



Alstonville  
Anglicans

**Tenth Sunday of Pentecost**

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021**



Image by congerdesign from Pixabay

## **Sharing the Good Life**

We acknowledge the Bundjalung people,  
Traditional custodians of the Land.  
Our doors are open: LGBTQIA+ welcome here.  
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## Liturgy for 1<sup>st</sup> August

### Sentence of the Day

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Eat what is good and delight yourselves in rich food. Isaiah 55.2

### Collect

Living God,  
whose Son Jesus fed the hungry  
with the bread of his life  
and the word of his kingdom:  
renew your people with your heavenly grace,  
and in all our weakness  
sustain us with your true and living bread,  
Jesus Christ our Lord;  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### Readings

#### **John 6:24–35**

<sup>24</sup> So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. <sup>25</sup> When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" <sup>26</sup> Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. <sup>27</sup> Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." <sup>28</sup> Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." <sup>30</sup>

So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?" <sup>31</sup> Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' " <sup>32</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." <sup>34</sup> They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." <sup>35</sup> Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

## Messages

### Worship & Spirituality



#### **Anam Cara Earth Vigil**

The Anam Cara group are organising an Earth Vigil Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 8am – 8pm.

#### **Anam Cara**

Wednesday 9am and Thursday 6pm



#### **Baptism**

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August 9am we welcome the Orchard family who bring Elyse to be baptised among us.

# Messy Life?! Church

Remember Messy Life?! Church  
Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August 5pm



**Profits and prophets**

- Prophets specialise in connecting cause and consequence.
- According to biblical prophets there is a direct relationship between the health of the most vulnerable of society (repeatedly symbolised in the "vulnerable trinity" of orphans, widows and foreigners) and the health of society at large.
- To neglect the vulnerable is to cause societal collapse.

Join us for Messy Life Church?  
1 August 5pm

# Messy Church

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 4pm



**Yoda best Dad!**

**Messy Church**  
Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August  
4pm  
Celebrating  
Father's Day

Alstonville Anglicans  
6 The Avenue  
Alstonville  
anglicans.live

## Bishop's Visit

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September we welcome Bishop Murray to our 9am service and to Messy Life Church at 5pm where he will be celebrating confirmation.



### LOVE AS ENERGY

*In the spirit of  
Teilhard*

1 X 15ML LAVENDER  
1 X 15ML BLENDED BODY OIL  
LINK TO A RECORDED VERSION OF JUNE 27TH  
REFLECTION DAY

The Oils are used as an  
intimate part of the  
reflections & meditations

\$60.00 PLUS POSTAGE  
TO ORDER CONTACT KELLIE TANCRED

email [kellietancred@gmail.com](mailto:kellietancred@gmail.com)  
mobile 0411 704 955

We recently held a Quiet Day, 'Love as Energy' In the Spirit of Teilhard facilitated by Kellie Tancred. Kellie is offering these products to assist with your home practice.

## Pastoral Care portfolio

### Family Crosses

On Sunday 1 August, the Family Cross is being given to Barbara & Peter Swain.



### Pastoral visits Remember!



If you or anyone you know is ill or in hospital, please let the office or Lynne Watt our Pastoral Care Coordinator know. Also, if you do visit anyone could you email Lynne? [wattlg@bigpond.com](mailto:wattlg@bigpond.com).

Next meeting Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 11am.

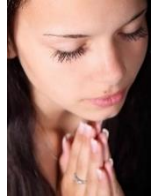
## Mothers Union

Meetings are 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month. Next meeting 16<sup>th</sup> August. MU have Christmas cards and diaries available to order. Contact [joyce@stephanies.com.au](mailto:joyce@stephanies.com.au).

## Prayers

This week we remember in our prayers the

- Swain Family
- Cocks Family



## Good Governance portfolio

### Current COVID Restrictions NSW Government

- You are encouraged to use QR code check in whenever possible as per Government Regulations.
- No singing by congregation.
- Masks to be worn.
- Hand sanitisation, good ventilation and recording of names.
- Limit of 1 per 4 square metre ie. maximum of 36 in St Bartholomew's and 65 in the Ministry Centre.

These restrictions remain in place until further notice. Watch this space! COVID Committee

## Safety on the Internet

It has been brought to our attention that a scam using the Rev'd Desiree Snyman's name has been sent to our parishioners asking for gift cards.

1. Desiree will NEVER ask for money in an unofficial manner and NEVER through iTunes cards or gift cards.
2. Please report any such scams to <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam>
3. We use the best online protection available and have a contract with a company that helps us protect you and ourselves.
4. We suggest the following websites to help you stay safe online.

**<https://esafety.gov.au/>**

Free courses on everything from how to access the internet, using your device and keeping in touch with others online:

**<https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/>**

## Ministry and leadership

### Worship Team members



We are looking for people to assist on the Worship team on a Sunday: welcomers, readers and people to help with morning tea. Please contact Helen Nicholson [helen22nic@gmail.com](mailto:helen22nic@gmail.com) if you are able to assist.

**Synod 2021** has been postponed due to the current COVID situation. The new SYNOD dates are 12 – 14 November.



## Community Engagement

### A.R.E.A

If you have not yet received your receipt for your donations to AREA (during the financial year), you can collect your letter at our church office. THANK YOU for your continuing financial support for Bruce Fleming at our High School. John Noble AREA Hon Treasurer.



### Sew Helpful Craft Group

Sew Helpful meet the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month at 1pm in the Ministry Centre. Everybody welcome.

## Sermon notes on John 6:1-21

### for Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July

#### Introduction

**"The common impression is that it is the unintelligent who believe in miracles, but the fact is that it is the great minds who believe most fervently in unforeseen possibilities."**

Our focus today is the miracle of Jesus feeding the crowds. The story represents for me the truest miracle. The experience of my ministry is the experience of the miracle of the feeding of crowd – on repeat. I know that the miracle is real, I know that it is possible. More about this later.

Last week Doug Bannerman preached a meditation on possibility. It is with this in mind that I offer the following quote



from Harry Fosdick. Harry Fosdick was a Baptist pastor serving in the 1920's and 30's. He was one of the early preachers to challenge fundamentalism. Fundamentalism means a literalist interpretation of the Bible. For example, in May 1922, Harry preached a sermon entitled: "'Shall the Fundamentalists Win?'" The provocative sermon signalled the public conflict between historic Christianity and modern liberalism. Liberalism means that modern science, ethics, and reason are applied to scripture above doctrine. Harry Fosdick adopted modernist ways of understanding Scripture. Noting his anti-fundamentalist stance, the following quote is interesting. Harry Emerson Fosdick wrote, **"The common impression is that it is the unintelligent who believe in miracles, but the fact is that it is the great minds who believe most fervently in unforeseen possibilities."**

"Unforeseen possibilities." Could this be a lens through which John 6 could be understood?

### **About John 6:1-21**

All four gospels relate the story of the feeding of the crowd in the wilderness. While only Luke offers the story of the lost son and the lost sheep (Luke 15), only John offers the miracle of turning water into wine (John 2) and the raising of Lazarus (John 11). Only in Mark is the teaching offered that "the sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath" (Mark 2:27). The story of the feeding of the multitude is told 6 times and is in all gospels. Clearly the story has significance for the first followers of Jesus and the early communities of disciples.

From a literary point of view the feeding of the multitude is a variation of Old Testament themes. For me Scripture

can be compared to another passion of mine – playing Piobaireachd on the bagpipes. In piobaireachd, a player begins the 10-minute tune with the urlar or ground. This is the opening movement. The 4 or 5 parts or movements that follow are variations of the urlar or ground movement, such as the taorluath and crunluath. Similarly, the urlar or ground movement in Scripture is (in my view) the hospitality of Sarah and Abraham in Genesis 18. Here Abraham and Sarah offer three guests, or if the Eastern Orthodox interpretation is to be believed, the Triune God, a feast in the wilderness. This desert hospitality is a product of the harsh landscape in which the story is contextualised. For Abraham and Sarah to refuse refreshment and sustenance for the wandering strangers is to let them die.

The hospitality is the transformation. We transform and are transformed. In hospitality we are transformed from stranger to guest. We are transformed from guest to friend.

Variations of this hospitality in the wilderness theme are scattered throughout the Scriptures. A key variation of the “hospitality in the desert theme” is the Manna Story in Exodus. In Exodus, Miriam and Moses lead runaway slaves to freedom through a desert and feast on Manna. In other variations of hospitality in the wilderness Elijah is fed manna in the wilderness by angels and again later by ravens. Elijah in turn offers manna to a widow and her son when there is famine in the land. Similarly, Elisha feeds others manna as described in 2 Kings, our other reading for today.

In John 6.1-21 clear reference is made to the Passover, a feast and festival that remembers the Exodus from Egypt through the wilderness to the promised land. The reference to Passover makes the point that Jesus is the new Moses offering a New Exodus from slavery to freedom. John 6.1-21 offers some of the political edge of Mark's version of the story. In Mark 6.30-44 and Mark 8.1-14, the feast Jesus offers when the crowds are fed bread and fish is contrasted by the banquets Herod offers. In Jesus feast several baskets of bread and fish are left over. In Herod's banquet nothing is left over except death and destruction. In John 6 Jesus withdraws before they can make him king by force. In Mark and Matthew, the possibility of the crowd being turned into an army under Jesus is strongly intimated.

### **The mechanics of the miracle of hospitality**

As the miracle of feeding happened in Genesis 18 with Abraham and Sarah, in Exodus 16 with Miriam and Moses, in 1 and 2 Kings in the lives of Elijah and Elisha and in the work of Jesus in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; so too can it happen in our lives. None of the Gospels explain how the miracle happened. All they know was that they started off with very little, but somehow the little became more than enough, it was an abundance with plenty to spare.

Some believe that Jesus empowered by the Spirit of God miraculously undid science and expanded the bread and fish until there was more than enough to share. Others believe that the story in John 6.1-21 is a miracle of shared generosity. The interpretation is that the crowds witnessed a young boy sharing his lunch and were inspired to do the same until there was an abundance.

Nobody quite knows how the miracle happened, they just know that it did. On the face of it the situation must have felt hopeless and the offering silly. There is a huge crowd, in a wilderness setting, no markets nearby, and they are hungry. The price tag for a decent feed is overwhelmingly huge. A young boy offers two barley loaves and five fish. It must have seemed a silly offering, one that could hardly make a dent in one boy's hunger, let alone a multitude (I consider myself an authority on this. I have two young boys who each eat a portion for a normal family of four – at every meal. 2 loaves and five fish is a snack, not even a starter for a young lad).

I have experienced so many similar miracles like the one recorded in John 6.1-21 – I honestly don't know how they happened, but I know they did. The problems were overwhelming and seemingly insurmountable. The little that I could offer seemed silly, insignificant, and insufficient. Yet I left every time with an abundance. Unforeseen possibilities? Absolutely. I offer only two examples of the many hundreds I could share.

When I was in Johannesburg, I was an HIV/AIDS activist and I partnered with a group of amazing women living in Orange Farm. Orange Farm is an informal settlement south of Johannesburg. Most live in shacks, there are few roads, no electricity and running water is by means of one shared communal tap. On one of my visits to Orange





Farm I became aware of child headed households. Parents had died because of AIDS and older siblings were left to care for the family.

Hunger and poverty are standard problems in South Africa. There is no Centrelink. There is no social welfare whatsoever. Many of these children were not even documented with birth certificates or identity documents. As far as I knew, I was the only person belonging to any institution that knew about these children. Without knowing how I was going to make it happen, I made a commitment to provide food monthly for the child headed households in extension 1, the area of Orange Farm in which my new friends lived. I offered my two barley loaves and five fish, begged for help from my darling church, from that month onwards the kids each had a grocery hamper to see them through the month. The early months were a nightmare as my idealistic intentions were not matched with admin and management processes. Yet, and I don't know how it happened, people, businesses, schools, and organisations came on board. The local grocery store packed the boxes and provided a delivery truck and driver to take me to Orange Farm. My 2 loaves and five fish were multiplied to feed a multitude.

Another story. The women in Orange Farm I was working with were worried that the teenagers who headed these child-headed households had dropped out of school to look after young siblings. One of





the women used her last paycheck, a mere \$50 dollars, to purchase recycled iron and wood to build a shack that would serve as a kindy, so that the older children could leave their younger siblings in safety while they continued their schooling.

Eventually the shack was added onto. I was very moved by this and spoke of the story to others.

Again, I don't exactly know how it happened, but in the picture below you can see the school that was built to support the education of the children aged 0-6.



The point being made is this:

- although we may be in a wilderness and there is nothing around,
- although the problems we face seem insurmountable
- and our available resources insufficient and insignificant,

we are asked nevertheless to offer what we have, even if it is as meagre as small fish and two pieces of bread.

- We offer what hospitality we can in love,
- we allow it to be blessed acknowledging that it came as bread from heaven anyway,
- we happily break it for only broken things can be shared, and we distribute our offering confidently, knowing that that our generosity and hospitality is transformed, even if we don't know how.

What is your wilderness and what is your hungry and desperate multitude? And what bread or fish can you offer? Perhaps

climate catastrophe keeps you awake at night, hungry as a multitude in a desert. Offer what you can with love, give it to God to be blessed for it is bread from heaven, and keep doing the little you can, knowing that an abundance consists of many little offerings.

Perhaps your wilderness hunger is mental illness, and the darkness seems insurmountable, and your energy insufficient. Well, what is the little you can offer? Perhaps its only getting out of the bed and having a shower. Offer the little you can do with love and offer it for blessing for it is bread from heaven, trust that the abundance will follow. Nobody knows when or how, but the abundance will follow.

Barbara Brown Taylor, Bread of Angels says:

What makes something bread from heaven? Is it the thing itself or the one who sends it? How you answer those questions has a lot to do with how you sense God's presence in your life. . . . If you are willing to look at everything that comes to you as coming to you from God, then there will be no end to the manna



in your life. Nothing will be too ordinary or too transitory to remind you of God. The miracle is that God is always sending us something to eat. . . . God gives the true bread from heaven, the bread that gives life to the world.



## ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers	all the baptised!	
Rector	The Reverend Dr Desiree Snyman 0402 764 969 <a href="mailto:priest@anglicans.live">priest@anglicans.live</a>	
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### The Anglican Op Shop

1 The Avenue, Alstonville **Tel:** 6628 8777

### Dates 1<sup>st</sup> August to 8<sup>th</sup> August

1 <sup>st</sup> August	Sunday 9am Holy Communion Sunday 5pm Messy Life?! Church
2 <sup>nd</sup> August	Monday 10am Anam Cara Praying for You Parish Office open 9am-12pm Op Shop 9am-3pm
3 <sup>rd</sup> August	Tuesday Parish Office closed (Please avoid going to the office)
4 <sup>th</sup> August	Wednesday 9am Anam Cara Parish Office open 9am-12pm Op Shop 9am-3pm Pastoral Care meeting 11am Messy Church leaders meeting 4pm
5 <sup>th</sup> August	Parish Office open 9am-12pm Op Shop 9am-3pm Play Place 9.30am-11.30am
6 <sup>th</sup> July	Thursday 6pm Anam Cara Friday 10am Holy Communion Parish Office open 9am-12pm
8 <sup>th</sup> August	Sunday 9am Holy Communion Sunday 10am St Peter & St Paul's Tregagle