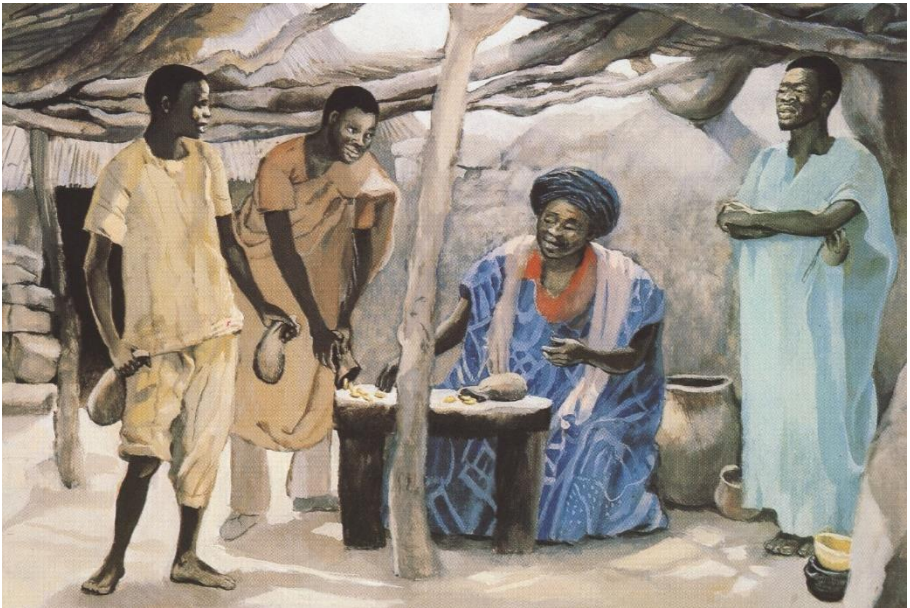




Alstonville  
Anglicans

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**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](http://www.anglicans.live)**

**Bank account: BSB 705 077 / Acc:00032931**

## 19<sup>th</sup> November – 26<sup>th</sup> November

|                           |          |                                      |
|---------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| 19 <sup>th</sup> November | 9am      | <b>Sunday</b><br>Holy Communion      |
|                           | 4pm      | <b>Christmas Tree<br/>decorating</b> |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> November | 9am-12pm | <b>Monday</b><br>Parish Office       |
|                           | 9am-3pm  | Op Shop                              |
|                           | 10am     | Anam Cara                            |
|                           | 10am     | Deadline for bulletin items          |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> November |          | <b>Tuesday</b>                       |
|                           | 9am-12pm | Parish Office <b>Closed</b>          |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> November |          | <b>Wednesday</b>                     |
|                           | 9am-12pm | Parish Office Open                   |
|                           | 9am      | Anam Cara                            |
|                           | 9am-3pm  | Op Shop                              |
|                           | 12.30pm  | Dawn Wilson funeral                  |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> November |          | <b>Thursday</b>                      |
|                           | 9am-12pm | Parish Office Open                   |
|                           | 9am-3pm  | Op Shop                              |
|                           | 9.30am   | Play Place                           |
|                           | 6pm      | Anam Cara                            |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> November |          | <b>Friday</b>                        |
|                           | 9am-12pm | Parish Office Open                   |
|                           | 10am     | Holy Communion                       |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> November |          | <b>Saturday</b>                      |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> November |          | <b>Sunday</b>                        |
|                           | 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](http://www.welcomeBooklet_v3.pdf)

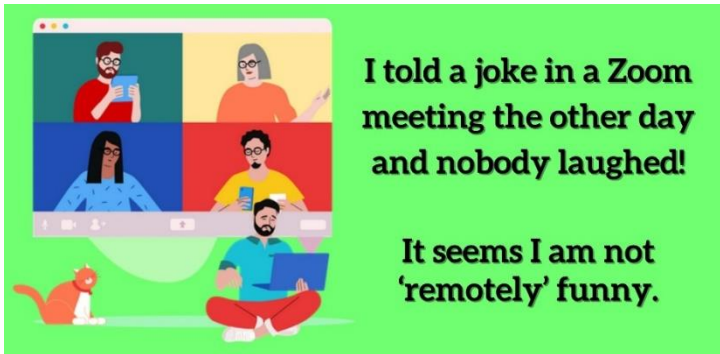
## Funeral

The funeral of Dawn Wilson will take place on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November at 12.30pm.

## LinC Alstonville Celebration Ceremony and Christmas function

This event is to be held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2pm in the Anglican Church Hall. Please RSVP by the 16<sup>th</sup> November to Lynne Watt. Please let Lynne know if you have any special dietary requirements. If you are able to bring a plate to share let Vivian know 0422 201 191.

## To Make you Smile



## Music Events

**Music for Peace** Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November 3pm St Andrew's Anglican Church Lismore.

**Isabella A Cappella**, Northern Rivers Vocal Ensemble

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 6.30pm Rochdale Theatre.

Contact Helen Quaiffe 0468 903 620 for further details.

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ordination of Women in the Diocese of Grafton

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 10am at Christ Church Cathedral Grafton.

Everybody welcome. RSVP via the link below.

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/748834352707?aff=oddtcreator>.



**Hat trick?**  
Quota Christmas Tree Competition  
25/26th November  
Alstonville Anglicans have been prize winners 2 years running! Can we make it 3?  
Join us on the 19th November 4pm  
to make the 'deadliest' tree ever!  
Alstonville Anglicans 6-8 The Avenue [anglicans.live](http://anglicans.live)

## Sermon Notes Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November

### Desiree Snyman

If the apostles were running churches, it is Mary Magdalene's church that I would attend. If she was all the way in France, I would probably go to Thomas' church. I know that I would stay as far away as possible from Matthew's church. I don't like much of Matthew's preaching. In today's parable, for example, I know without a shadow of a doubt that I would be classed as one of Matthew's so called foolish bridesmaids. I would leave the service feeling depressed, and judged, by Matthew and his five smug wise bridesmaids.

I could be the archetypal foolish bridesmaid: As hard as I try to be early, I am often late. Once I was 30 minutes early for a clergy meeting only to realise that I was at the wrong venue. I arrive at a meeting feeling prepared only to discover I have left all my notes somewhere else. As much as I try to be neat, coffee stains flock to my clothes like bees to honey. With people to help me in the office and the benefits of an electronic diary, I still double book appointments and sometimes forget I have them altogether. It is now a permanent aspect of a warden's job description to keep track of my keys, which like my brain, like to go for a walk without me.



As an oil-bearing bridesmaid, I know that I would have *meant* to buy more oil but was probably distracted. I went to the desk for the credit card to pay for the oil, but then noticed that the desk plant needed water. Went to fetch water for the plant but forgot why I needed water and made some coffee instead. Messed the coffee on me and decided that while washing the stained shirt I might as well do a load of washing. Put the coffee down and while fetching the laundry remembered the dog hadn't been taken for a walk. Went to fetch the dog lead and house keys. Couldn't find my keys and while looking for my keys found the credit card and it was midnight and the shops were closed, and I had no oil, no keys, a cold cup of coffee, the washing wasn't done, the dog hadn't been for a walk and the plant wasn't watered. And I was late for the banquet. And the groom shut the door in my face after yelling: "I do not know you!" at me.

I'm not putting myself down, I've made peace with my eccentricities, and invest time in generating calendars, planning, and making checklists for repeatable tasks. I also surround myself with understanding and forgiving friends, which is why I find it so hard to swallow the punch line of the story. My friends and family don't shut the door in my face because I have been late. There have been many times when I have run out of oil, and God's saints have been there either to share some of theirs, or to hold the light for me when I am too exhausted to hold it myself. As the song *Brother Sister let me serve you* states: "I will hold the Christ light for you, in the nighttime of your fears, I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear." I am positive these people that share their oil and their lamps with me are the same people that God addresses in Matthew 25:35 "for I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

How then do we wrestle with this parable, when in the parable of the ten bridesmaids the heroes are those who do not share and in the parable of the sheep and goats the heroes are those who do? How do we interpret this parable when the trajectory of Scripture is that it is the least, the last and the lost that are first in the kingdom of God? The lost sheep, the prodigal son, along with prostitutes and tax collectors are the ones Jesus chooses. The blessed ones are the

poor, the meek, and those in mourning; in other words, those who haven't got any oil to spare.

Scholars offer different interpretations about Matthew 25. John Crossan for example suggests that it is highly unlikely that the historical Jesus said this parable. That may or may not be true, but it is still part of our Canon and tradition and our lectionary, and it is not going to go away just because we ignore it.

Other interpreters examine the wider context of this passage, especially Matthew 24. The context of the early community in whom the sermon was birthed was the unrelenting pain caused by the Romans. At the time, things had never been more terrible in Palestine: the temple was destroyed in 70AD. Thousands were brutally murdered. Those that survived were scattered. Borrowing heavily from Hebrew prophets such as Amos, Isaiah and Ezra, the anonymous author of the Gospel of Matthew inspired hope by asserting God's judgement on resistant imperial powers such as Babylon and Rome and promised that God's cosmic influence would permeate the heavens, the skies, astral bodies, and the entire earth. In the face of suffering, war and trauma the preacher in Matthew's Gospel encourages steely eyed endurance, unwavering hope, and enduring love.

Unfortunately, Matthew 24 and 25 inspired some damaging, untrue and unbiblical teachings of rapture. Anglican priest John Nelson Darby from Ireland is the source of the message of the Great Tribulation. According to Darby, God will remove the elect by rapture before destroying the earth in the final battle of Armageddon. Perhaps you have even seen the bumper stickers "in case of rapture the driver of this car will disappear." This "teaching" led to an alliance between the Christian evangelicals in America and the Likud party in Israel who fight for Israel and not Palestine to have control over the Holy Land.

The key message of the final sermons in Matthew 24 and 25 is this: "be awake, wake up, watch, be mindful, be alert:

Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour (Mat 25.13) "Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming" (24:42).

Our doxology, Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ will come again is a way into this message.

Let us be careful to not totally misunderstand Christ's coming again. When we say that Christ will come again, we do not mean that Christ will literally come to earth again descending on a cloud. Christ has never left; Christ is always present. Christ comes again and again and again moment by moment. The eternality of Christ is experienced in being present to the present, being awake.

The difficulty is that being fully present to the present is like trying to grasp water. Anyone who has ever tried to meditate could tell you this. Even while listening to me, some of you have been making shopping lists and planning the week ahead. When we can be fully present to the present, we can awake to reality, that Christ is here right now. In the people that you have shown kindness to you have been Christ. In the people that have been kind to you, you have been Christ. We are not God but every single person is born out of the love of God, expresses this love in his/her unique personal form and so in every breath of love Christ is coming again. There is nothing left for us to do, but to wake up and keep awake for all the ways in which God comes towards us.

## **Sentence of the Day**

God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other. 1 Thessalonians 5.9, 11

## **Collect**

Everliving God,  
before the earth was formed,  
and even after it shall cease to be, you are God.  
Break into our short span of life  
and show us those things that are eternal,  
that we may serve your purpose in all we do;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## Matthew 25:14-30

<sup>14</sup> 'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup> to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup> The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup> In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup> But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. <sup>19</sup> After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup> Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." <sup>21</sup> His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." <sup>22</sup> And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." <sup>23</sup> His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." <sup>24</sup> Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup> so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." <sup>26</sup> But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? <sup>27</sup> Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup> So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup> For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>30</sup> As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."