



Alstonville
Anglicans

3rd Sunday of Easter

18th April 2021



Sharing the Good Life

We acknowledge the Bundjalung people,
Traditional custodians of the Land.
Our doors are open: LGBTQIA+ welcome here.
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Liturgy for 18th April

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.**

Readings

Luke 24:36b–48

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.

Messages

Worship and Spirituality portfolio

**From Friday 16th April we are moving
Services back into the church**

Save the date!



Messy Church 25 April 4pm

Join the peace train to explore the meaning of peace in our time. Meet at 4pm in the Ministry Centre for Anzac Creativity and Community. Our celebration time includes a short walk to Elizabeth Brown Park and a Picnic Evening Meal "Peace" style.

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W orship

T eaching

F ellowship

Messy Life?! Church 18 April

This is an intergenerational approach to teaching and worship. People of all ages are accommodated.

When is it?

This new service launches on 18 April

We will meet on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 5pm beginning 18 April.

Each session will include confident teaching and group discussion. We will begin and end with worship.



Who is it for?

Those seeking confirmation, new membership and first communion preparation are asked to sign up, but this service is for any and all who seek to deepen their faith through teaching, discussion and worship.

We will take a fresh look at scripture through the interpretive lens of Jesus' life, death and resurrection and God's overall call for each of us to partner with God in mending this fractured world. The hope is that after we have done so, our interpretations and use of the scriptures will be truly liberating and life-enabling.

Community engagement



volunteers required to prepare morning tea at Play Place on Thursday mornings. If available, please contact Margaret Brown. margaretandken@bigpond.com



Save the date!

Mother's Day Fete

Saturday 8th May 2021

Congratulations to the Noble's as they welcome new grandson Henry!

Pastoral Care

Coming soon!

Family Crosses



Anthony Stone made these Family Crosses, thank you Anthony, they are beautiful!

Beginning in May, these family crosses are presented to one or two families at the Sunday and Friday services.

- The families are invited forward at the Final Blessing.
- The family takes the family cross home and lights the candles daily, remembering that they are loved and prayed for by the Alstonville family.
- The names of families receiving the family cross appear for two weeks in the bulletin so that the community may remember them in their prayers.
- After two weeks, the family returns the family cross so that it may be passed on to the next family.

The office will make contact with each family to receive permission to put their names in the bulletin.

Pastoral visits

Remember!

If you or anyone you know is ill or in hospital, please let the office of Lynne Watt our pastoral coordinator know. Also if you do visit anyone could you email Lynne? wattlg@bigpond.com.

Good Governance

Pool Table and Table Tennis Table

As an icebreaker for the Messy Life service, the Parish Council would like to place a pool table and a table tennis table in the Library area. The equipment will provide a gathering point for the confirmation students who are joining the Messy Life community.

Note

Current Status of COVID Restrictions

Restrictions for Places of Worship were relaxed in NSW from 29th March.

1. Limit of 1 person / 2sqm ie. now 72 for St Bartholomew's and 20 at St Peter & St Paul's.
2. Checking in is very important and is mandatory.
3. Ventilation is important ie. opening windows and doors and morning tea outside.
4. Hand sanitization is mandatory.
5. 1.5m rule of separation is advised.
6. Singing is ok with no restrictions.

Ministry and leadership

Opportunities

At Alstonville Anglicans, we consider all the baptised as ministers. Thus, everything that builds the community in love is ministry. The ministry at the altar and working in the kitchen are one and the same thing, the preparation of holy things for holy people. Below are opportunities for people to put their hand up for the work of God where their abilities match the needs of the church.

Put your hand up!

1. Catering coordinator

We have a great team of willing helpers who are looking for a coordinator. The catering team is ad hoc and only called together from time to time as needs arise. A job description is available for those interested. Please speak to one of the Wardens.

2. Play Place Morning Tea Minister

(Volunteer) See previous note.

3. Technician

Many are appreciating the opportunity to watch services online when they cannot attend in person. For this ministry to continue, the team under Robyn must expand. If you have some computer knowledge and willingness to learn the Livestream process, please have a chat to Robyn.

Sermon notes on John 20:19 – 31 Acts 4:32- 35

for Sunday 11th April

Over the Holy Week period, Desiree has guided us through an illuminating comparison of the structure of The Genesis account of Creation and that of St Johns Gospel, in which the “eighth day” of both narratives describe pivotal moments of the creation process, when something relational, wonderful and new is revealed.

Today’s gospel passage describes events that happen on the same day as the breath-taking account of Mary embracing the risen Christ; a new creation emerging from the resurrection, the two in eternal embrace representing the new humanity. Into this mix, the Holy Spirit breathes upon the disciples in earnest of their full participation in the new relationships of human existence.

All this a parallel with the Genesis story of an earth creature (Hebrew *'adam* אָדָם) made of clay (Hebrew *'adamah* אֲדָמָה) into which the Spirit of God breathed life, the creative act that gave way to a new creation when Woman (Hebrew *'ishshah* אִשָּׁה) and Man (Hebrew *'ish* אִישׁ), both of whom are fashioned out of the earth creature, are declared to have become one flesh, a new creation, humanity.

So, here we are. All is done, seemingly, and we are all breathing, imbued by the same breath of life that vivified the

clay form that God moulded on the eighth day of creation, that the risen Christ breathed upon the disciples on the eighth day of the second creation. Or are the two creations both the same? Time is an equally tricky concept.

But where are we really? For almost a lifetime, I have been pleased to know about Thomas because of his nickname, Doubting Thomas. However, it has finally dawned upon me (pun intended) that Thomas simply wanted to see what the others had already seen, the disfigured flesh of his one-time friend and mentor, the man Jesus. Jesus graciously allows his request.

The risen Jesus, unimpeded by locked doors, appears, nail scars and all. With no condemnation of Thomas, he bestows his blessing of peace together with a simple invitation to see, to touch. His subsequent question to Thomas "Have you believed because you have seen me?" is devoid of accusation or condemnation, for it is the precursor to his declaration "blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." In this enquiry and promised blessing, Jesus assigns the same task to his followers that the Father sent him to do, to bring the same blessing to whoever will listen, to spread the Word, to scatter seeds of love in a world of doubters, to lay the ground for a continued declaration throughout the ages to come. Even so, as Joy Moore observed,

Today's listeners bring their own turned over worlds. Some by their own doing: a community scattered, distraught, by ... vehement denial of what was once confidently promised, and compromised by a price unequal to the betrayal of a loved one. Some by what has been done to them: disenfranchised by wavering public opinion, persecuted and tormented by the very systems that should sustain them, demoralized by the loss of hope for a future.

None of this, then, is really about a phantom appearance or even a doubting disciple, although there are plenty of the latter. Again, to quote Joy Moore,

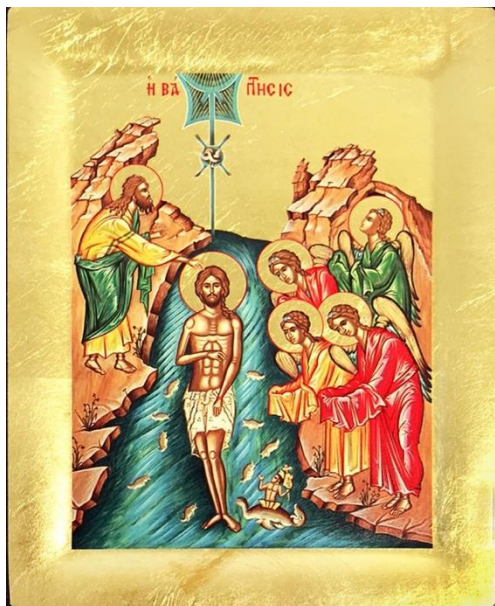
It is how to tell of a world when the divine shows up in disaster. It is how to tell of a world when forgiveness is forever ... It is how to tell of a world when a woman's witness welcomes wonder. It is how to tell of a world when life is to know the God whose mission is to forgive ... and reconcile communities scattered by oppression.

It is this message that gives rise to John's vision: a myriad surrounding the throne singing, "worthy is the Lamb ... to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!" (Revelation 5:12)

That vision continues with a significant inclusion: "Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the sea, and all that is in them, singing, "To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might forever and ever!" (Revelation 5.13)

Let me repeat this vitally significant phrase - "Every creature in heaven and on earth and under the sea, and *all* that is in them." Not just people; the *whole* of creation. The original blessing of creation is not confined to a bunch of human animals.

Yet, many Christians have a habit of thinking they are very special, set apart, different from the rest of the bunch. The paradox herein is that this is both true and not true. To tease this out, let us start with one particularly special human being.



The classical Eastern Orthodox icon of the baptism of Jesus shows him naked and often up to his neck in water. John the Baptist stands on one bank of the river and three angels on the other holding Jesus' clothing. The hand of God descends from above, whilst below the surface of the water, a curious little figure of the river god is often depicted.

In the Orthodox interpretation of this image, the baptism of Jesus represents a descent into unregulated, chaotic reality prior to the coming of the Holy Spirit, akin to the waste and void that covers the face of creation at the beginning of Genesis. This tradition views Jesus' baptism as a recapitulation of Genesis. The Word descends into chaos and, under the supervision of the Holy Spirit in her role as midwife, something is brought to birth, that something being the vocation of Jesus to live out his innermost identity.

Likewise, the Christian vocation includes not only to live out one's innermost identity, but to live in the neighbourhood of chaos, the unregulated mess in which the world finds itself.

The chaos of other people's lives, the chaos of suffering, the chaos of doubt, the chaos of a real world in which people are ground down and oppressed and denied by others who don't understand what it is to face their nothingness.

If, as we claim, baptism is an entry into the identity of Jesus Christ, it is also, as Rowan Williams put it, an entry into the most profound solidarity with human experience that we could imagine.

But, in the light of the Revelation to St John, we must perforce extend that solidarity to all that is, seen and unseen; that is to say with the whole of creation.

Richard Rohr has reminded me that Julian of Norwich, one of my favourite medieval divines, wrote

All those who are on the spiritual path contain the whole of creation, and the Creator. That is because God is inside us, and inside God is everything. And so whoever loves God loves all that is.

As Mary Earle eloquently remarked,

God is within us, at home, patiently and kindly awaiting our recognition. As Maker of all, God is in everything, present in all places and all times.

Amen.

Doug Bannerman © 2021

Ephraim Spieser's translation in Ephraim A Speiser *Genesis: Introduction, Translation and Notes (The [Anchor Bible](#))* (New York: Doubleday 1964)

¹ See Rowan Williams "Sacramental Living" in Trinity Papers Number 32, (Melbourne: University of Melbourne 2002)

¹ *ibid*

¹ *ibid*

¹ See Richard Rohr's daily meditation 9 April 2021 from Center for Action and Contemplation <Meditations@cac.org>

¹ **Mirabai Starr *The Showings of Julian of Norwich: A New Translation* (Hampton**

ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers all the baptised!

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The Anglican Op Shop

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Dates 18th April to 25th April

18 th April	Sunday 9am Holy Communion 5pm Messy Life
19 th April	Monday 10am Anam Cara Praying for You
20 th April	Wednesday 9am Anam Cara
22 nd April	Thursday 6pm Anam Cara
23 rd April	Friday 10am Holy Communion
25 th April	Sunday 9am Holy Communion 10am St Peter & St Paul's 4pm Messy Church

Messy Church



Sunday 25th April 4pm

Ride the Peace Train

Alstonville Anglicans
6 The Avenue
Alstonville
anglicans.live



Celebrate Mother's Day

Mother's Day Fete
Saturday 8th May
8am—12.30pm

Gifts, food, craft,
entertainment
Something for everyone!
COVID regulations apply

Alstonville Anglicans
6 The Avenue Alstonville
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www.anglicans.live

**Fete Co-ordination Meetings Tuesday 20th & 27th
April in the Ministry Centre at 4.30pm. All welcome!**

Easter with Alstonville Anglicans

Photos Susan Fitzpatrick

