



Alstonville Anglicans

Twenty-First Sunday of Pentecost

Sunday 17th October 2021



Sharing the Good Life

We acknowledge the Bundjalung people,
traditional custodians of the Land.
Our doors are open: LGBTQIA+ welcome here.
Streaming licence: One License A-738115

Liturgy for 17th October

Sentence of the Day

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mark 10.45

Collect

God of unchangeable power,
when the heaven and earth were made,
the morning stars sang together
and the host of heaven shouted for joy:
open our eyes to the wonders of creation
and teach us to use all things for good,
to the honour of your glorious name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Readings

Mark 10:35–45

³⁵ James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to Jesus and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." ³⁶ And he said to them, "What is it you want me to do for you?" ³⁷ And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." ³⁸ But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" ³⁹ They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." ⁴¹ When the

ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. ⁴² So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. ⁴³ But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Messages

Pastoral Care

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.

Mothers Union

The MU meeting on Monday, 18 October 2021 has been postponed. Contact Pam on 0417 258 991 or Joyce 0407 690 874 joyce@stephanies.com.au.

Good Governance

COVID UPDATE

Given that Covid-19 now has entered the Alstonville Community, we are closing the Church (St Bartholomew's and St Peter and St Paul's), the Op Shop and the Ministry Centre until at least 25 October 2021.

We are closing because we care about you and are concerned for your safety.

The Services for 17th October 9am and 24th October 9am will be livestreamed. Connect via the webpage at anglicans.live.

Community-On-the-Verge



COMMUNITY ON-THE-VERGE

1. This Food Garden is For All
2. Food is Free
3. Take what you need
4. You too can plant, water and tend.
5. Consider your safety... slip, slap, slop and sip

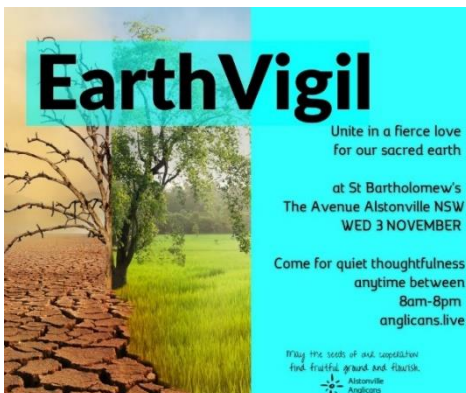
Alstonville Anglicans
anglicans.live

Everyone is invited to participate in the first working bee scheduled for Saturday 30th October 2-4pm. (COVID permitting).

If you would like to be involved in the planning and management of the project, or have any ideas to contribute please contact Alan Larsen on 0409 655 123 or Barbara Fewtrell 0429 385 713

Anam Cara Earth Vigil

The Anam Cara group are organising an Earth Vigil Wednesday 3rd November 8am-8pm.



Earth Vigil

Unite in a fierce love for our sacred earth

at St Bartholomew's
The Avenue Alstonville NSW
WED 3 NOVEMBER

Come for quiet thoughtfulness
anytime between
8am-8pm
anglicans.live

May the seeds of our vigilance
find fruitful ground and flourish.
Alstonville Anglicans

The Earth Vigil is also the launch of the Community on the Verge food garden. Each visitor will cradle a seedling for the duration of their time in silence. At the end of their reflection, the seedling may be planted in the verge garden. A guided meditation begins the 12-hour vigil at 8am and a sound healing bath concludes the event at 7-8pm. The bell will toll before every hour. All people of every faith or no faith are invited to come and sit in thoughtful quietness at a time and for a time of their choosing between 8am -8pm.

How you can be involved in the Community on the Verge garden and the Earth Vigil:

1. Join in on the Working Bee Saturday 30th October @ 2-4pm as we begin to set up our verge garden. Bring your friends.
2. The Earth Vigil Wednesday 3rd November 8am – 8pm
The Community is encouraged to participate in a vigil of meditation and contemplation with a focus on the Earth. The program includes guided meditations, and quiet times and will conclude with a Sound Bath and a short Compline. It will also be the launch of the Community-on-the-Verge food garden. Guests will be invited to plant a seedling in the garden.



We need:

1. Welcomers to fill an hourly roster to cover the 12-hour period.
2. People to assist guests with the planting of their seedlings on an hourly roster.

We need you!

If you are able to help you can register via the website anglicans.live, email Anne ma@anglicans.live or phone the office 6628 0231.

PS. These events will take place with a COVID safe plan.



Play Place

Play Place in recess due to the current COVID shutdown.

Online ministry

Head to Anglicans Live YouTube channel to catch up on any of our discussion or service videos you may have missed.

Have you subscribed? Get your friends and family to subscribe at: Anlicans Live YouTube channel.



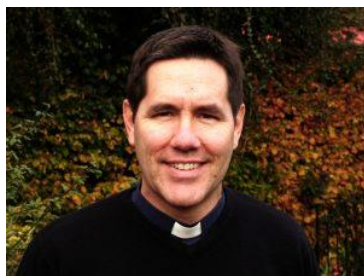
Sew Helpful

Sew Helpful will meet again once the current COVID restrictions are lifted.

Worship and Spirituality

Save the date! 7 November

Bishop Murray will be visiting the parish on the 7th November 2021. The Bishop will preach and celebrate at the 9am service and will lead a confirmation service at 5pm where we will also be receiving young friends in First Communion.



Messy Church

Messy Church cancelled for October due to the COVID shutdown



Anam Cara

Wednesday 9am ONLINE

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6224874493?pwd=ZFhidWtHHTHV3NUK3UE9hcXNzaHEwdz09>

Meeting ID: 622 487 4493

Passcode: 82462477

Messy Life Church?!

Messy Life Church?! Will not take place on the 17th due to COVID issues.

Sermon notes on Mark 10:17-31 for the 10th October

Mark 10:17–31: Jesus looked at him, and loved him

Introduction

Jesus may have been good at many things, but I don't think he would have made a good priest/minister/pastor, he doesn't preach the sort of message that people find comforting. Jesus offers many hard sayings that turn people off and today's Gospel is as comfortable as a good dose of rabies. Already short on numbers, Jesus is approached by someone that most parish priests would be delighted to have in their churches:

1. If the man is generous with his obvious wealth, he would make a difference to church offerings.
2. Clearly the man has business and management skills and were he to approach me I would be wondering about how I could fast track him onto parish council. In my mind's eye I can already see lay ministers lining up to sign him onto rosters.
3. The man that approaches Jesus seems to have a sincere spirituality and seems to work well with people and I may even wonder how soon I could be asking him to be a warden.

What does Jesus do when the man approaches with a question? He offers a terse and rather rude rebuff at being called "good teacher." In answer to the man's seemingly sincere question Jesus offers a somewhat impatient and brusque answer. (Jesus usually engages in dialogue and conversation by responding to a question with another question or a story). Let's walk through the story step by step.

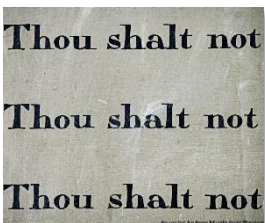
Unpacking Mark 10.17-31

To state the obvious, Mark 10.17-31 is an episode within a series of events that have as a common theme the call to stand in solidarity with the least and the last or “the little ones of history” as Geoff described last week.

Imagine that the Gospel of Mark is a Netflix binge series. As a TV series, season two of Mark’s Gospel has the healing of blind men in the first and last episode, reminding us that the remaining episodes are about healing our sight till we see the world as Jesus sees it.

In today’s episode the man approaches Jesus asking about *inheritance*, in this case eternity: “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (10.17). Interesting choice of words, inheritance. We are immediately aware of the association of the word with extreme wealth, which prepares us to be unblinded by Jesus’ misquote of the ten commandments.

At most Sunday Schools the ten commandments are learnt off by heart in return for a lolly or a sticker or a certificate. In case you forget the ten commandments they are relearnt in the catechism for confirmation and recited in the Prayer Book every Lent and Advent. Thus, if we are paying attention, we notice immediately that Jesus recites the decalogue incorrectly, he throws in “You shall not defraud.” Clearly there is a connection between the wealth of the man and economic exploitation.



The man is a slow learner and claims that he is good and that he has kept the law (10.20). In response Jesus gazes at him in love: “Jesus, looking at him, loved him” (10.21). Jesus, looking at him, loved him – what a powerful moment in the episode.

Jesus looks at him, he really sees him, and he loves him, and then offers a diagnosis, a judgement. Verse 21 of Mark 10 is why all of us should look forward to Judgement. In judgement we are seen, and we are loved.



“Jesus, looking at him, loved him.” I would love for us to meditate on this verse and allow it to become our own. I would love for us to sit in silence and allow Jesus to see us and love us. This is the ultimate definition of prayer, to be in the gaze of God’s love, of Christ’s love.

“Jesus, looking at him, loved him”. I am no psychologist but my experience of ministry among the vulnerable in South Africa has taught me how deeply people desire to be seen and loved. One story among many is this. I was the pastor of a church in an inner-city slum area of Johannesburg. The squatter camp alongside the church burnt down completely during one of the coldest winters. Having exhausted all offers of pragmatic help, one night I stood there, wearing the compulsory priest’s clothing, useless, with my hands frozen in the pockets of my coat, as the squatter camp dwellers scrambled together bits of waste and steel sheeting to rebuild their homes. A man came up to me and said that he was so grateful that I was there. I looked at him surprised and said that I was just



standing there doing nothing, what possible help could I have been. He replied that because I was there, the people, and their suffering, was not invisible, they were seen.

The Redistribution of wealth

Jesus, having seen the man and loved him, invites him to redistribute his wealth and make the Kingdom of God his highest priority. As we were warned in the parable of the Sower in Mark 4, wealth like a weed with thorns, strangles to death the possibility of the kingdom happening in this man's life: "Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful (Mark 4.18-19).

In our capitalist democracy redistributive justice is the highest heresy. As we listen to the hard sayings of Jesus we squirm with tension because we know without a doubt, we are the rich of the world and we benefit from the systems that create wealth for the few at the expense of the many.

The pheasant joke about the camel being pulled through the eye of the needle is no laughing matter for the rich. The famous assertion that the eye of the needle is a gate near Jerusalem that camels had to crawl through can hardly be taken seriously, it is a way of avoiding Jesus' hard saying. As Jose Miranda described it, the text has been victim to "manipulation at the hands of bourgeois conscience tranquilizing exegetes" (In Ched Myers, *Binding the Strongman*, p275). A modern equivalent of what Jesus is saying is something like "the rich enter the kingdom of God when pigs fly backwards, or the rich enter the kingdom when hell freezes over.

The disciples are shocked. Wealth and health were signs of blessings from God. Like we do today, the poor were blamed for their own poverty. Jesus repudiates this idea, turns conventional

wisdom upside down and makes clear that the last are first, the poor have a head start in the kingdom of God, and it is the rich not the poor who are to blame for poverty.

It would be a grave mistake to read this text individualistically. Jesus is inviting Sabbath-Year practices. In year of the Lord's favour, or Sabbath Year, debt is released. The poor are also set free. The land itself is returned *to itself*, to grow as it will. And all humans and animals, for the space of that year, are released from labour and domestication, to live "wild," and free.

The reason the rich can't enter the kingdom of God is that in God's kingdom there are no rich and there are no poor. If, like Jesus, we really look at people and really love them, we too would design society, families, churches, economics, politics... everything with the most vulnerable and the most marginalised at the centre with their flourishing as our highest goal. The kingdom of God is a place where Mary's Magnificat comes true, the rich are (joyfully) sent away empty because they have shared their excess with the hungry who are now filled with good things. Let us continue to pray that this kingdom of God may come on earth as it does in heaven.

Ched Myers, [Binding the Strong Man: a Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus](#), p.271-276.

Desiree Snyman

ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers all the baptised!

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The Reverend Geoff Vidal 0447 645 456
The Reverend Doug Bannerman 0418 182 450
The Reverend Greg Ezzy 0412 660 742

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website: anglicans.live

Bank account: BSB 705 077 / Acc:00032931

The Anglican Op Shop

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

Dates 17th October to 24th October

17th October Sunday 9am Holy Communion ONLINE
18th October Monday 10am Anam Cara Praying for You (in abeyance)
Parish Office CLOSED
Op Shop CLOSED

19th October Tuesday Parish Office CLOSED
20th October Wednesday 9am Anam Cara ONLINE (see Zoom link)
Parish Office CLOSED
Op Shop CLOSED

21st October Parish Office CLOSED
Op Shop CLOSED
Thursday Anam Cara 6pm (in abeyance)

22nd October Friday 10am Holy Communion (in abeyance)
Parish Office CLOSED

24th October Sunday 9am Holy Communion ONLINE
Sunday 10am St Peter & St Paul's (in abeyance)