



Alstonville
Anglicans

Sunday 14th April 2024

Welcome



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Duccio_di_Buoninsegna_017.jpg

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

14th April – 21st April

14 th April		Sunday Holy Communion
	9am	
15 th April		Monday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	10am	Anam Cara
	10am	Deadline for bulletin items
	1pm	Sew Helpful (in recess)
16 th April		Tuesday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Closed
17 th April		Wednesday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office
	9am	Anam Cara
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
18 th April		Thursday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	9.30am	Play Place (in recess)
19 th April		Friday
	10am	Holy Communion
20 th April		Saturday
	9am	Faithfulness in Service Course
21 st April		Sunday
	9am	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](#)

Faithfulness in Service Course

There will be a Faithfulness in Service course on Saturday 20th April 9am-12pm in the Ministry Centre. Please let John Noble know if you will be attending: 0414 285 132.

Annual Fete Saturday 11th May 8am-1pm

Plants

We need plants to be potted up for the fete. Appropriate labelling is helpful.
Enquiries Barbara Fewtrell 0429385713.

Cakes

Request for brightly coloured cupcakes to be made. Coordinator: Robyn Beck.

Floral arrangements

Chrysanthemums and gerberas required. Coordinator: Gladys Charters.

Produce

Home grown produce required. Coordinator: Ken Brown.

Sew Helpful Craft

Sew Helpful would like some help in replenishing their supplies for the fete. Any items you would like to make would be most welcome but some items we need are baby jackets, bunny rugs, scarves, microwave bowl holders, coat hangers – adult size, teapot cosies. Thank you for your help.

2024 Fete Raffle

3 Great Prizes @ valued at \$40 – Dining Voucher, Pamper Voucher, Outdoor Voucher. If you would like to make a monetary donation towards these vouchers you can leave them at the Parish Office or contact Susan Fitzpatrick.



Confirmation

Bishop Murray will be visiting the Parish on Sunday 6th 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.

Outdoor Pizza Oven

The Anglican Parish of Alstonville is applying for a Faculty to install an outdoor pizza oven as part of the COVE Community Garden.

Sew Helpful and Play Place are in recess for the school holidays.

A return to the Common Cup

Desiree Snyman

A return to the Common Cup: Intentional and gradual

From 2022 we have been encouraged by the Bishop of Grafton to return to the Common Cup in Holy Communion. This practice, dating back to ancient Christianity, involves using a shared chalice for the consecrated Wine, symbolizing the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Common Cup tradition has its roots in the practices of Christ himself, making it rich in spiritual, psychological, theological, and biblical significance.

Summary:

- Within the Center for Disease Control, the consensus is "that a theoretic risk of transmitting infectious diseases by using a common communion cup exists, but that the risk is so small that it is undetectable."
- Beginning in Easter, we will return to the Common Cup.
- Following best practice recommendations, we will not allow "intinction" (the dipping of the bread into the Common Cup).
- The Church has long held that if you take only one form of Communion (either the bread or the wine), you are fully communed; thus no one should feel pressured to sip from the Common Cup.
- Instead of discouraging physical touch (like hugs and handshakes), we strongly encourage everyone to wash their hands before and after worship to help reduce both common and serious illnesses.
- Those who distribute the wine will, as usual, "wipe and turn" the chalice after each sip.

Grace and peace to you, The Rev'd Dr Desiree Snyman RECTOR

2024 COVE Garden Update

Upgrade work has begun on the COVE garden to allow people with disabilities to feel more comfortable using the space. An area has been concreted ready for the installation of garden beds shaped so that people in wheelchairs or people who need to sit can easily access the garden.

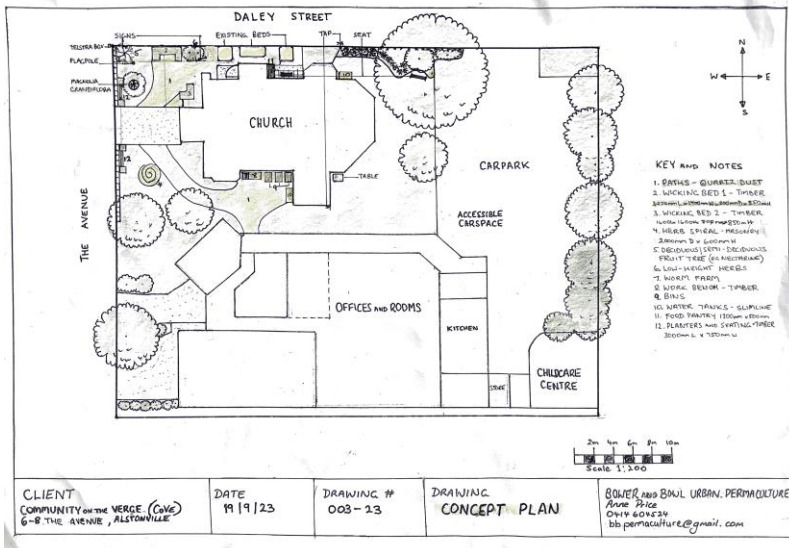
A slab has also been laid behind the church where an outdoor pizza oven will be installed. We have an application for a Faculty for the pizza oven in progress. Desiree, Grahm Ireland and Barbara Fewtrell are happy to discuss the plans if you have any questions.



Slab outside front door of church



Slab for Pizza Oven

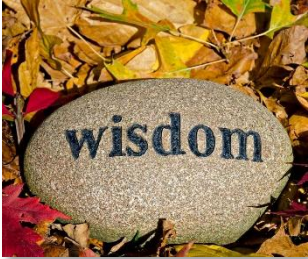


COVE Garden Concept Plan

Sermon Notes Friday 5th April

Doug Bannerman

*But these are written so that you may come to believe that
Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God,
and that through believing you may have life in his name.*



The author of John's Gospel wrote at the end of the first century CE; Jesus lived at the beginning of that century. Both of them lived within a rich cultural heritage of arts, crafts, science, theology, philosophy, and mysticism from India through Persia to Egypt and the Mediterranean countries. Think of the massive library of Alexandria (accidentally destroyed by Julius Caesar in 46 BCE when he set fire to Egyptian ships that were in his way). This was no back water. The same heritage still influences us in this day and age.

The Fourth Gospel stands apart from the other Gospels, presenting Jesus as incarnate revelation descending from another world to offer people light and truth. Jesus proclaims himself in his discourses with the repeated "I am" formula; his divine and celestial origins are apparent both in what he says and in how he says it. His otherworldliness is discernible in his responses to the plots against him and the attempts to arrest him.

In his own words, he is "in the world but not of it." Inter alia, John's portrait of Jesus capitalizes on identifying Jesus with the personified divine Wisdom described in the OT. Just as NT writers found in Jesus a fulfilment of the Prophets' words, so also the fourth evangelist saw in Jesus the fruits of a tradition that runs through the Wisdom Literature of the OT.

The Wisdom Literature covers a wide spectrum of material and is one of the most ecumenical sections of the OT, sharing much in common with the sages of Egypt, Sumer, and Babylon – an early ecumenism. of the Wisdom movement that is later evident in openness of the biblical sages to Hellenistic influence; for it was in works like Ecclesiastes and the Wisdom of Solomon that Greek philosophical thinking and vocabulary made their greatest inroads into the Bible. Almost half the Apocrypha (Tobit, Judith, Baruch, Sirach, 1 & 2 Maccabees, Esther) preserved in the canon of Alexandria exhibit Wisdom characteristics. It is clear, then, that the Wisdom

books with which we are familiar comprise a blend of Oriental mysticism with Greek philosophy.

In the NT, James represents a Christian wisdom book dealing with practical ethics. Colossians and Ephesians have a flavour of the more mystical trend in Wisdom thought. Likewise, Wisdom mysticism pervades the Gospel of John. Even the concept of the "Word" has discernible antecedents in the Wisdom Books.

In particular, John's *portrait* of Jesus is steeped in Wisdom allusions. As you are aware, references to personified divine Wisdom are scattered widely in the OT, wherein She is a female figure – the Hebrew word for wisdom, *hokmâ* (חָכְמָה) and the Greek word *Sophia* (σοφία) are both feminine.

John's chief sources are poems dedicated to Wisdom in (**Job** 28; **Proverbs** 1-9; **Baruch** 3.9-4.4; **Sirach** 1 4.11-19, 6.18-31, 4.20-15.10; 24; **Wisdom** 6-10). According to these, Wisdom came forth from the mouth of the Most High and existed with God from the beginning, even before there was an earth – so also John's Jesus is the Word who was in the beginning, and was with the Father before the world existed. Wisdom is a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty, and those who hold her fast inherit glory – so also Jesus had glory with the Father before the world was created and manifests the Father's glory to human beings. Wisdom is a reflection of the everlasting light of God; and in lighting up the path for people, she is preferred to any natural light – in John, God is light, and Jesus who comes forth from God is the light of the world.

Wisdom is described as having descended from heaven to dwell with human beings – so also Jesus is the Son of Man who has descended from heaven to earth. Wisdom worked signs to deliver a holy people and guided them along their ways of life, while Jesus worked signs and *constituted* the way. The ultimate return of Wisdom to heaven offers a parallel to Jesus' return to his Father.

In accomplishing her task, Wisdom speaks in the first person in long discourses addressed to her hearers – so also Jesus addresses people in discourses, often beginning with "I am." For the instruction that she offers, Wisdom uses symbols like food (bread) and drink (water, wine); and she invites people to eat and drink. – So also, Jesus uses these symbols for his revelation.

There is much more in this vein to be said, but that's enough to get the idea. This and more John gives to us *so that you may come to believe that*

Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

I close with some verses from the Book of Wisdom.

For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;
because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things.

²⁵ For she is a breath of the power of God
and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty;
therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her.

²⁶ For she is a reflection of eternal light,
a spotless mirror of the working of God,
and an image of his goodness.

²⁷ Although she is but one, she can do all things,
and while remaining in herself, she renews all things;
in every generation she passes into holy souls
and makes them friends of God and prophets,

²⁸ for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom.

²⁹ She is more beautiful than the sun ... (Wisdom 7.24-30)

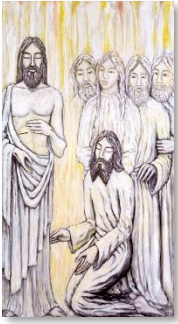
Source: Raymond E Brown *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2023)

Sermon Notes Sunday 7th April **Desiree Snyman - John 20:19-31**

When it was evening on that day,
the first day of the week,
and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of
the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side.

Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again,
"Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said
this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you
forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they
are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not
with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the
Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and
put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."
A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them.
Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said,



"Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Long before it became popular around the world, South Africans were praying in the words of Desmond Tutu:

Goodness is stronger than evil.

Love is stronger than hate.

Light is stronger than darkness.

Life is stronger than death.

Victory of ours is in God who loves us.

Resurrection is the transformation that love brings about. Resurrection reveals the blueprint of how the universe is constructed: that out of death comes life; and that the force of love is a fire so strong that neither death, fear, hate, or separation will overpower it. As the poet in Song of Songs declares: "Many waters cannot quench love". Desmond Tutu's prayer summarises Resurrection belief, that love is stronger than hate. Years later, parents, who may or may not identify as Christian, offer a similar resurrection story, surviving an abominable hell when all three of their children died.

Flight MH17 was shot down by Russian controlled forces in July 2014. Several Australians were among the dead including three children and their grandfather. The parents of these three children shared a media statement outlining their utter, crippling grief, and the abyss they were coping with. They asked for privacy. Then they said what I consider to be Resurrection words: "No hate in the world is as strong as the love we have for each other. No hate in the world is as strong as the love we have for our children." It seems that the Songs poet is correct; many waters cannot quench love.

There is something more incredible than the Resurrection, and that is what happens after the Resurrection in John 20.19 - 31. Jesus' resurrection from the dead is amazing enough. More incredible is that his message after the

resurrection is love and peace. With the wounds of crucifixion still on his body, Jesus ignores the locked doors, ignores the fear, and open his hands to offer peace, love, and reconciliation to those who abandoned and betrayed him: "Peace be with you" Jesus says, twice. Jesus then says that as Creator God sent him to be the Christ, so now he sends us, the Resurrection community, to be the Christ to others. Jesus the Christ then breathes on his friends, and they receive the Spirit. Similarly, the resurrected Christ continues to breathe on us, filling us with Spirit, God's indwelling love, that we may continue the New Creation. Jesus, so filled with the presence of God, becomes a source of that presence for others. Having received the breath of Love, the Holy Spirit, we too are so filled with Spirit that we too become a source of God's presence for others. How is this so? Studying the text explains how we are part of the evolving New Creation.

John 20.19 references that on the evening of that day, the first day of the new week, Jesus appeared to his friends. This is the 8th day, the first day of New Creation. As I have explained before, John's Gospel retells the Genesis story. In John 19 Pilate presents Jesus with the words: "Behold the Man." This corresponds with the sixth day of the Genesis creation story when God created humankind. In the New Creation of John's Gospel God recreates humankind in God's image, a crucified and broken anointed man. When Jesus dies, he breathes his last with the words: "It is finished" matching the pattern of Genesis when God completed creation with the words "thus the heavens and the earth were finished." It is on the first day of the new week, the eighth day, that Mary the Magdalene meets the Resurrected Christ in the new garden of Eden.

The New Creation so eloquently mapped by John is only the beginning of the story. Jesus says as the Father sent me, so I send you. In other words, we are to continue to completion the New Creation inaugurated by the resurrection. In technical terms, Creator God is responsible for creation. Jesus the Christ is responsible for redemption, the New Creation. And we, having been breathed on by the Christ, receive the Spirit and are responsible for mission. Mission is about being empowered by love to become love, to be love, to share love and to spread love.

We have been given multiple stories of creation, so let us not forget the other creation story recorded in Genesis 2.7-8: "Then the Lord God formed man (an "adaam") from the dust of the ground ("adaamah"), and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man (the "adaam") became a

living being. ⁸And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed.



It is quite easy to see the parallels between Genesis 2.7 when God breathed life into Adam and John 20.19-31 where Christ breathes the Spirit of Love into us, the apostles, the New Adams. Jesus so filled with the presence of God becomes a source of that presence for others and thus breathes spirit on the apostles and us the descendants of the apostles.

The text also evokes Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones and the question "can these bones live?" As the spirit brought life to the bones, so too does the spirit bring life, courage, forgiveness, and hope to us, those empowered by spirit to be Christ, the co-creators of the New Creation.

In the new creation disease has no place and that is why hate, bitterness, separation, and fear cannot enter. Love, other-centred self-sacrificing, self-emptying love, is the DNA of the New Creation. All that hinders love is to be transformed through love. That which resists the gentle touch of transforming love is left behind in the old creation. "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

John 20 presents three stages of history: God's Creation, Christ's Redemption, and the Spirit's Mission. So, how do we live the third stage of history, continuing the work of the New Creation, empowered by the Spirit of Love. The answer is hinted at the beginning prayer. We continue the New Creation in living resurrection faith; choosing love over hate, wisdom over easy answers, forgiveness over bitterness and hope over despair. We continue the New Creation when we live Tutu's prayer:

Goodness is stronger than evil.
Love is stronger than hate.
Light is stronger than darkness.
Life is stronger than death.
Victory of ours is in God who loves us.

Sentence of the Day

Turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. Acts 3.19–20

Collect

Lord of life,
by submitting to death, you conquered the grave;
by being lifted upon the cross, you draw all peoples to you;
by being raised from the dead,
you restore to humanity all that was lost through sin:
be with us in your risen power,
that in word and deed we may proclaim
the marvellous mystery of death and resurrection.
For all praise is yours, now and throughout eternity. **Amen.**

John 24:36b-48

³⁶ While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' ³⁷ They were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?' ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate in their presence. ⁴⁴ Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.