



Alstonville  
Anglicans

# First Sunday in Lent

21 February 2021

## Welcome



### 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

# Thought for the week.

First Sunday in Lent Mark 1. 9-15

Creating Space

*"At once the spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness for 40 days, where he was tempted by Satan: the wild beasts were with him and the angels waited on him."*

One of the Patristic or Early Church Father was Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons. He said that "Christ became what we are, human, so that we could become what Christ is, Divine." Jesus is thus the ultimate pattern of our lives. It is not okay to read Scriptures and think: "Oh well, that's easy for Jesus, he is divine, I am only human!" Who Jesus is, is who we already are. Like Jesus we too are to be "Christ", anointing ones, in whom, with whom and through whom God blesses and loves the world that God has created. It is with this in mind that we look at the Lenten season. Creating space is the great gift of the Lenten Season. This is what Jesus does. Jesus **creates space**: he was in the **wilderness** for **40 days**. Lent is about creating space. We too can embrace the gift of lent by **creating space**, in this way we live the Scripture, we follow Jesus into the wilderness for 40 days.

The adventure that awaits us is to celebrate Lent by creating space. How we do this is uniquely ours to work out. For some it requires taking on something: a pattern of walking before the day starts or when the day ends, the discipline of morning or evening prayer. For others it may mean giving up something: giving up a meal to meditate, giving up television to read, giving up words to listen. To create space is a supremely Godly thing to do, it is how we celebrate Christ becoming who we are so that we can become who Christ is. May God bless each of us as we journey into created space.

# Liturgy for 21<sup>st</sup> February

## 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.**

## Readings

### Mark 1:9–15

<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." <sup>12</sup> And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. <sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, "The time is

fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

# Messages

## Worship and Spirituality portfolio



### Lenten Study – Way of Love

Rev Desiree will be facilitating two groups Wednesdays 11am-12.30pm, Thursdays 4pm-5.30pm commencing 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> February. Please add your name to the list provided. The Way of Love study guide is also available for those wishing to form a Lenten study group. Guides available parish office.



### Parish Leaders Retreat Day

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February 10am-4pm  
St Matthew’s Church, Dunoon.



### Messy Church

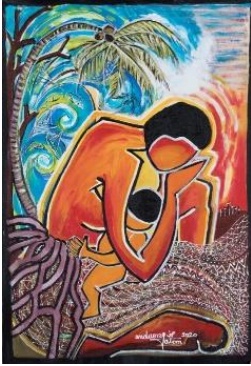
#### Blessing of the Bags

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February, 4pm  
A blessing of school bags and all school endeavours for 2021.  
RSVP: [anglicans.live/contact](http://anglicans.live/contact)



### SRE – Scripture in Schools

Prayers are asked as this ministry begins in our local schools. If you are interested in teaching scripture in school please contact Merlene Hellyar:0428 116 744



## **World Day of Prayer**

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 10am in the Ministry Centre. This year we are hosting the World Day of Prayer. The country is Vanuatu and the theme is "**Build on a Strong Foundation.**" The guest speaker is Mike Wolfe.



## **Sew Helpful**

Sew Helpful will now be meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays only. Contact Carol: 0427326832

## **Empowering Leadership**



### **AGM**

Today 11am.

## **Good Governance**

### **COVID 19 & Church Services**

With the resurgence of COVID 19 in Sydney and Victoria, NSW Health has some new regulations for church services.

**1. Masks:** - these are recommended for all members of the congregation. At the present time members of the congregation are forbidden to sing. In our churches, masks will be made available at the door, so people have an option. (stocks are in the

COVID box)

2. **Food:** - Morning tea is still allowed as long as social distancing is observed. At St Bartholomew's morning tea will be served outside. (reduces the risk by 95%). Milk and sugar will be on the outside tables to help with social distancing at the counter.

3. **Numbers:** - These cannot be increased so St Bartholomew's is in the hall and Tregeagle is outside.

4. **Cleaning:** - Chairs need to be wiped over with detergent solution and dried after usage.

Church services have been inspected to ensure compliance. Please remember this is the current law.

### **Volunteers Needed – Concierge**

Members of the congregation are very much needed to provide a hand sanitising and welcoming face to the Op Shop. If you can spare 3 hours a week or fortnight on a Monday, Wednesday or Thursday between 9am and 3pm please call Paul Earner 0416280140.



### **Op Shop**

Our Op Shop is now open Monday, **Wednesday** and Thursday. Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers.



## Repurposing Plastic

We have an opportunity to recycle plastic milk bottle tops and bread tags. These items are sorted in our area and sent to Adelaide where they are melted down and repurposed to assist people with disabilities. Items can be left at the collection point at the Op Shop. Contact person is John Noble.

## Community



QLD Ballet Gala 5<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> March  
Charlie Slater will be performing in all performances including a solo.  
Speak to Sherry Ann Lowe for more information. 0402492531

## Offertory Options

### Alstonville Anglicans - Offertory Options

We give thanks to God for all people making offertories to the vision of God's Kingdom here on earth.

Your offertory can be made using the following options:

- Direct transfer to our bank account BSB 705 077 /  
Acc:00032931
- Parish Provider - Direct debit through Anglican Funds -  
Forms available from the office
- Cheque to Alstonville Anglicans (PO Box 451, Alstonville  
2477 or Offertory Plate)
- Offertory envelopes
- Cash

*Thank you for your support.*

# Sermon Notes

## Transfiguration

Mark 9:2-9

On this last Sunday before Lent we hear the story of Jesus clothes becoming dazzling, shining with heavenly brilliance when he goes up onto a mountain with Peter, James and John. The story is told by Matthew, Mark and Luke and is known as the Transfiguration (a word that means an alteration or change of form or appearance).

It's generally thought that this mountain was Mount Hermon which is the most northern point of the Golan Heights (the disputed territory between Israel and Syria). In 1977, while I was a pilot in the RAN, I worked with the United Nations in the Sinai desert and in some time off a few of us drove past Mount Hermon on the way from Lake Tiberius (Sea of Galilee) to Damascus. There isn't time today to tell 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 in white-painted UN staff cars. You probably would like to know more about my goings on in the Middle East but that would need to be an after dinner talk rather than a sermon. I've mentioned this time I spent with the UN now, simply to illustrate the point that it can be very frustrating when the person telling a story only tells part of it.





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". Probably the reason some people have rejected Christianity, or are sceptical 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. People need to hear the whole story before the true message of Jesus is understood.

The disciples had just seen something way beyond normal experience. In some sort of mystical experience, they had glimpsed (for a while) the wonder of Jesus. There, standing with them, was the image of the Father, "My Son, the Beloved," and the one the world needed to hear: a voice from the cloud said "listen to him!"

Jesus brought his friends down from the mountain renewed in faith and with fresh vigour to face the realities of life on earth. However, these disciples had to be warned to not enthusiastically rush around talking about what they had seen up on the mountain.

This was not the final glory to be preached. The story was not yet complete. They were to "listen to him" and observe him, to

go through Good Friday and all that led up to it. And they had to encounter the risen Jesus.



Then 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 what "risen from the dead" really means. And until then they would only be able to tell part of the story of Jesus. Telling of meeting the risen Jesus is the punch line of the Jesus story.

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 makes sense.

So, Jesus requires that his disciples "tell no one" until you can talk of "risen from the dead". This is the proper way to share the Christian story.

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 (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.

That's the GOOD NEWS line in the sermon today (Remember Desiree shared with us the requirement she was given as a Methodist minister. I had the same instruction from my rector, Geoff Smith, when I was a curate in Ballina Parish)

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.

False messages come from half-truth and wrong emphasis. False messages also come from those who preach and profess the truth but contradict it by the way they live their lives.

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.



# ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

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## Calendar 2021

21 <sup>st</sup> February	Holy Communion 9am
	AGM 11am in Ministry Centre
22 <sup>nd</sup> February	Anam Cara Praying for You 10am
24 <sup>th</sup> February	Anam Cara 9am Lent Study 11am-12.30pm
25 <sup>th</sup> February	Lent Study 4-5.30pm Anam Cara 6pm
27 <sup>th</sup> February	Parish Leaders Retreat Day 10am-4pm
28 <sup>th</sup> February	Holy Communion 9am
	St Peter & St Paul's Service 10am & AGM
	Messy Church Blessing of the School Bags 4pm
1 <sup>st</sup> March	World Compliment Day
	Anam Cara Praying for You 10am
3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Anam Cara 9am Study 11am-12.30pm
4 <sup>th</sup> March	Lent Study 4-5.30pm Anam Cara 6pm
5 <sup>th</sup> March	World Day of Prayer