published 1955).



Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

Parent Wellbeing Hive – parent wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	Click here to visit
ART NORTH exhibition	Saturday 7 - Saturday 28 March	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
Last day of Term 1	Wednesday 1 April	
Boarder travel day	Thursday 2 April	
Term 2 commences	Tuesday 21 April	Click here for 2026-2027 Abbotsleigh term dates

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Years 4- 6 Easter Service	Tuesday 31 March 8.30-9.30 am	Senior School Chapel
K-3 Easter Service	Tuesday 31 March 9.30-10.30 am	Senior School Chapel
Years 3 and 5 URStrong online parent info session	Tuesday 31 March 6-7.30 pm	Online

SENIOR SCHOOL

Saturday sport	Saturday 28 March	Click here for times and venues
Model United Nations conference	Saturday 28 March 8 am-5 pm	Senior School Library/iHub
Year 7 camp	Monday 30 March to Wednesday 1 April	CRU Lake Macquarie
Years 11 and 12 Engineering Studies excursion	Monday 30 March	University of Sydney
Year 10 Drama excursion	Tuesday 31 March 11 am-2.15 pm	Ensemble Theatre, Sydney
Women in Global Relations breakfast	Wednesday 1 April 7-8.15 am	Senior School Cafeteria