



## Crookwell Uniting Church

### “To Know Christ and Make Christ Known”



*Witnessing to God's love for the world  
From the main street to the paddock.*

February 2024

### O Death, Where Is Thy Sting?

Each year on Easter Sunday, Christians all over the world stand and sing the words, “Where O Death, is now thy sting? *Hallelujah!*” But how often do we stop to think about our theology of death – and why the Christian hope for death differs to the world around us?

During Lent this year, I will be leading a study on Fr Alexander Schmemmann’s book *O Death, Where Is Thy Sting* – a short collection of sermons on the themes of death and Holy Week. These studies will help us to think deeply about a theme of which we don’t often talk, so that we

might discover what is the hope of our faith.

By exploring a text from outside any of our own traditions, we will enter into a *mutual* journey of discovery, learning about the Orthodox faith together and reflecting on how it might speak into our own contexts.

I will provide copies of the book on loan to everyone participating in the study. If, at the end of the study, you would like to keep your copy of the book, I ask that you reimburse me the purchase price, or you can return the book at no cost.

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### Contact Us

#### Minister of the Word

Rev Daniel Mossfield

0432 648 676

[crookwelluniting@gmail.com](mailto:crookwelluniting@gmail.com)

#### Congregation

(02) 4832 1026

PO Box 75

Crookwell NSW 2583

The Crookwell Ecumenical Lenten Bible Study for 2024 will be held on Thursdays during Lent (February 15 to March 21) at 7pm. For more details, please contact me on 0432 648 676 or via email at [crookwelluniting@gmail.com](mailto:crookwelluniting@gmail.com)

I look forward to exploring these sermons with you.

Yours in Christ

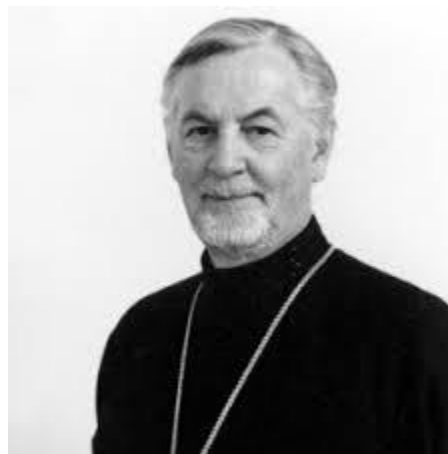
- Daniel

### About Alexander Schmemmann

Fr Alexander Schmemmann was an Orthodox Priest and the Dean of St Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood, New York. Growing up as a Russian émigré in Paris, Schmemmann became aware of the "presence on this world of something absolutely and totally 'other'." Convinced that this world (the Kingdom of God) illumines everything, Schmemmann spent his life attempting to describe and understand his experiences. To this end, he became a leading liturgical theologian, seeking to explain to the Church what our worship reveals about the God we worship.

During the Cold War, Fr Schmemmann was a regular contributor to *Radio Liberty*: a radio station which sought to provide information and commentary from the Western World into the USSR. Schmemmann's sermons were a highlight of the programme, and a gift to Russian Christians living under the oppression of the Soviet regime.

The great Russian author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn later wrote, "For a long time, with spiritual delight I have been listening on Sunday evenings, whenever possible, to the sermons of Father Alexander over Radio Liberty. And I was amazed at how genuine, how truly contemporary and of what high order is his art of preaching." This book is a collection of several of these sermons.



*Fr Alexander Schmemmann*

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## Worship & Readings

### Sunday 4 February

9:30am Crookwell and  
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11,  
20; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39  
Acts 8:26-39

### Sunday 11 February (Communion)

9:30am Crookwell and  
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2  
Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

### Sunday 18 February

#### Baptism of Lucy & Jack Tyrrell

9:30am Crookwell and  
crookwelluniting.org  
2:30pm Jerrara

Readings: Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1  
Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

### Sunday 25 February

9:30 Crookwell and  
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm  
22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

## Welcome Rev. Andrew Smith

Crookwell Uniting welcomes the Rev.  
Andrew Smith to our church to lead  
preaching, and talk about the church's  
Mission Plan on February 4, 2024. Andrew  
is a Minister from the Canberra Region  
Presbytery.

Andrew's sermon will be based on Acts  
8:26-39. This is the passage about Philip  
and the Ethiopian Eunuch, which is one of  
the Bible passages that underpins the  
Presbytery Mission Plan.

The theme will be assimilation and  
accommodation, and how our congregation  
engages with our local community. Where  
are we accommodating? How are we  
changing ourselves to connect with the  
community on their terms? Where are we  
practicing assimilation? In what ways are  
we expecting the community to change to  
our terms in order to engage in faith?

Throughout 2022 and 2023, congregation  
representatives to Presbytery and ministers  
from these congregations discerned  
together a Presbytery Mission Plan for  
across the diverse congregations of the  
Canberra Region Presbytery. This plan has  
the potential to offer significant leadership  
for congregations as we serve together in  
God's mission.

We welcome Andrew to our church.

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## Meeting the Uniting Church Again for the First Time

In 2023, the Uniting Church released its Statement of Missional Intent 2023-24 document, which was created to articulate Uniting's central purpose, strategy and values to its congregations, staff, volunteers, and the wider community.

The key message of this statement is that **people are at the heart of everything we do**. We aim to create a better future for more people and communities by disrupting entrenched disadvantage.

With this in mind, the statement has formulated a ten year plan (2022-2032) to do this, with key strategies around delivering services to communities, ensuring older people can live with choice and dignity, make a social impact, provide a safe and encouraging workplace, create new ways of helping people in need, and investing from sustainable funding sources.

As part of the continuing witness of the Uniting Church, Uniting works to challenge injustice and the systems that impose and perpetuate disadvantage on those who are vulnerable in our communities. Through the work of its advocacy, research, media and government relations teams, it seeks to influence positive change for a more just society.

In 2022, Uniting assisted more than 3000 independent living residents, over 7700 aged care residents, 4000 children enrolled in early learning, more than 3700 War Memorial hospital patients, and over 9200 home care clients.

The Moderator of the Uniting Church in NSW, the Rev Simon Hansford noted, "We cannot serve in isolation. The diverse and vital work of Uniting – serving young people and their families, our ageing community, people living with disability or injustice – will be less effective without the prayers of our Church, and the hope in Jesus which calls and renews us all. Our Church is less effective when we fail to hear the voice of Uniting, and to acknowledge – celebrate! – our achievements together."

The growth goals of Uniting that are outlined in the statement include leading congregations, engaging communities, and Being a leading and respected Christian voice on contemporary issues.

To view the full document, visit [https://www.uniting.org/content/dam/uniting/documents/about-us/the-uniting-church/uniting\\_statement\\_of\\_missional\\_intent\\_2023.pdf](https://www.uniting.org/content/dam/uniting/documents/about-us/the-uniting-church/uniting_statement_of_missional_intent_2023.pdf)

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