



Alstonville
Anglicans

Sunday 18th February 2024

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

18th February – 25th February

18 th February	9am 10.30am	Sunday Holy Communion AGM
19 th February	9am-12pm 9am-3pm 10am 10am 4pm	Monday Parish Office Op Shop Anam Cara Deadline for bulletin items Fete Meeting
20 th February	9am-12pm	Tuesday Parish Office Closed
21 st February	9am-12pm 9am 9am-3pm	Wednesday Parish Office Anam Cara Op Shop
22 nd February	9am-12pm 9am-3pm 9.30am 6pm	Thursday Parish Office Op Shop Play Place Anam Cara
23 rd February	9am-12pm 10am	Friday Parish Office Holy Communion
24 th February		Saturday
25 th February	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](#)



What do you think?

Come with questions... Come with answers...
Come as you...



To
The Think Tank on Family Life
25 February 4pm
Ministry Centre
Supper included (5.30pm)

Alstonville Anglicans
6-8 The Avenue Alstonville
66280231 anglicans.live

Fete Committee Meeting

Monday 19th February 4pm in the Ministry Centre.

Lost Sheep



A Good News story as we welcome baby 'Lost Sheep'. Keep your eyes open at this years Fete because the word is that there will be many more lambs available to take home and love!

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.

World Day of Prayer

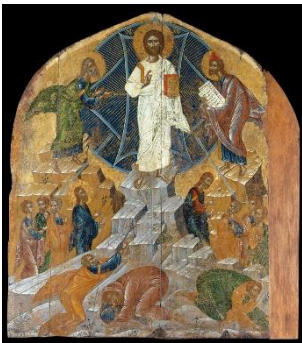
Friday 1st March 1.30pm at the Alstonville Baptist Church.

To Make you Smile



Sermon Notes Sunday 11th February Goeff Vidal Mark 9:2-9

“Transfiguration”



One of the traditions of the church is for the Gospel reading on this last Sunday before Lent to tell us the story of Jesus taking Peter, James and John up on a mountain to pray and while they are up on this mountain Jesus' clothes becoming dazzling, shining with heavenly brilliance. The story is told by Matthew, Mark and Luke and it is known as the Transfiguration (a word that means an alteration or change of form or appearance).

When tourists to Israel are taken in a bus “to the place where Jesus was transfigured”, they could be taken to either Mount Tabor or Mount Hermon. Mt Tabor is not too far south of Jerusalem (on the way to the Dead Sea) and Mt Hermon is the most northern point of the Golan Heights (the disputed territory between Israel and Syria). Mt Hermon is over 9000 ft high, and it is about an hour's drive north (it's 65 km) from the Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberius). The highest UN base in the world is on Mt Hermon. Most scholars choose Mt Hermon as the site of the transfiguration because it is close to

Caesarea Philippi where Mark says Jesus was teaching just before going up the mountain.

In the last few days, the media are reporting that the army of Israel is about to make a final attack on Raffa, the last refuge for over a million people in the Gaza strip. In 1977, while I was a pilot in the Navy, I worked with the United Nations in the Sinai desert and often drove through Raffa and the Gaza strip. At that time things were reasonably quiet in the Gaza strip. After driving across the Sinai desert, it was a relief to drive into the pretty town of Raffa and then through palm groves and Australian gum trees into the friendly, bustling city of Gaza.

However, at the same time, it was pretty tense up on Golan Heights where Mt Hermon is located. On a weekend off, a few of us drove up past Mount Hermon from Lake Tiberius to Damascus. There were lots of checkpoints, but it was worthwhile travelling into the beautiful, cosmopolitan city of Damascus where there were lovely restaurants and interesting markets with great shopping along the "street called straight" which is actually one of the oldest streets in the world and is mentioned in Acts as the street in which Paul stayed after his Damascus Road experience.

I could go on for ages telling you all about my experiences flying helicopters in between the armies of Israeli and Egypt in the Sinai or the antics of beer drinking Australian military personnel driving around Israel and Syria in white-painted UN staff cars. At that time, I was very casual and remember strolling the streets of Jerusalem with an ice cream in my hand. I certainly didn't pay too much attention to the Biblical history of the area (unlike the huge number of religious tourists who go there now).

As much as you probably would like to know more about my goings on in the Middle East with the UN, there simply isn't time for me to tell you the whole story of me being away from Carol and our two little children during this period of difficult flying in hot, sandy conditions with an Indonesian Major General as our Force Commander and a Canadian General as his deputy.

I'm sorry if you find it frustrating to hear just part of the story, but I have actually done that deliberately to illustrate something important that we can take away from today's Gospel message.

To properly understand something, we need to hear the whole story. Often, the story doesn't even make sense unless you hear all of it. A

joke will not make sense unless you are given the "punch line" and a "punch line" means nothing without the lead in story. Probably the reason some people have rejected Christianity, or are skeptical about Christianity, is that they have only ever heard part of what Jesus has to say. People need to know the whole story before Christianity makes sense to them.

In today's reading, we are told that on the way back down the mountain, after being all glowing and amazingly transfigured, Jesus told the disciples Peter, James and John who had seen this to not tell anyone about it "until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead". It was important to wait until Jesus had risen from the dead before telling this remarkable story. Jesus knew that people need to hear the whole story before the true message of Jesus is understood.

It is not uncommon for people to say that they have had a "mountain top experience". The Israelites probably already spoke of mountain top experiences as they knew the story of Moses' significant encounter with God up on Mt Sinai. In Christian conversation, it is quite probable that this story of the disciples witnessing Jesus' transfiguration is what is being referred to when the expression "mountain top experience" is used.

The disciples had just seen something way beyond normal human understanding. By some mystical experience they had glimpsed for a while the wonder of Jesus brightly shining and a voice from the clouds was heard saying, "This is My Son, the Beloved. Listen to Him." It's no wonder that the disciples had to be warned to restrain their enthusiasm and to not rush around talking about what they had seen up on the mountain. This was really spectacular, but the whole story of Jesus needed to be known and the whole story of Jesus was still to unfold. Only when the whole story was revealed, would the absolute glory of Jesus be known. It was important for Peter and James and John to "listen to him".

Eventually, they would be able to tell the full story of Jesus as Lord. It was only when they had the full experience of what "Son of Man" meant that they would understand and be able to share what "risen from the dead" really means. Until then they would only be able to tell part of the story of Jesus.

The Christmas story needs to be told along with the Good Friday story and the Easter Day "risen to life" story before the meaning of following

Jesus made sense. Telling of meeting the risen Jesus is the punch line of the whole Jesus story. The punch line needs the preamble to make sense.

Half of the message isn't helpful without the other half. Sharing the stories of Jesus healing lepers and restoring the sight of blind people and Jesus arguing about the Sabbath with people stuck in a legalistic mindset is only scratching the surface. Telling the story of a baby born in a manger and wise men bringing gifts isn't enough. The Christmas story needs the Good Friday and Easter Day stories of meeting the risen Jesus before the meaning of following Jesus can be properly understood.

So, Jesus requires that his disciples be restrained and "tell no one" until it is possible to talk of "risen from the dead". This is the proper way to share the Christian story.

Probably the reason some people have rejected, or are skeptical about, Christianity is that they only know a few isolated parts of the Jesus story. People need to know the whole story of Jesus before it becomes significant for them. It's quite pointless knowing about a miraculous birth with stars and angels and shepherds without knowing that this Jesus did things and taught things and amazed some people and made other people furious and he was executed on a cross and after that people actually found that he was very much alive to them.

In a similar way that an inoculation of a little measles or chickenpox or COVID or shingles is able to prevent a person being infected with the full disease, people being given just a little part of the Christian message are often prevented from becoming "full blown" Christians.

So, we should take this teaching from today's Gospel seriously. The Christian message cannot be understood in a piecemeal way. If Christianity is just presented as a set of rules (you must love your neighbour as yourself) or obligations (you shall have no other gods but me) or as a set of duties to be performed (attend church each Sunday) people will not see it properly.

Eventually it was those who were truly risen with Jesus who were sent to teach and witness. Having listened, suffered, known the need for forgiveness, they had, with Jesus, died and risen. They knew and lived the risen Christ. I am sure that you are aware of examples of people living "risen lives". Some personal stories are well known, such as the life of John Newton who wrote the powerful hymn "Amazing Grace". His life as a ruthless, commercially driven slave trader changed

dramatically when he rose from this "dead life" to enjoy real life as a follower of Jesus.

It is when "the Son of Man is risen from the dead" in the words and actions and whole life of his disciples that the full truth will be recognized and loved.

Sentence of the Day

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news. Mark 1.15

Collect

God of the new and eternal covenant,
as the forty days of the great flood
swept away the world's corruption
and watered new beginnings of righteousness and life:
grant to us, who are washed clean and born again
in the saving flood of baptism, the wellspring of your grace,
that your gift of new life may flourish once again;
through Jesus Christ our Redeemer,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Mark 1:9-15

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' ¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. ¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵ and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'