



# Alstonville Anglicans

**Christmas Day**  
**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

**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**

## Dates 25<sup>th</sup> December to 1<sup>st</sup> January

25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Sunday</b>
9am	Holy Communion
26 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Monday</b>
9am-12pm	Parish Office Closed
27 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Tuesday</b>
	Parish Office Closed
28 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Wednesday</b>
9am-12pm	Parish Office Closed
29 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Thursday</b>
9am-12pm	Parish Office Closed
30 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Friday</b>
9am-12pm	Parish Office Closed
	<b>No 10am Service</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Jan	<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](#)

## Community Engagement

To make you smile!



What do you call a bunch of chess players bragging about their games in a hotel lobby?

Chess nuts  
boasting in an  
open foyer!



## Save the Date!

### A.R.E.A. Movie Night

More details closer to  
the date

A.R.E.A. is planning  
another Film Night at  
Ballina Cinemas  
Sunday  
12th February 2023  
at 6pm



## Sing-a-long Group

In recess until 31st  
January 2023

Alstonville  
Anglicans  
6 The Avenue  
Alstonville  
anglicans.live

## Worship and Spirituality

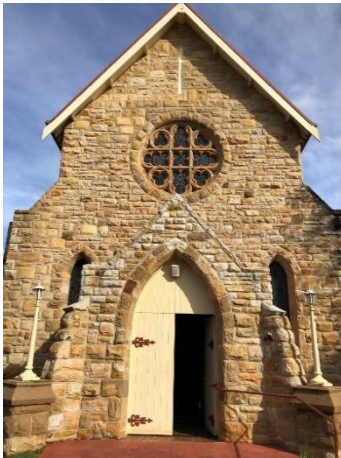


From our family to yours  
**COME AS ...YOU\***

24 Dec 5PM FAMILY SERVICE  
24 Dec 11PM CAROLS & Communion  
25 Dec 9AM CHRISTMAS SERVICE

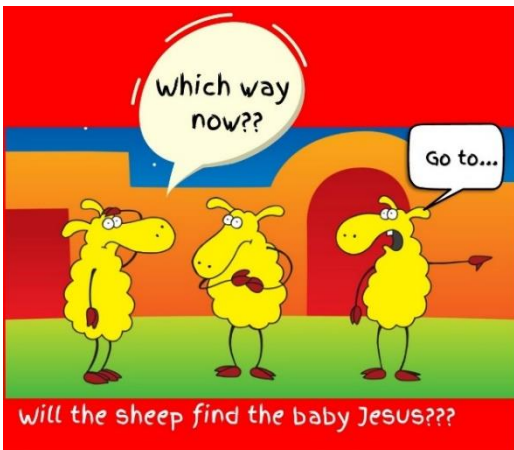
Alstonville Anglicans

[anglicans.live](http://anglicans.live)



There will be no Friday  
Service on  
30th December 2022.

Friday Services will continue  
normally through  
January 2023.



## Lost Sheep Family Christmas Service

Alstonville Anglicans  
Saturday 24th Dec  
5pm



6 The Avenue  
Alstonville  
[anglicans.live](http://anglicans.live)

**Thank  
You!**

Thank you to everyone who is giving their time to support the smooth running of our Christmas Services. Your contribution is valued.



**Anam Cara**

**In recess  
until  
February**

## **Empowering Leadership**



**AGM**

**Sunday 19 February 2023  
at 10.30am in the church.**

**If you would like to submit a report for the AGM papers please do so before 15 January 2023. Please submit reports to [office@anglicans.live](mailto:office@anglicans.live)**

## Christmas Closing Times

Parish Office:  
12 noon 23rd December  
reopening 23rd January 2023  
Op Shop:  
3pm 15th December  
reopening 9th January 2023



Best Wishes for the  
Christmas Season from  
your Office Staff.  
Thank you to all who  
assist us so willingly.

## Sermon Notes

Advent 4A: A meditation on **Matthew 1.18-25**

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

<sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

<sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord



appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

<sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.'

<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfil

what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.'

<sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife,

<sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Her deepest longing connects with God's deepest longing, and she becomes pregnant with divine potential.

Her deepest desire connects with God's deepest desire and there is a union of divine infinite love with finite flesh.

Her experience is that she is so filled with the spirit of God, love, that she becomes a source for God in the world. She experiences firsthand that God is with her.

When she first experiences God's Word inside her, she knows that she carries God, but that God also carries her.



At first the experience of the Divine moving within her is angelic, holy, and inspiring. She feels God's Word live and move and breathe within her – it is breath taking. She feels God's hopes and dreams to share love and presence take solid form within her. There is no denying it – she is blissful.

But soon her flesh body begins to revolt. She is nauseous and tired. What she once enjoyed she now avoids – it makes her gag. And the distaste that she sometimes feels at the burden of divinity within her is echoed in the judging faces of the community around her. Fingers are pointed. Eyebrows are raised. Questions are asked. When she enters a room, conversations are muffled.

How is it that the burden of divinity, the burden of restless transcendence can be so light yet so heavy at the same time? She truly desires nothing more than the fullness of God's presence to saturate her. The answer to her prayers is both her greatest freedom yet the source of scandal and offence. The divinity within her comforts her as much as it confronts and offends others. God's messengers bless her, but the gossip and judgement of the most religious, and the rumours of others degrade her.

To console herself she chooses as spiritual ancestors Tamar, Rahab, Bathsheba, and Ruth. These women leaders are the ancestors of her son Jeshua, the new Moses, who will lead her people into a new freedom. She identifies with these women. These women are also shrouded in a cloud of scandal. These four women are also outsiders, always at the edge of things, excluded, but they are women through whom God works, through whom the divine love story takes shape, women through whom salvation is carried out for God's people. She looks to the strength of these women as heroes and





whispers a prayer to the divinity with her that he would be brave as they were brave, that he would continue the song-line of God's love story carried so faithfully through Ruth, Bathsheba, Tamar, and Rahab.



She writes their names down with other ancestors, dividing their names into 7 groups of 6. Seven is the number of wholeness, fullness, and healing and when fingers are pointed, eyebrows raised and when her own body revolts against her, she reminds herself that the new life in her is a new beginning, a genesis, a creation of God that she has co-created.

Why is it that people feel so threatened by her potential to bring the divine into being? Even a righteous man, her best friend, quietly tries to remove his embarrassment and scandal: her. A just man is one who is well versed in the law. By rights he could have her stoned, this would be "just". This would be true righteousness - applying the letter of the law.

Being just is also about being open to the Infinite, open to Mystery, open to being surprised by God. This just man responds by providing a safe haven for the God bearer and sanctuary for the Word she bears, the fruit of her womb. In this act of trust and openness, in this tender and compassionate and gentle response, the righteous one experiences "God with us."

Whose story is this?

Her story is a universal story. It is her story. It is our story. It is my story. It is your story. For when we are empty, empty of ego, empty of our own self-righteousness, empty of ourselves, empty



of our own plans, then finally we can offer space for the fullness of God. When we are free of our own exhausting ambitions and control, when we are truly virgin, then God's infinity joins hands with our finite reality – heaven and earth join hands – grace and mercy kiss. And when we long of God, really thirst and desire

nothing but all of God: all of God's love, all of God's presence, all of God's life: then our deepest longing connects with God deepest longing and the union of those two desires will birth God into this world. We are pregnant with the presence of God. As we wait on God, as we learn to say yes to God's Word in us, God's presence in us and with us, we will know ourselves as called and gifted to give this Word to the world that God loves.

### **Sentence of the Day**

I bring you good news of great joy for all people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, Christ the Lord. Luke 2.10–11

### **Collect**

Almighty God,  
who gave your only-begotten Son  
to take our nature upon him  
and as at this time to be born of the virgin Mary:  
grant that we being born again  
and made your children by adoption and grace,  
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;  
through the same our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you and the same Spirit,  
ever one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## John 1.1-14



<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into

being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

# Values

What follows are the best words that we are able to offer, to describe what we love best about Alstonville Anglicans. When you come to us and when we go to you, this is what we are thinking and feeling.

## Beloved:

each person comes into the world as an original blessing from God. Thus, each person is a beloved person: significant, wanted and loved.

## Belonging:

anyone who wants to belong already belongs. We want to welcome each other as a gift, saying, "my greatest difference from you is my greatest gift to you". Community matters and is protected. We want to consciously enjoy each other hearing "the Christ in me sees the Christ in you."

## Being:

we are human beings not human doings. Our being present is important. The Spirit of God vibrates within us "like a pure diamond, blazing with the invisible light of heaven."

## Believing:

we are partners with God in living heaven on earth now. We want to be one call among many, offering a provocative but compassionate voice calling for a whole new way of thinking and believing that is loving, liberating and lifegiving.

## Blessing:

as beloved original blessings, we are blessed to be a blessing to others. God is always on God's way through us to creation, of which humans are a part. We believe everyone is called, that everyone has something beautiful to do for God. We want to be the sort of beloved community that creates space for people to express their calling.