



Alstonville  
Anglicans

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Welcome**



## Sharing the Good Life

We acknowledge the Bundjalung people, traditional custodians of the Land.

Our doors are open: LGBTQIA+ welcome here.

Streaming licence: CCLI 102220

Alstonville Anglicans are committed to ensuring that all people who participate in our worship, programs and ministries have a safe and rewarding experience.

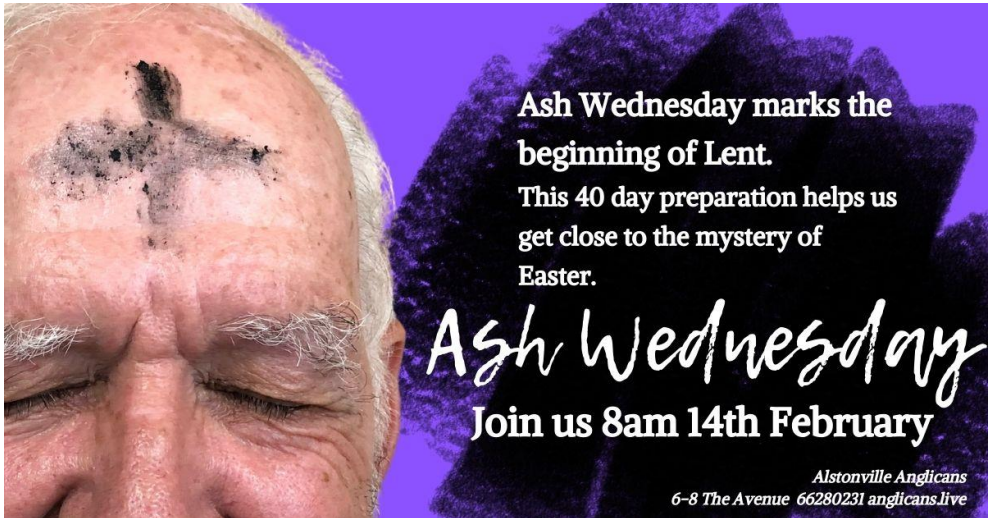
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## 11<sup>th</sup> February – 18<sup>th</sup> February

11 <sup>th</sup> February	9am	<b>Sunday</b> Holy Communion
12 <sup>th</sup> February	9am-12pm 9am-3pm 10am 10am	<b>Monday</b> Parish Office Open Op Shop Anam Cara Deadline for bulletin items
13 <sup>th</sup> February	9am-12pm	<b>Tuesday</b> Parish Office <b>Closed</b>
14 <sup>th</sup> February	8am 9am-12pm 9am 9am-3pm	<b>Wednesday</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b> Parish Office Open Anam Cara Op Shop
15 <sup>th</sup> February	9am-12pm 9am-3pm 9.30am 6pm	<b>Thursday</b> Parish Office Closed Op Shop Play Place Anam Cara
16 <sup>th</sup> February	9am-12pm 10am	<b>Friday</b> Parish Office Closed Holy Communion
17 <sup>th</sup> February		<b>Saturday</b>
18 <sup>th</sup> February	9am 10.30am	<b>Sunday</b> Holy Communion AGM

**This bulletin contains current announcements and the week's calendar and the sermon notes from the previous Sunday. Use our welcome booklet for info and contact details for regular activities. Keep it as a reference tool. We welcome any feedback on the booklet.** [../../welcomeBooklet\\_v3.pdf](#)



## **Fete Committee Meeting**

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 4pm in the Ministry Centre.

## **Waterslide Afternoon**

Thank you to Paul and Leslie Earner for hosting the Waterslide Afternoon last Sunday. Thank you also to all the volunteers who assisted. Everyone had a great time!

## **Confirmation**

Bishop Murray will be visiting the Parish on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October. If you are interested in being confirmed please complete the application form and speak to Rev Desiree. Forms are available in the Parish Office and via the website.

## **World Day of Prayer**

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 1.30pm at the Alstonville Baptist Church.

## To Make you Smile



### **Sermon Notes Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February Desiree Snyman Mark 1:29-39**

*Jesus took her by the hand and raised her up.*



According to Wikipedia, the song "You Raise Me Up" was created by Rolf Løvland and written by Brendan Graham. It was first sung by Secret Garden with Brian Kennedy. Even though the first version wasn't very popular, many other artists have recorded it, like Josh Groban in 2004 and Westlife in 2005. I really like Aled Jones' version and I have a CD of Celtic Woman singing the song, which I enjoy. "You raise me up"

could be the background music for today's readings: Jesus took her by the hand and raised her up.

Jesus takes Peter's mother-in-law by the hand and raises her up. The mirror stories are Jesus raising the widow of Nain's son, and Jesus raising the paralysed man. At the end of the Gospel, Jesus himself will be raised up. In Mark 16:6 the word is applied to Jesus himself when the women looking for Jesus are addressed by a messenger: <sup>6</sup> "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus

the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.”

Thus Mark 1.29-39 is a prefiguration of the Resurrection. Just as Jesus will be taken by the hand and raised up in Mark 16, so too is Peter’s mother taken by the hand and raised up in Mark 1. The Gospel will end as it begins completing the circle of being raised up. We pay attention to today’s lectionary reading as it offers us insight into how the spiritual world functions, especially how it relates to Resurrection.

### **1. Resurrection is something that is done to us.**

Being raised up is not about human nature. It is about God’s nature. Being raised up reveals something about God. Here God in Jesus acts on behalf of a woman who cannot act for herself. Raising her is what God in Jesus does for the woman. At the end of the Gospel, it is the same. Being raised up is about what God does in Jesus. Jesus was not immortal. Jesus died. God raised him. Resurrection is the most radical expression of God’s grace. God acts on behalf of the one who is dead. God acts for the sick, the paralysed, on behalf of the dead, on behalf of those who cannot act for themselves. We cannot control it. We cannot manufacture it. God is revealed as a God who helps those who cannot help themselves; our word for this is grace.

Being raised up is about receptivity and surrender. Surrender is not giving up or giving in, as when a defeated army surrenders. Surrender is more akin to floating on water. To float effectively one must surrender to the buoyancy of the water; too much striving and one will sink. Surrender is yielding to God, leaning into God, not giving up. The opposite of surrender is striving or grasping. Grace acts through death. It is only when we are dead to our own efforts and lean into Spirit that we are transformed. This is what Paul means when he says we are saved by grace through faith. We are being raised up, when we cannot act, God will act on our behalf.

### **2. Tenderness: Jesus took her by the hand and raised her up.**

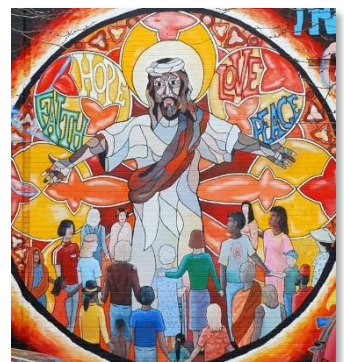
Notice the gentleness and kindness that is achingly beautiful in how Jesus takes the woman by her hand and raises her up. The tenderness is utterly attractive. The tenderness is a symbol how God deals with us and with our friends and enemies. We are offered a touch that heals us, that makes us look up again. It has been said that Jesus is God's answer to a bad reputation. For whatever reason, we humans have inherited a stark, aloof, judgemental image of God who is angry and ready to punish us when we are wrong. I don't know how or why we have a fearful image of God, but many do. Spiritual maturity is rewriting our ideas about God (until we no longer have any) and redrawing our picture of God. The tenderness with which God in Jesus raises the women evokes the total gentleness and holistic love with which God touches each of us.

### **3. Service**

Having been raised up she serves. Before we fall into the stereotypes of women serving tea and preparing food it may be worth noting that the word *diaskow* is used of Jesus and of her. The raised woman serves as Jesus serves. In Mark 10.45 the word *diaskow* is used to explain how Jesus came not to be served but to serve. Turns out Peter's mother-in-law is a chosen apostle. While her ministry may not be itinerant as Peter's is, she serves in the spirit of Jesus who serves and as such is an apostle.

### **4. Being raised up for silence**

Three points make a neat sermon, but I notice a fourth aspect of "being raised up." Early the next morning, while it is still dark, Jesus is raised up to spend time alone with God in contemplative silence. This is another resurrection- Jesus is raised for a contemplative encounter. A pattern is set up of action and receptivity, compassion and contemplation. Being raised up is a disposition of honouring the interior life since God's first language is silence. Paying attention to our interiority with the contemplative disciplines of meditation, solitude and immersing ourselves in the



pool's of silence is necessary as we live out our compassion for others. Without a rich inner life, our service to others risks burnout, we may become brittle with bitterness as we are exhausted with the demands that are made on us. Both the Christian Meditation and Centering Prayer movements advocate two periods of at least 20 minutes a day in silent solitude and solidarity with the Divine. However, as always, we pray as we can and not as we can't. If five minutes first thing in the morning is all we can manage it is better to rest in some silence rather than none. We never let the perfect get in the way of the practical.

So how are we being raised for that moment of contemplation - within pools of silence? Today many resources abound. Both Centering Prayer and Christian Meditation have well-resourced websites and apps. Our church offers guided meditation on Wednesday mornings and non-guided silence on Thursdays. Evidence based secular organisations such as Balance and Headspace have beginner friendly resources for exploring ways of entering into silence.

### **Concluding comments**

Jesus takes each of us by the hand and raises us up. We are raised up with tenderness and the risen Christ in each of us serves the risen Christ within all God's children.

The song 'You Raise Me Up' has grown in popularity and music culture and been covered more than 125 times, although the Groban version remains the best known and loved. Viewpoints vary on who raises them up based on the singer and listener. Loveland stated everyone raises one another up, others point to a specific person and Josh Groban states that God raises him up.

Who raises you up?

### **Sentence of the Day**

It is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4.6



## Collect

Almighty God,  
whose Son was revealed in majesty  
before he suffered death upon the cross:  
give us faith to perceive his glory,  
that being strengthened by his grace  
we may be changed into his likeness,  
from glory to glory;  
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,  
now and for ever. Amen.

## Mark 9:2-9

<sup>2</sup> Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, <sup>3</sup> and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one<sup>[a]</sup> on earth could bleach them. <sup>4</sup> And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. <sup>5</sup> Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings,<sup>[b]</sup> one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' <sup>6</sup> He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. <sup>7</sup> Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the Beloved;<sup>[c]</sup> listen to him!' <sup>8</sup> Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. <sup>9</sup> As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

### Consider the following questions.



- Thinking of a ministry you have been involved in, when was it at its best?
- What or who really helped to make it the best?
- What is working well or what are you most grateful for?
- What are you worried about?
- What could you do next?