



# Alstonville Anglicans

Pentecost 3 - 21st June 2020

## You are welcome to join us this week...

- Sunday@8am. **A short Anglican Service of Worship 8am** connect via webpage [www.anglicans.live](http://www.anglicans.live)
- Sunday@6pm A conversation approach. Join us via Zoom. Link available on the website [www.anglicans.live](http://www.anglicans.live)  
**Meeting ID: 934 099 691 Password: 030920**
- Anam Cara – a meditation group. Wednesday 9am via Zoom. Link available on the website [www.anglicans.live](http://www.anglicans.live)  
**Meeting ID 880 0635 6978 Password 82462477**



### **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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## Thought for the week

It is exceedingly difficult to sanitise the story of Hagar to fit our religious expectations. Like all human relationships, the dynamics between Sarah, Abraham and Hagar are messy. Hagar is a slave. Sarah gives Hagar to Abraham as a wife to bear Abraham a son.

According to Tikva Frymer-Kensky the custom of giving a wife to one's husband was common:

"...cuneiform texts of the second and first millennia B.C.E. attest to this custom in ancient Mesopotamia. The first such text, from the Old Assyrian colony in Anatolia, dates from around 1900 B.C.E. A marriage contract, it stipulates that if the wife does not give birth in two years, she will purchase a slave woman for the husband. In the world of the ancient Near East, a slave woman could be seen as an incubator, a

kind of womb-with-legs. Sarai and Abram see Hagar in this role and never call her by name."

Hagar does not see herself as a slave. She values herself as a person, not as property, and later feels superior to Sarah "she looked with contempt on her mistress" (Gen 16:4). In response Sarah and Abraham degrade and abuse her. Hagar runs away. In the wilderness she meets God's messenger who asks her to return to the abusive situation for then she will bear a son who will be a "wild ass of a man" (Gen 16:12). A wild ass is undomesticated, likewise Ishmael is undomesticated and will not be oppressed and live "with his hand against everyone" and "in everyone's face" (Gen 16:12).

In a male centered society what is astonishing is that Hagar is Abram's counterpart. God speaks directly to her and Abraham.

Hagar and Ishmael are freed

by Sarah (Gen 21:9–14). Later, Israel will be freed from slavery and like Hagar will end up in the desert and struggle with thirst.

Hagar is a powerful symbol for anyone who has felt that they do not belong, for anyone who is excluded or rejected by “mainstream” religion. Hagar is a heroine for all who support “Black Lives Matter”.



Source: Frymer-Kensky, Tikva. "Patriarchal Family Relationships and Near Eastern Law." *Biblical Archaeologist* 44 (1981): 209–214.

## Pentecost 3 8am Liturgy 21st June 2020

### Welcome and acknowledgement of country

### Sentence of the Day

Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for Jesus' sake will find it. Matthew 10.39



### Opening Song As the Deer

1. As the deer pants  
for the water  
so my soul longs after you.  
You alone are my  
heart's desire  
and I long to worship you.

*You alone are  
my strength, my shield,  
to You alone may  
my spirit yield.  
You alone are my  
heart's desire  
and I long to worship you.*

2. You're my friend and  
You are my brother  
even though  
you are a King.  
I love You more  
than any other  
so much more  
than anything.

*You alone are  
my strength, my shield,  
to You alone may  
my spirit yield.  
You alone are my  
heart's desire  
and I long to worship you.*

3. I want You more than  
gold or silver,  
only you can satisfy.  
You alone are the  
real joy giver  
and the apple of my eye

*You alone are  
my strength, my shield,  
to You alone may  
my spirit yield.  
You alone are my  
heart's desire  
and I long to worship you.*

Martin Nystrom 1956  
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## Reading

### Genesis 21:8-21

The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac."

The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring." So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin

of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, "Do not let me look on the death of the child." And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is.

Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him." Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled

the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink. God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

## Sermon

## Intercessory Prayers

Lord God,  
friend of those in need,  
your Son Jesus  
has untied our burdens  
and healed our spirits.  
We lift up the prayers  
of our hearts  
for those still burdened,  
those seeking healing,  
those in need within the  
church and the world.

## SILENCE

That leaders in church and state hunger for wisdom

### **Hear our prayer**

That parents and teachers find joy in their children

### **Hear our prayer**

That those in any prison  
be set free  
**Hear our prayer**

That refugees find home  
**Hear our prayer**

That the sick are  
comforted, and the dying  
find peace  
**Hear our prayer**

Hear our prayers  
that we may love you  
with our whole being  
and willingly share  
the concerns of our  
neighbours. Amen.

## Blessing

God who has called you is  
faithful.  
Go into the world with joy,  
forgive generously,  
love extravagantly,  
live abundantly;  
and the blessing of God,  
the Father, the Son and the  
Holy Spirit, be upon you  
now and for ever. Amen.

## Final Song

**Sing of the Lord's goodness**

1. Sing of the Lord's  
goodness,  
Father of all wisdom,  
come to him  
and bless his name.

Mercy he has shown us,  
his love is forever,  
faithful to the end of days.

*Come then, all you nations,  
sing of your Lord's  
goodness,  
melodies of praise  
and thanks to God.  
Ring out the Lord's glory,  
praise him with your  
music,  
worship him and bless his  
name.*

2. Power he has wielded,  
honour is his garment  
risen from the snares of  
death.  
His word he has spoken,  
one bread he has broken,  
new life he now gives to all.

*Come then, all you nations...*

3. Courage in our darkness,  
comfort in our sorrow,  
Spirit of our God most high;  
solace for the weary,  
pardon for the sinner,  
splendour of the living God.

*Come then, all you nations...*

4. Praise him with your  
singing,  
praise him with the trumpet,  
praise God with  
the lute and harp;  
praise him with the cymbals,  
praise him with your dancing,  
praise God  
till the end of days.

*Come then, all you nations,  
sing of your Lord's  
goodness,  
melodies of praise  
and thanks to God.  
Ring out the Lord's glory,  
praise him with your  
music,  
worship him and bless his  
name.*

*Ernest Sands  
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#12035*

## Pentecost 3

### 6pm Liturgy

### 21st June 2020

- Read the story of Hagar and Genesis 21:8-21
- What is the text about?
- Tell the story in your own words. "Once there was ..."
- Who are the main characters?
- What do we know about them?
- Who has control and how is control used?
- Who has power and how is power used?
- Are there people like Hagar in your church and/or community? Tell their story.
- What resources are there in your area for people like Hagar?

We continue to stand in Solidarity with the Hagas of the world.

## Solidarity

### The Second Conversion

If the first conversion to solidarity is to befriend or experience compassion for the poor, **the Second Conversion** to solidarity is anger at the unjust situation that caused their poverty. Many people never reach this stage of anger at injustice, especially in the United States. Our cultural worship of individualism and "bootstrap" mentality deprives us of the capacity to empathize with people in need and recognize systemic oppression. When we are in the middle or upper tier of privilege, it is almost impossible to see the many ways the system helped us succeed. We cannot recognize or overcome this "agreed upon delusion" as isolated individuals, mostly because it is held together by the group consensus. The dominant group—in any country or context—normally cannot see its own lies. We have to pay attention to whomever is saying "I can't breathe" to recognize the biases at work. This often only changes when, through friendship with people of different backgrounds and life experiences, we witness mistreatment and marginalization. We get to know someone outside our

immediate social circle. Our sister falls in love with someone from another race, religion, or culture. Our grandchild is transgender. We see all the ways life is more difficult for them than it needs to be. We feel their pain instead of standing apart at a safe distance.

Anger is a necessary, appropriate, and useful response to this kind of injustice. It is the beginning of social critique and helps us protect the appropriate boundaries for ourselves and others. Yet anger can be dangerous, too. When it hangs around too long, it becomes self-defeating and egocentric. Then it distorts the message it came to offer us. We can become so intent on pointing out problems that we are never actually willing to be part of the solution. As I like to say, the best criticism of the bad is the practice of the better, not more criticism! The question of true conversion and solidarity is, "how can I work through my anger and get to the other side, so I can be a life-giving presence *with and for* those who are most suffering?"

For oppressed communities, however, anger can be a form of survival, a necessary stage on the path towards healing. Listening to such

anger with compassionate friendship can itself be a form of solidarity. As my colleague Barbara Holmes writes:

Many spiritual traditions warn us against anger. We are told that anger provides fertile ground for seeds of discontent, anxiety, and potential harm to self and others. This is true. However, when systems of injustice inflict generational abuses upon people and communities because of their ethnicity, race, sexuality, and/or gender, anger as righteous indignation is appropriate, healthy, and necessary for survival. . . . Until the killing of black and brown people stops, all peaceful methods of resistance are appropriate. Right now, our anger is our truth, and our anger is a sacred part of our humanity and our faith.





## Update Hot News

The Bishop has approved our COVID 19 Safety Plan to reopen our services under strict COVID safe conditions. Our first Service will be

- **8am Sunday 5th July**
- 6pm Sunday 5th July
- 9am Anam Cara 1st July
- 10am Friday 10th July

More news in the next bulletin

## Did you know?

### Social Media

Our social media videos and images continue to be enjoyed by our followers. Please consider sharing a post you enjoy. Lets spread the good news!



### Congratulations!

Graham & Mary Ireland celebrated 50yrs of marriage on the 13th June. Congratulations to you both!

The cake was made by Judy Thompson. Thank you too Judy for the lovely photo.



### Floral Group

The Floral Group shared this beautiful message of inspiration.

'This April in New York City, spring feels different: there is still beauty under the shadow of the virus.

This spring of 2020, because of the pandemic, the whole world is shrouded in a shadow of uncertainty and death.

The normally bustling New York is now quiet and empty, full of inexplicable desolation and loneliness ... until a certain morning, when you walked in a corner of Manhattan, you accidentally encountered a large bouquet of flowers, and bumped into the arms of spring's abundance ...

You cannot help stopping, can't help lingering, can't help feeling. It turns out that the flowers are still blooming under the haze of the pandemic. It turns out that even though life is so fragile, it is still so beautiful!

Therefore, you cannot help curling your lips up and being filled with a confidence, because you believe that the pandemic will pass, and the world will be better!



## Sermon notes - 14th June

A critical look at the gospels, and the rest of the bible for that matter, informs us that we cannot take everything literally. There are too many internal inconsistencies to allow that with any degree of rigour.

Rather we need to listen with the ear of the heart, tease out the broader concepts and intentions, so that the *spirit* of the gospel, the *deep* wisdom, will penetrate the soul, thence the mind. In my experience, that only comes in the fathomless spaces of deep silence, in which only *pure* things can gather and coalesce.

Easier said than done. Now for me, the heart of today's gospel reading is this.

As you enter the house, greet it. <sup>13</sup>If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.

The greeting, of course, is the greeting of peace, the common greeting of the Semitic world. The Greek word for peace is *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη), which gives rise to the English name Irene. It is also the name of one of the Greek goddesses of the seasons.

In 379 BCE the citizens of Athens erected a votive statue in her honour. The original bronze is lost, but the Romans carved marble copies, perhaps the best of which depicts the goddess Peace cradling her child Plutus in her left arm – Plutus, the god of Plenty. The statue was, in fact, an allegory for

Plenty prospering under the protection of Peace; and it represented a public appeal for *good sense*.

That is the appeal when you enter another's space. The words "Peace be with you" are an appeal for good sense and all that goes with that. So, to stretch a point somewhat, "Peace be with you" can also mean "Have some sense".

And, to stretch it even further, "Have some sense", as a protest in another context, has the connotation of "I can't breathe"; words uttered by more than one indigenous person in the world, as they lay dying under the crushing weight of several hefty law enforcement officers; in Australia, David Dungay Jr; in the United States, George Floyd.

There is a perception in Australia, Alison Whittaker wrote recently, that Indigenous deaths in custody are inevitable or natural. Despite 432 Indigenous deaths in custody since 1991, no one has ever been convicted. All this a consequence of racist silence and complicity endemic in the legal system itself, together with the way such cases are portrayed in the media; together with a lack of political will; together with the frozen deafness of our leaders. Justice is extremely difficult to obtain in this circumstance.

In fact, we only hear about the indigenous lives lost in custody "because of the persistence, expertise and courage of their families and communities who mourn them. But it is not

enough to *hear* about justice, justice must be done."

There is no *good sense* and certainly no peace is this sector of our national life. Marcus Borg has cogently argued that liberation from bondage is one of the central meanings of salvation; but here there is no liberation, and the bondage is palpable.

It goes without saying, surely, that Jesus' teachings and behaviour "reflect an alternative social vision" that operates on the basis of good sense, liberation and peace.

The heart of the matter, in Borg's words, is that,

God wills, comprehensively, our well-being – not just my well-being as an individual but the well-being of all of us and of the whole of creation.

Our task is to give wings to this and make it real. "How?" is my prevailing question. Each of us have skills in different areas. None of us are perfect in the exercise of those skills. But all of us can try as best we can to use the gifts we have in the service of liberation and justice. *That* is Gospel.

As one of our latter-day prophets, Leonard Cohen, said/sang,

The birds they sang  
At the break of day  
Start again  
I heard them say  
Don't dwell on what  
Has passed away  
Or what is yet to be  
Yeah the wars they will

Be fought again  
The holy dove  
She will be caught again  
Bought and sold  
And bought again  
The dove is never free

Forget your perfect offering  
There is a crack in everything  
(there is a crack in  
everything)  
That's how the light gets in

So be it.

Ring the bells (ring the bells)  
that still can ring

Doug Bannerman Ó 2020

## ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers all the baptised!  
Rector The Reverend Dr Desiree Snyman 0402 764 969  
priest@anglicans.live  
Associate The Reverend John Kidson 0411 394 213  
The Reverend Geoff Vidal 0447 645 456  
Life Groups Chaplain  
The Reverend Greg Ezzy 0412 660 742  
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e-mail: office@anglicans.live  
**website:** anglicans.live  
**The Anglican Op Shop** 1 The Avenue, Alstonville **Tel:** 6628 8777

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

### **Option 1**

Parish Provider these are the details:

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

### **Option 2**

Cheques can be posted to the address above or placed in our locked letterbox. Before 12pm Fridays .

## **Sharing the Good Life**

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