



Alstonville Anglicans

Eighteenth Sunday of Pentecost

Sunday 26th September 2021



Liturgy for 26th September

Sentence of the Day

Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can it be seasoned? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another. Mark 9.50.

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 A-738115

Collect

O God, your Son has taught us that those who give a cup of water in his name will not lose their reward:
open our eyes to see those who are in need,
and teach us to set no store by riches and earthly rewards,
so that, in surrendering ourselves
to serve you in your children,
we may labour for the treasure that endures;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings

Mark 9:38–50

³⁸ John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." ³⁹ But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. ⁴⁰ Whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward. ⁴² "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck, and you were thrown into the sea. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell,⁴⁸ where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched. ⁴⁹ "For everyone will be salted with fire.⁵⁰ Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another."

Messages

Pastoral Care

Family Crosses

On Sunday 26 September, the Family Cross is being given to Jenny & John Noble.

Pastoral visits Remember!

If you or anyone you know is ill or in hospital, please let the office or Lynne Watt our Pastoral Care Coordinator know. Also, if you do visit anyone could you email Lynne? wattlg@bigpond.com.

Mothers Union

Meetings are 3rd Monday of each month. Contact joyce@stephanies.com.au.

Prayers

This week we remember in our prayers the Noble Family.

Good Governance

Lockdown

- 4sqm rule applies so 9am services are still in the Ministry Centre
- No singing
- Masks worn indoors
- Ventilation is important – windows and doors open.

Community Engagement

Community-On-the-Verge

The initial preparation work has begun on the Community Garden at St Bartholomew's. The fence has been removed and the ground is being prepared prior to the placement of the above ground garden beds.



Everyone is invited to participate in the first working bee scheduled for Saturday 30th October 2-4pm. (COVID permitting).

If you would like to be involved in the planning and management of the project, or have any ideas to contribute

please contact Alan Larsen on 0409 655 123 or Barbara Fewtrell 0429 385 713



Play Place

Play Place is in recess for the school holidays recommencing Thursday 7th October.

Online ministry

Head to Anglicans Live YouTube channel to catch up with William Black and Doug Bannerman digesting Mark's Gospel and environment activism.

Have you subscribed? Get your friends and family to subscribe at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfenYVJ8_jR4tN58MVoGu8A



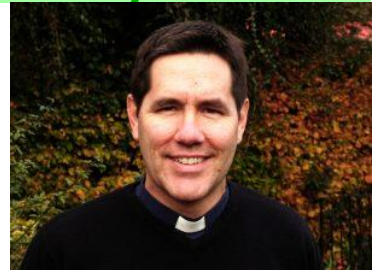
Sew Helpful

Sew Helpful is in recess for the holidays and will meet Monday 4th October 1pm in the Ministry Centre. Please note this day is a public holiday but we are still planning to meet if COVID regulations allow.

Worship and Spirituality

Save the date! 7 November

Bishop Murray will be visiting the parish on the 7th November 2021. The Bishop will preach and celebrate at the 9am service and will lead a confirmation service at 5pm where we will also be receiving young friends in First Communion.



Anam Cara Earth Vigil

The Anam Cara group are organising an Earth Vigil Wednesday 3rd November 8am-8pm

Anam Cara

Wednesday 9am

Thursday 6pm

Messy Life Church?!

Messy Life Church?! is in recess during
the school holidays.

Next Meeting will be Sunday 17th October
2021



Please note there is **NO MESSY CHURCH SUNDAY**
26 September

Leadership



Your parish council met Wednesday via zoom and were skilfully facilitated by the chair Amanda. **Do you notice Bruce's halo?** Remember these lovely people work very hard behind the scenes to make life more beautiful for you. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to any one of them. Matters that you consider of importance to

be included on the agenda can be written and either emailed or addressed to the secretary Des Fitzpatrick. We look forward to hearing from you – negative and positive!

Here is an update on some items that were decided:

1. A **contemplative library room and professional office** has been prepared for hire. This room can be rented by professionals looking for a quiet space to work, counsellors and service providers needing to offer counselling or mediation, and it will be open at set times for a specialised library to be accessed.
2. A **management plan** for the community verge food garden was approved.
3. A pastoral care database was discussed – soon you will all receive an invitation to **chmeetings.com**. This database management system has good security. Chmeetings.com is an easy and professional application to organize members, events, follow-ups, and more. Our church management software is used in managing more than 2000 churches and ministries. It is **GDPR compliant** in all perspectives and we make all efforts to ensure data security by privacy industry best standards & practices.

Sermon notes on Mark 9 for the 19th Sept

I'll be riding shotgun

Time flies by in the yellow and green
Stick around and you'll see what I
mean

There's a mountaintop that I'm
dreaming of

If you need me you know where I'll be
I'll be riding shotgun underneath the
hot sun

Feeling like a someone (someone)...



Shotgun is a George Ezra song that made the 2018 top 40. Riding shotgun used to describe the bodyguard that sat alongside the stagecoach driver. Armed with a coach gun the bodyguard sitting shotgun had to ward off bandits when the stagecoach drove through America's Wild West. Today, shouting "shotgun" or "shotty" means you want the front seat in a car.

Shotgun wars have not died out from America's Wild West. Shotgun wars are alive and regular in any suburban home with multiple children. Bring family members together in one vehicle and the fight for the front seat could result in sulking backseat passengers on a good day. On a bad day, blood and physical injury is the result of family shotgun wars, if, to secure your shotgun status, you accidentally close the door on a rival sibling's fingers.



Who won the shotgun wars in your family? Marius and I were devoted to our first pet, a Scottish terrier Themba. We had a tiny fiat uno with a 1400 engine. Marius would drive. Themba would ride shotgun. Heavily pregnant with twins I would

be squashed into the backseat with a seatbelt barely making it across my body. Before I was pregnant, Themba and I did have a shotgun peace treaty whereby I was allowed to ride shotgun if he could sit on my lap.

The politics of riding shotgun are complex; several factors are considered: seniority, marital status, relationship with the driver, physical conditions, build and in patriarchal contexts – gender. In conservative cultures it would be unheard of for any women to ride shotgun if there was another adult male in the car.

The point is that the fight to sit in the front seat is perhaps a frivolous example of a wider and deeper human tendency: the concern to grab status, privilege, and power for oneself. As the song phrases it, "I'll be riding shotgun" to feel "like a someone".

Riding shotgun in Mark 9.30-37

The Gospel for this the 17th Sunday of Pentecost is Mark 9.30-37. We encounter Jesus overhearing the equivalent of a first century middle eastern shotgun argument among his disciples. The disciples' fight for privilege, position, power, and importance occurs against a backdrop of their inability to understand the work of Jesus and his vision for the kingdom of God. Three times Jesus will predict his



suffering and death; three times the disciples will fail to understand. Three times Jesus will use their lack of understanding as the basis for an essential teaching about what the kingdom of God is really like.

If Mark's Gospel were a Netflix binge series, Mark 9.30-37 is about episode 5 of season 2. "Season 2" of Mark's Gospel would begin in Mark 8.22 and end at Mark 10.52. Both episodes describe the healing of blind people. In 8.22, Jesus is outside Bethsaida. He takes a blind man aside and must heal him twice before he can see clearly. In 10.52, Jesus heals Bartimaeus; the man born blind. The blind men are symbols of the disciples' (and our) inability to see Jesus clearly. Like the blind man in 8.22, the disciples will gradually see the different perspective that Jesus offers.

In response to the disciples' argument for power, prestige and position, Jesus takes a child as a living symbol of the politics of the kingdom of God; the least, the last and the lost. Some interpretations suggest that the symbol of a child is to nudge us into childlike faith and trust. I disagree. The symbol of the child in the context of Mark is the ultimate symbol of the least, the last and the lost, one with no status, no agency, and no influence. The child is a symbol for anyone in society who is weak, vulnerable, with no power, one who is disabled by the powerful. For Jesus, it is those who are the most vulnerable, most ostracised, most powerless who are greatest in the kingdom. Serving the least, the lost and the last is the avenue of salvation.

The take home message

The principle here is simple; design everything (buildings, public spaces, banks, organisations, groups, society, churches)

with the most vulnerable and ignored as the central most important clients and everything and everyone will flourish. I have often said that Jesus is an unrecognised genius. What I am suggesting is that the resources Jesus offers are the greatest keys to authentic success. If people want their businesses to flourish, if politicians want their states to be successful, if architects want their buildings to be brilliant, if we want the best possible society, the principles of Jesus are an invaluable resource, even without faith in Jesus.

Here are some examples of the success that is possible when the least and the last (not the powerful and privileged) are put front and centre:

1. Gravity Payment's CEO Dan Price introduced a minimum wage of \$US70,000 (\$AU95,371) in 2015. He was ridiculed and even sued by his brother for this decision. Many were threatened by Dan Price's move and promised it would never work. He took a pay cut to implement his policy. However, since then revenue tripled. Harvard Business School has researched Gravity and now offers the company as a case study for effective business.

<https://www.newsweek.com/ceo-who-raised-company-minimum-wage-70k-says-revenue-has-tripled-1583610>

2. We want the economy to grow as much as possible. What is the most cost-effective way to grow the economy? Noble prize winner Professor Heckman's research is invaluable in proving that investment in early childhood education, from birth to five years, especially for the poorest of the poor, is the most cost-effective way to grow a country's economy and reduce debt. https://cehd.uchicago.edu/?page_id=71

3. Another example of how placing people who experience exclusion or disability front and centre allows all to flourish (and the bottom line) is from research by the centre for inclusive design. Partnering with Microsoft and Adobe, the research shows that when products and services are designed with the needs of people experiencing poverty, disability or the effects of ageing in mind, four times the number of intended consumers are reached and profits are increased. When education adopted an inclusive process, an additional 228,000 tertiary qualifications were earned in Australia which in turn increased employment and salaries by \$4.5 billion annually.

<https://centreforinclusivedesign.org.au/index.php/the-benefits-of-designing-for-everyone-report/>

The point about these examples is that by implementing Jesus' principle of making the most vulnerable and the least powerful as your primary focus, we all flourish.

As we reflect on making the least, the lost and the last the greatest in our



kingdom's, perhaps we could consider that along with impoverished women and children, Mother Nature herself is extremely vulnerable. Here the message of Jesus is more urgent. Placing the most vulnerable front and centre, in this case, the environment, is urgent for our survival let alone for our flourishing. Yet the government continues to take the

direction of the rich and the powerful. Santos and Chevron have been given millions in taxpayer grants for the illusory and non-existent "carbon capture and storage" systems. Chevron and Santos have failed to meet their targets with no penalty or fines. According to the Guardian, Chevron released 10.2m tonnes of CO2 in 2019-20, making it Australia's eighth-biggest emitter.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jul/20/a-shocking-failure-chevron-criticised-for-missing-carbon-capture-target-at-wa-gas-project>

What is needed is structural change beyond the efforts of individuals, but individuals working together in a collective to effect broader societal change. To return to our opening image, our concern is more than who rides shotgun, it is to consider the comfort of those on the backseat who have less room and no control over the air-conditioning or radio choices or even those without access to a car at all. More than that we want to have as our litmus test for any decision, any policy, the benefit it brings to those who are most vulnerable.

Further reading :

<https://australiainstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/P546-Sunk-costs-WEB.pdf>

<https://australiainstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/P635-Gorgon-tuan-Problem-Web.pdf>



ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers all the baptised!

Rector The Reverend Dr Desiree Snyman
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Associates The Reverend John Kidson 0411 394 213
The Reverend Geoff Vidal 0447 645 456
The Reverend Doug Bannerman 0418 182 450
The Reverend Greg Ezzy 0412 660 742

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The Anglican Op Shop

1 The Avenue, Alstonville **Tel:** 6628 8777

Dates 26th September to 3rd October

26th Sept Sunday 9am Holy Communion
Sunday 10am St Peter and St Paul's (if lockdown is lifted)
NO MESSY CHURCH

27th Sept Monday 10am Anam Cara Praying for You
Parish Office open 9am-12pm
Op Shop open 9am-3pm

28th Sept Tuesday Parish Office closed (Please avoid going to the office)

29th Sept Wednesday 9am Anam Cara
Parish Office open 9am-12pm
Op Shop open 9am-3pm

30th Sept Parish Office open 9am-12pm
Op Shop open 9am-3pm
Thursday Anam Cara 6pm

1st October Friday 10am Holy Communion
Parish Office open 9am-12pm

3rd October Sunday 9am Holy Communion