



Alstonville
Anglicans

Sunday 13th December 2020 Advent 3

Welcome back

- Sunday@9am Anglican Service in the Ministry Centre
- Sunday@10am online via webpage www.anglicans.live
- Wednesday 9am & Thursday 6pm at St Bartholomew's
- Friday 10am Anglican Service in the Ministry Centre



Sharing the Good Life

We acknowledge the Bundjalung people,
Traditional custodians of the Land.
Our doors are open: LGBTQIA+ welcome here.
Streaming licence CCLI#690910

Thought for the week

Our Advent focus is 'The Way of Love', Practices for Jesus-Centred Life. We encourage you to take time out of your busyness to reflect on how 'The Way of Love' is taking shape in you.

'The Way of Love'

Third Week of Advent: Journeying with Community

As we continue our Advent walk, we invite you to see the Way of Love as a journey that includes the community. The witness of Zechariah and Elizabeth who bring infant John to the Temple to be circumcised reminds us of the importance of our faith community to sustaining the Way of Love. Just as the community did for John's family, communities provide a place for discernment, sometimes challenging us and other times affirming us. Communities celebrate and mark important moments along the journey.

Worship and Spirituality

The Way of Love

Sunday, December 13

WORSHIP

Pray for each person as they receive communion. Imagine who you'd like to see at church next week. Invite that person to join you.

Monday, December 14

GO

Choose to take a different route to work, to school, or to play today. Whom or what did you encounter differently?

Tuesday, December 15

LEARN

Read Luke 1:64. When Zechariah could finally speak, he began by praising God. For what can you praise God? Share on social media or with a friend.

Wednesday, December 16

PRAY

Keep a lookout for anyone who might seem lonely, stressed, or sad. Offer this simple invitation: "May I pray for you?" Then offer prayers – silently or aloud – on the person's behalf as you move through your day.

Thursday, December 17

BLESS

Identify a blessing you have that you could give away. Share this blessing with your church, a local ministry, or your community.

Friday, December 18

TURN

Turn away from the busyness of the week and turn toward someone who gives you life or to whom you give life. Give thanks.

Saturday, December 19

REST

In Genesis 1-2, God calls the creation "good" and rests. What can you proclaim to be "good" instead of "not enough" as a witness to God's love for the world today?

For more Advent resources related to the Way of Love, visit episcopalchurch.org/wayoflove. There, you'll find links to the full Advent curriculum *Journeying the Way of Love*, as well as *Living the Way of Love in Community*, a nine-session curriculum for use anytime.



THE WAY OF LOVE
Practices for Jesus-Centered Life

Liturgy for 13th December

Sentence of the Day

Bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, the day of vengeance of our God. Isaiah 61.1-2

Opening Song

"Woza nomthwalo wakho,
Woza nomthwalo wakho,
Woza nomthwalo wakho,
Uyes'akasozi hayi."

"Come, bring your burdens to God,
come, bring your burdens to God,
Come, bring your burdens to God
for Jesus will never say no."

South African Traditional

Readings

John 1:1-6, 19-28

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ¹⁹ This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹ And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²² Then they said to him,

"Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³ He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' " as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶ John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷ the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Closing Song

1. Like the murmur of the dove's song,

like the challenge of her flight,
like the vigour of the wind's rush,
like the new flame's eager might:
come, Holy Spirit, come.

2. To the members of Christ's body,
to the branches of the Vine,
to the church in faith assembled,
to its midst as gift and sign:
come, Holy Spirit, come.

3. With the healing of division,
with the ceaseless voice of prayer,
with the power to love and witness,
with the peace beyond compare:
come, Holy Spirit, come.

Reflection

A reflection on Mark 1:1-8 Advent 2 6th December 2020

Waiting

Advent is about waiting in the wilderness and pointing the way to Jesus the Anointed One.

One of my worst experiences of waiting would have to be the Greyhound bus that I travelled on from Johannesburg to Grahamstown when I was a student. The fourteen hours on the bus is the longest waiting I have ever done. You lean your head against the window to nap, a while later you lean forward and nap some more, and three hours later your sore neck wakes you up and as you glance at your watch you realise that only two minutes have passed in the three hours that you thought you were asleep. I learnt an important lesson in those 14 hours – I am not good at waiting. This makes me wonder how I would have fared in the Stanford Marshmallow experiment into delayed gratification.

In the Stanford experiment, preschool kids were left in a room with one marshmallow. The children were told that they could eat the marshmallow. However, the researcher had to leave the room for 15 minutes and if the 4-6-year-olds could delay eating the marshmallow they could have two when he returned. Two thirds of the children ate the marshmallow. The third that waited and were rewarded with two all went on to achieve remarkable success in their adult lives.

Advent is about waiting in the wilderness and pointing the way to Jesus the Anointed One.

It goes without saying that 2020 has been a wilderness in which the whole planet has waited for most of the year. COVID-19 lockdown, social isolation and quarantine is its own wilderness waiting hell.



Many would gladly exchange lockdown for John's bugs and honey and a camel hair jumper. If Advent is about practising our waiting in the wilderness, by this stage, many are wilderness waiting professional athletes.

Waiting in the wilderness is tough. Although NSW had high rates of COVID, our nightmare wasn't as long as Melbourne's, or the rest of Europe who have recently returned to lockdown.

What did people do while waiting in the wilderness of COVID lockdown? Social Media is littered with people's creative ingenuity and many of us are grateful for their wit which kept us amused in the wilderness of lockdown.

A less helpful drive was all the self-help motivators who pressured us into learning a new skill or craft during lockdown. When you are trying to work from home, or you have just lost your work or friends, or you are trying to home-school your kids, or look after an elderly parent or spouse and get them through COVID alive, upskilling is the least helpful advice - I don't care how good home-baked sourdough bread tastes.

We are already in a wilderness called COVID19/Climate Emergency/Bushfire season/Recession. Advent places high demands on our waiting in the wilderness. What are we meant to be doing in our wilderness? We are not expected to have well-ordered lives with military routines. However, our waiting is not passive either. Advent is about waiting in the wilderness and pointing the way to Jesus the Anointed One.

The reason the 14 hours on the bus felt so long was because it was passive -it was a waiting that I had to endure to reach my destination. In contrast the waiting that the preschool children in the Stanford experiment did before being awarded a second marshmallow was active. One napped, some sang, some walked

around the room, some played with the one marshmallow, sniffing it before putting it down – several times.

Likewise, our advent waiting is active. Advent is not something we get through to arrive at Christmas. It's a period of actively pointing to Jesus the Christ, the anointed one. With John the Baptist, advent people proclaim the Good News. Make no mistake, this is not a religious pastime nor a new age spiritual hobby. To stay present in the wilderness, waiting and pointing to Jesus, preaching the Good News means you take a stand against toxic political powers, you challenge the economic status quo and re-write history with an unfamiliar perspective. Mark's Gospel shows us how; it launches right in "The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah,^[a] the Son of God,^[b] ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet...". In this one explosive sentence Mark's Gospel has taken a stand against toxic political powers, challenged the economic status quo and re-written history with an unfamiliar perspective. This is the background. In 31 BCE Octavia conquered Mark Anthony. Octavia was named Son of God, the Sacred One, the Anointed one – Augustus. His reign was said to be a new beginning: a time of peace, prosperity, and the end of civil war. Coins announcing his victory and the new world order were distributed – evangelions - which translate as "Good News". In effect Mark's opening line says Jesus, not Augustus, is the anointed one. The Kingdom of God and not Rome is the Good News. The Kingdom of God is the new world order, not Augustus. The Kingdom of God is closer than you think, it is at hand, it is present within you as your inner authentic self. Guided by this Inner Self, the Kingdom of God within you, you have been proclaiming the Good News all week. As Barbara Brown Taylor rightly put it:



Preaching is not something that an ordained minister does for 20 minutes on Sundays, but what the whole congregation does

all week long; it is a way of approaching the world, and of gleaning God's presence there.

Like John the Baptist you have been proclaiming Good News. Some of you proclaim the Good News through the unconditional love you show children and grandchildren. Some of you preach God's healing and presence through visiting and volunteering. Some of you preached through charitable giving and being generous with your finances. Some of you preach hope and faith through your friendship and support to neighbours and strangers. And some of you preach the Good News simply through taking the time to phone someone and you didn't know that that phone call saved them from a dark tunnel of loneliness or dissolved the fog of their isolation. We are living in a critical time in human history and our preaching is urgently needed now. How are you proclaiming the Good News?

Worship & Spirituality

St Peter & St Paul's

The next service will be 24thth December 2020 6pm
Carol Service.



Every Monday 10am

We are praying for you.

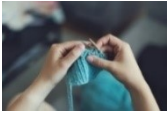
Join us in St Bartholomew's or submit your prayer requests online

Community Engagement



Play Place

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am. All welcome



Sew helpful

In recess until February 2021

Alstonville Anglicans Twilight Christmas Fair

A huge thank you to all who have worked so hard to make the Fair a success. **Wash-up meeting Monday 14th December 4pm.**

Finance

Alstonville Anglicans - Offertory Options

We give thanks to God for all people making offertories to the vision of God's Kingdom here on earth.

Your offertory can be made using the following options:

- Direct transfer to our bank account
BSB 705 077 / Acc: 00032931
- Parish Provider - Direct debit through Anglican Funds - Forms available from the office
- Cheque to Alstonville Anglicans (PO Box 451, Alstonville 2477 or Offertory Plate)
- Offertory envelopes
- Cash

Thank you for your support.

Good Governance

Christmas Office Closing Times

Wednesday 23rd December 12pm – Reopen Monday 4th January

Op Shop Closing Times

Friday 18th December 12pm – Reopen Monday 11th January

ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers	all the baptised!	
Rector	The Reverend Dr Desiree Snyman	0402 764 969
	priest@anglicans.live	
Associate	The Reverend John Kidson	0411 394 213
	The Reverend Geoff Vidal	0447 645 456
	The Reverend Doug Bannerman	0418 182 450
	The Reverend Greg Ezzy	0412 660 742

Parish Office: The Ministry Centre, 8 The Avenue, Alstonville

Telephone: 6628 0231

Postal: PO Box 451, Alstonville NSW 2477

e-mail: office@anglicans.live **website:** anglicans.live

The Anglican Op Shop 1 The Avenue, Alstonville Tel: 6628 8777

Christmas Service Times

Christmas Eve:

5pm Family Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 9am

Christmas Eve 6pm A Carol Service with Holy Communion

St Peter & St Paul's Tregear.



**Tis the Season
to be Jolly**

Christmas Eve
5.00pm Family Service
11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day 9.00am

(6pm Christmas Eve - A Carol Service with
Holy Communion, St Peter & St Paul's
Tregagle)



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6 The Avenue Alstonville
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