

## **Easter with our Rest Home Congregations: Sharing Ideas**



This year two of our rest home congregations flowered an Easter cross. The picture above shows the cross not yet flowered but ready to be covered with lots of greenery from the church garden.

I brought this cross online from a New Zealand store called Oceans: creative floral & gift presentation. The cross is 84x38x5cm. It is a hard-plastic frame filled with green oasis. Small strips of plastic hold the oasis in place and it comes ready to hang. I brought a pack of two for \$45 NZ dollars.

At the Home people gathered for the service. A basket of cut artificial flowers on the floor and the greened-up cross sitting on a low table. We sung 'Chris the Lord has Risen Today', 'I Will Enter His Gates', and 'He Lives'. I read the account of Mary Magdalene going to the tomb, that beautiful story where the risen Lord calls her by name "Mary" and she recognises him. We talked about how Jesus waits for us and calls our names too. We spoke about how in Jesus, life is stronger than death. About hope. About peace. About joy in believing and knowing Jesus to be our closest Friend and Saviour. Then we flowered the cross. The basket was handed around and everyone took a bloom. I then walked the cross around to each person. "The flower, it represents your belonging to Jesus" I said and invited people to pray in silence if they wished. We then pushed the stem of our flowers into the oasis, into the cross of the community of God. What was a symbol of death is now flowering and sprouting green shoots of new life. The cross is transformed, as are our lives in Christ Jesus as we remember again that we are family.

Christ has risen. Alleluia!

Alleluia! He has risen indeed!