



Alstonville
Anglicans

Sunday 12th November 2023

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.

Tel: 66280231 www.anglicans.live

Bank account: BSB 705 077 / Acc:00032931

12th November – 19th November

12 th November	9am	Sunday Holy Communion
13 th November	9am-12pm 9am-3pm 10am 10am	Monday Parish Office Op Shop Anam Cara Deadline for bulletin items
14 th November	9am-12pm	Tuesday Parish Office Closed
15 th November	9am-12pm 9am 9am-3pm 6pm	Wednesday Parish Office Open Anam Cara Op Shop Parish Council Meeting
16 th November	9am-12pm 9am-3pm 9.30am 6pm	Thursday Parish Office Open Op Shop Play Place Anam Cara
17 th November	9am-12pm 10am	Friday Parish Office Open Holy Communion
18 th November		Saturday
19 th November	9am	Sunday Holy Communion

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](#)

12 November is Defence Force Sunday

Defence Sunday is a nationwide expression of partnership between the local Anglican churches of Australia and Anglican Chaplains serving in the military. Every year, on the Sunday close to Remembrance Day, local churches across Australia acknowledge and further commit themselves to support and pray for Christian ministry in the Defence Force. As we pray for our Defence Force we also lament the pain and devastation of nations at war. These resources are offered as a possible guide for your prayers.

A prayer for the Defence Force:

Eternal God, the only source of peace, we pray for all who serve in the Defence Force of this land.

Give them courage and comfort in danger, patience in waiting, and discipline in the just use of force.

Help us to seek for all people the freedom to serve you and each other in compassion and peace.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Litany in a Time of Crisis & War

Lord of the nations, the horrors of war stand before us in graphic ways that disturb our daily lives. Fear grips us for our personal safety and the safety of those in harm's way. Sorrow washes over us for the seeming necessity of war and the losses that come with it. Opinions divide us and leave us confused in the face of an uncertain future. You alone, O God of Creation, who in the beginning brought order into chaos, light into darkness – you alone can help us in these days of crisis and war.

We, your people, cry to you, O Lord!

Come to the aid of nations and leaders who need your guidance. Come to the aid of those standing in harm's way.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

Strengthen us in faith and calm the fears within us that are many. Help us to trust in you for our lives and our future.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

Forgive us for our sins, both corporate and individual, especially for our failings as peacemakers. Forgive us for the divisions among us. Renew our spirits and increase our resolve to pray fervently for peace.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

Protect us from any evil that surrounds us. Lift the hearts of the sorrowful. Bring healing to the sick and the wounded. Comfort the dying and the bereaved with your love.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

God of peace, God of love, fill our hearts and our minds with the peace and love that only you can give. We, your people, ardently cry to you, O Lord. You are our hope. Come to our aid. In Jesus' name.

Amen

Sarah

Anne and Doug thank you all for your care and support as they grieve the loss of Sarah. Sarah has been gracious, loving and influential in our midst. Now may her spirit be free and flourish.

A big 'Thank you' to those who catered and helped after Sarah's funeral, especially the Play Place people.

Anam Cara

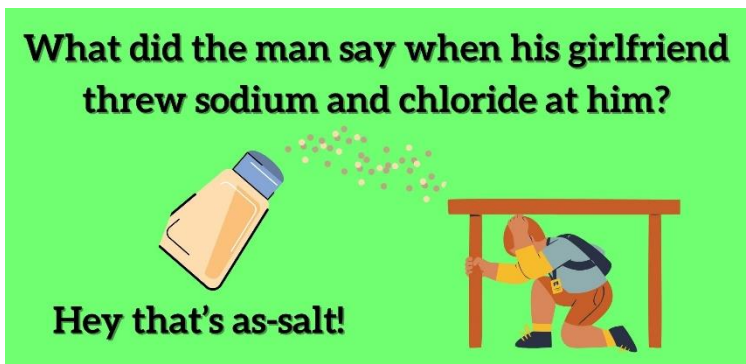


The final Advent Meditation is on Wednesday 15th November at 9am.

LinC Alstonville Celebration Ceremony and Christmas function

This event is to be held on Thursday 23rd November 2pm in the Anglican Church Hall. Please RSVP by the 16th November to Lynne Watt. Please let Lynne know if you have any special dietary requirements. If you are able to bring a plate to share let Vivian know 0422 201 191.

To Make you Smile



Music Events

Music for Peace Sunday 19th November 3pm St Andrew's Anglican Church Lismore.

Isabella A Cappella, Northern Rivers Vocal Ensemble Saturday 2nd December 6.30pm Rochdale Theatre. Contact Helen Quaiffe 0468 903 620 for further details.



Hat trick?
Quota Christmas Tree Competition
25/26th November
Alstonville Anglicans have been prize winners 2 years running! Can we make it 3?
Join us on the 19th November 4pm
to make the 'deadliest' tree ever!
Alstonville Anglicans 6-8 The Avenue anglicans.live

Sermon Notes Sunday 5th November Geoff Vidal

Revelation 7:9-17 "Remembering Saints and Souls"

I didn't expect to be here today. We were supposed to be in Tara in Queensland to help in the church there until bushfires intervened and made it unsafe to travel there. But is it realistic for us to expect to be somewhere? In the old days people would say things such as "I'll see you tomorrow afternoon, God willing". Our Muslim brothers and sisters say, "In shallah" which means "if God wills". In addition to me not being where I expected to be, and I am mindful of deaths in the Tara fires and also the firefighter who died near Kyogle. As a Parish, we think of the recent deaths of Lesley Stone and Sarah Jones; two lovely people who were part of our church family here at Saint Barts.

Last Tuesday, 31st October, was Halloween (properly known as All Hallows Eve). This was followed by the Feasts of All Saints on 1st November and All Souls on 2nd November. Halloween has become another major commercial event that we have picked up from America. When we think of Halloween, we think of dress ups and trick or treats and unruly groups of kids in our streets. Some houses are decorated with spooky things; there was a front yard in Tanamera Drive made to look like a cemetery with graves and skeletons.



However, the real intention of Halloween is to thumb our noses at death. So, the skeletons and scary things are designed to provoke a nervous, crazy laughter. The type of laughter that comes as a response to surprise and fear. Laughter is a way of overturning fear.

But it's not easy to laugh at death these days with so many victims of COVID and wars in Gaza and Ukraine. We become very worried when we think that perhaps our clever doctors might not be able to fix our problems. People these days seem to be more fearful of death than they were in earlier generations.

The Good News story is that our fear doesn't separate us from the reach of God. In fact, fear might be the place of vulnerability in our lives through which God actually reaches us and touches us. So, Halloween can be helpful for us. Maybe, in our fear we are actually able to find the face of God.

The day after this Halloween evening of making a joke about spooky things and death is the Feast of All Saints (All Hallows). In our celebration of All Saints, we remember the victory of goodness that we have seen in all the remarkable things done by God's faithful followers.

There are the widely acclaimed and well-known women and men of past times who are our capital "S" Saints such as St Augustine and St Patrick. And also, there are the countless small "s" saints. These are the holy people the Church celebrates and honours with this major Feast on All Saints Day; those who have loved and served God in their faithful following of Jesus Christ but who have not been recorded in our history books. A brilliant definition of a saint is "A saint is a person who makes goodness attractive".

The Gospel reading, we heard today was Matthew's report of a part of Jesus' sermon on the mount. As once the Law was given to Moses on the mountain of Sinai, now Matthew tells a story of the new and perfect Moses, Jesus, who gathers a new people of God, his disciples, on a mountain to give them a new Law.

These sayings we know as the Beatitudes do two jobs. Firstly, they tell us of the way already chosen by those we remember as people who lived Godly lives, and then the Beatitudes challenge all of us who would like to join these saints. So, the peacemakers are blessed and if we become peacemakers too, we will also be blessed.

Jesus assures his disciples that they have been blessed in a particular way if their lives have certain qualities. To be gentle, to mourn, to thirst for what is right, to be merciful, pure in heart and a peacemaker are the signs of the presence of the kingdom of God in our lives. We do not acquire these qualities simply by our own will-power and hard work. We receive them from a loving God, if we are prepared to abandon the world's way to happiness, and accept God's way. In other words, if we live as saints.



This saintly way of living is not something we manage to do by our own efforts. It is a gift God offers to us and we are free to accept or refuse this gift.

So, All Saints is a time to remember those who have died in the faith of Christ and to celebrate what Jesus has done in and through these saints, through the ages. It is also a time to look forward to what God wants to do in our lives.

All Saints is also a celebration of the mysterious, sovereign power of God. Because, in commemorating the saints who are now dead, we are in fact celebrating life. We use the expression "The communion of saints"; which is a recognition of the connection between saints of the past and saints of the present.

What we have and what we are today comes from the gifts, both material and spiritual, which we have been given through the love and service of those who went before us. In celebrating All Saints, we praise God for raising up the saints we have known, and ask for God's continued gifts that we too may grow in holiness.

Worship is not just something we share with the people we are able to see. We remember the wider church through all time. We remember (commune with) the many saints we have personally known in our lifetime and we also remember the multitude in heaven. Faith in Jesus Christ draws us together with all the saints, past and present. And we are hopeful for our future because of them.

The last of these special celebrations is All Souls. As an expression of Christian love for departed relatives and friends, All Souls is a rather beautiful day. Often candles are lit for those who have been especially close. In times of war and plague and famine, this day has provided a focus of comfort and hope for many.

In All Souls there is the message of the hope we have that we will share eternity with those we have known and loved. As All Hallows Eve (or Halloween) leads us to face death, All Souls is a feast of resurrection life. We praise God that we are being drawn close to share in that place where "death shall have no dominion".

In our earthly life, we will never have a perfect knowledge of what heaven will be like, but there are some clues to be found in the reading from Revelation Chapter 7 today. In heaven there will be a multitude; too many to put a number on. There will be people from every nation; all tribes and all languages. There will be worshipping and singing; and there won't be any let up in this worship day and night. Somehow it will be as if the multitude are in God's temple; are continually singing and worshipping in God's presence. Jesus referred to heavenly life as being a banquet. There will be no hunger or thirst. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

I think that the whole purpose of this time of remembering all the saints and all the faithful departed is to be reminded that death here on earth is not the end. We are able to anticipate being in God's presence forever.

We struggle to understand that the promises of Jesus are much better than we could possibly imagine. As we look back over the story of our loved ones, the ones whose life, love and death have given us our own life and possibilities, we come to recognize that there is no human hope that can totally satisfy us. We discover that we can't fit God into our imperfect way of seeing things.

In an odd sort of way, death is a blessing that strengthens our wonder at the gift of life that we have been given. We are reminded that Jesus has more to offer us than anything we could ever hope for.

All Jesus asks is for us to believe in him so that we may have life, both now and forever.

(by Rowan Williams in an essay originally delivered as the 10th Michael Harding Memorial Address to the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement in 1989).

Sentence of the Day

Watch and be ready, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. Matthew 24.42, 44

Collect

Eternal God,
you have taught us that the night is far spent
and the day is at hand:
keep us awake and alert,
watching for your kingdom,
so that when Christ, the bridegroom, comes
we may go out joyfully to meet him,
and with him enter into the marriage feast
that you have prepared for all who truly love you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Matthew 25:1-13