



Alstonville Anglicans

Pentecost 8 - 26th July 2020

You are welcome to join us this week...

- Sunday@**9am**. **Anglican Service of Worship in the Ministry Centre.**
- Or 10am connect via webpage www.anglicans.live
- Sunday@6pm A conversation approach. Join us in the Ministry Centre and via Zoom. Link available on the website www.anglicans.live
Meeting ID: 934 099 691 Password: 030920
- Anam Cara – a meditation group. Wednesday 9am
St Bartholomew's



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

Matthew 13 is chock full of parables that start with the words, "The kingdom of God is like ..."

In the OT, the phrase "kingdom of God" is, an eschatological concept that first appears in the prophets. Eschatology refers to a future world in which all human hopes will be fulfilled according to God's purposes. Micah (4.1-4) describes it attractively; all peoples shall stream to it, and

In days to come
the mountain of the Lord's
house
shall be established as the
highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised up above
the hills.

Peoples shall stream to it,
and many nations shall come

they shall beat their swords
into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning-
hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword
against nation,
neither shall they learn war
any more;
but they shall all sit under
their own vines and under
their own fig trees,

and no one shall make them
afraid ...

Jesus asks the disciples "Have you understood all this?" and they say "Yes!" I wonder what they mean? Is it "Yes!" to Micah's image, which I presume they knew; or yes to the string of parables laid out for them like a necklace? How do *you* see it? Do you say "Yes!" that readily? What do you respond to?

Jesus' response, his punch line if you will, is telling. "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." The old treasure, the Scribe's treasure, was the "Law and the Prophets," in which they were comprehensively schooled. The Scribes were the guardians as it were, and significantly they were guardians of social cohesion.

Jesus indicates that the old and



the new belong together; the new being that which Jesus has laid before his disciples in his life, teaching, and works. In the language of the old dispensation, the disciples are to be the Scribes of an enlarged treasure that contains the old and the new, strongly indicating that the new Scribes will be agents not just of personal change, but also of social change. "A new heaven and a new earth."

Rev Doug Bannerman

Pentecost 8

9am Liturgy

26th July 2020

Welcome and acknowledgment of country

Sentence of the Day

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 8.38–39

Opening Song

You Servants of God

1. You servants of God,
your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad
his wonderful name;
the name all-victorious
of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious,
and rules over all.
2. Our God rules on high,
almighty to save;
and still he is nigh,
his presence we have;
the great congregation
his triumph shall sing,
ascribing salvation
to Jesus our king.
3. Salvation to God,
who sits on the throne!
let all cry aloud,
and honour the Son:
the praises of Jesus
the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces,
and worship the Lamb.
4. Then let us adore,
and give him his right,
all glory and power,
all wisdom and might,
all honour and blessing,
with angels above,
and thanks never-ceasing,
and infinite love.

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Reading

Matthew 13:44-58

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. ⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.

⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁵¹ "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes."

⁵² And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." ⁵³ When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place. ⁵⁴ He came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue,

so that they were astounded and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power? ⁵⁵ Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?" ⁵⁷ And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor except in their own country and in their own house." ⁵⁸ And he did not do many deeds of power there, because of their unbelief.

Sermon

Intercessory Prayers

In peace we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

For all people in their daily life and work;

**For our families, friends, and neighbours,
and for all those who are alone.**

For this community, our country, and the world;

For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger,
sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
**For those who minister to
the sick, the friendless, and
needy.**

For the peace and unity of the
Church of God;
**For all who proclaim the
gospel, and all who seek the
truth.**

For Murray Harvey our
bishop, and for all bishops and
other ministers;
**For all who serve God in the
Church.**

For our own needs and those of
others.

Silence.

Hear us, Lord.

For your mercy is great.

Final Song

**Glorious things of you are
spoken**

1. Glorious things of you are
spoken,
Zion, city of our God:
he whose word cannot be
broken
formed you for his own abode.
On the Rock of Ages founded,
what can shake your sure
repose?
With salvation's walls
surrounded,
you may smile at all your foes.

2. See, the streams of living
waters,
springing from eternal love,

well supply your sons and
daughters
and all fear of want remove:
who can faint while such a river
ever flows their thirst to assuage
grace, which like the Lord the
giver
never fails from age to age.

3. Blest inhabitants of Zion,
washed in the Redeemer's
blood:
Jesus, whom their souls rely on,
makes them kings and priests to
God.
For his love his people raises
over self to reign as kings,
and as priests, his solemn
praises
each for a thank-offering brings.

4. Saviour, since of Zion's city
I, through grace, a member am,
let the world condemn or pity,
I will glory in your name:
fading is the worldling's
pleasures,
all their boasted pomp and
show;
solid joys and lasting treasures
none but Zion's children know.

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Sermon Notes

“Wheat and weeds”

There’s a lot of terrible things going on in the world. COVID / starving in Yemen / the never-ending USA v China niggles. Sometimes bad things happen in churches. We are frequently saddened by tragic accidents / cancers.

I think there’s a sense in which today’s Gospel reading (this parable Jesus tells of weeds growing in amongst the wheat) is Jesus responding to people wondering about all this trouble.

We are shocked when “normal” people do terrible things, and in the same way, the servants in Jesus parable were shocked when they saw unwelcome weeds in a field where they expected only wheat to be growing.

There’s lots of information in the Newsletter about weed being dandelion. But for me that’s not the key point.

Jesus says the wheat represents the children of the kingdom. Sons and daughters of the kingdom are generally surprised and discouraged when they find themselves tangled up with people and forces they think of as being like weeds: destructive, useless, an impediment to

growth.

In Jesus’ day religious people expected that there would be a Messiah who would come and clean up the field; removing all the weeds once and for all. The people longed for a political liberator who would set up an earthly kingdom. They wanted a Messiah to reign over this earthly kingdom on God’s behalf.

There are followers of Jesus today who are looking for a perfect church. They’re seeking a church without problem people or situations. They leave one denomination and go to another. However, they are inevitably disappointed.

This parable explains that sons and daughters of the kingdom should expect opposition. Opposition will come! But not because of something we have done. There’s opposition because of who we follow.

That’s simply the kind of world we live in. The enemy of the landowner sowed weeds, not





because he hated the wheat, but because he was totally opposed to the landowner.

As followers of Jesus Christ we are automatically caught up in Satan's opposition to God.

The difficulties and misfortunes of "sons and daughters of the kingdom" are a result of the enemy's hostility to the landowner. Satan doesn't care about us; we are simply something he can use to oppose God.

So, what are we to do, and what does Christ expect of us?

If we, as followers of Christ, think of ourselves as being the wheat, the expectation is that we will continue on growing despite adverse conditions. We will bear a fruitful harvest.

The wheat in the parable had many things in its favour despite the weeds. God was the sower. The wheat had been planted and

established by a divine hand. God provided all things needed for good growth. Also, our God is able to supply our every need in Christ Jesus (Phil 4:19); that we may be bearers of the word and increase the harvest.

Our Creator's expectation is that we will bear fruit in spite of the weeds that try to control and stifle us.

We'll bear fruit despite all the troubles; the trials and the difficult people Satan might use to hold us back.

The parable also has a very clear message for all those who really want to serve God.

Our Lord expects his servants to obey him and not to take matters into their own hands regarding the weeds.

This is common sense; trying to separate wheat from weeds would not only damage the wheat, but it would do nothing to stop the enemy who sows the bad seed. The kingdom will come, not because of what you and I do, but because of what God has done, what God is doing, and will do.

Let me get a bit academic now. You know I occasionally get enthusiastic about a word in the original Greek.

The word I think is important

here is the one which we have in English as "Let". Verse 30 says "Let both grow together until the harvest". The original Greek word is one with a wide range of meanings. One major meaning is the one used in our English translation today: "Let", in the sense of "to allow" or "to permit". Another major meaning is "pardon" or "forgive." In the Lord's Prayer this word comes up and we have always known it as we pray, "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."

In a book, "The Parables of the Kingdom" (*Eerdmans, 1985*), chapter 8, pp 105-108, Robert Farrar Capon argues that the original Greek language sense of Jesus' statement "Let both grow together until the harvest" has a sense of forgiveness toward the malicious enemy.

So, it seems that this parable is inviting us to costly discipleship. The very real evil that others do is not to be answered by pulling out the weeds, by attacking and destroying the people responsible. Doing so only adds to the harm. Instead, our response should be forgiveness, and a willingness to trust in the purposes of God.

In this view, God, the landowner practices forgiveness and patience. And by his example

the same approach is recommended to us. Certainly, this patience and forgiveness appears to be how God functions in the world.

Definitely, the Christian Church would do well to apply the principle of patience to those outside the church. The church's greatest sins; the Inquisition, witch hunts, and attacks against Jews, have been committed by the Church in the interest of purifying the world.

When we use violence to spread the Gospel, we do violence to the Gospel.

This message of patience is something that we followers of Christ need to hear as we struggle to do God's will in a world that refuses to listen. A world that resists every effort to bring it closer to God's kingdom. It's something that we need to hear as we struggle to do God's will in a church where so many people just don't "get it." If we



want a saintly church, perhaps the best place to start is by praying that God will grant us saintly patience with those who do church things differently.

But the parable doesn't just tell us that we should expect that the evil one will stir up our churches or our world. This parable isn't just saying "hang on and try to make the best of things".

There's the Good News that while we can expect adversity, we can also expect that in God's good and perfect time, the Lord of the harvest will deal with the weeds and the one who planted them.

Jesus said, "those who cause people to sin and all others who do evil things will be gathered and thrown into the fiery furnace"; a punishment that is complete, consuming, and unending.

God's justice is greater than we

could ever imagine, and God's timing, though a mystery to us, is perfect because God is perfect.

As people whose allegiance is to the landowner, we await the harvest with hopeful hearts. At the harvest all of God's promises in Christ will come to pass.

What a great promise! All the saints of every age and place will be gathered together; as Jesus said "then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father".

I was taught that in a parable there is a single, simple message. So last week, we had the message that GOD is an extravagant sower of seed.

This week, the message is "God is in control!". People who have allegiance to the landowner should be confident that there will be a harvest. We are to wait for this harvest with hopeful hearts.

Be confident that God is in control. The Lord of all history will be present when the crop is gathered in.



Housekeeping

Our notices are organized under our mission goals.

Worship

Question and Answer Series

August

Liturgically, the season after Pentecost is a time of growth. The feast of Pentecost is a time when we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit given to all creation. After Pentecost the Holy Spirit (the breath of God's love) assists our growth in faith; a growth that is symbolized in the church with green garments, green decorations and flower arrangements.

One way that we can develop more confidence in our faith is through asking questions. Thus, every August, during the season of growth, members of the church are invited to pose questions.

How shall these questions be 'answered'?

Q & A reflections are not answers to the questions, but rather a structure in which to reflect on the questions asked.

The structure is threefold: **reason, tradition and scripture.**

By **reason** we mean any knowledge we produce through the active use of our minds. Reason also includes the role that reflected experience plays in pondering God and life questions. Self-reflective awareness presumes some knowledge of one's own context, blind spots and assumptions. Wherever possible we hope to use as a deliberate



assumption the perspective from the margins. Jesus offers a preferential option for the poor and thus we practice this virtue as much as possible, aware that we fail before we have begun. Why? Our context as educated westerners, consuming most of the world's resources, means that our wealth prevents us from noticing information that is clear to the outsider or the marginalized.

By **Tradition** we mean post biblical theological resources of the early church from the past to the present. Why use tradition? The conviction is that the Spirit continues to be present and at work in God's community beyond Scripture. Tradition literally means "handed down" and refers to how we treasure insights valued and preserved in previous generations.

By **Scripture** we mean the canon of the Old and New Testament books. We can briefly mention that the word Scripture means different things to communities. The Roman Catholics, Anglicans and

Protestants generally have different "versions" of Scripture. We can also briefly note the influence of differing translations from alternate sources whether the Greek New Testament (NIV, NRSV), the Latin Vulgate, the Septuagint (Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures) and looser more dynamic translations (CEV or Good News Bibles). These few sentences hint at the fraught nature of Scripture as a source



and we haven't yet mentioned the opposing ways in which Scripture is interpreted. Perhaps at this point we pause and state that for our purposes we hope to read the Scripture through the "eyeglasses" of Jesus. Those parts of Scripture that are "in tune" with Christ's vision of God's kingdom come clearly into

focus. Those aspects of Scripture that are against the Spirit of Jesus fade into the background. In summary, we reflect on the questions our community poses through **the tension of reason, tradition and Scripture**, as Anglicans have done since the time of Richard Hooker onwards. As we use **the tripod of reason, tradition and Scripture**, the invitation is offered to receive the reflections presented as further questions to ponder and not as a definitive answer.

Questions are best submitted at anglicans.live or left for the person delivering your bulletin or posted at the church



Sundays @ 6

Given that

1. When we first developed our ministry plan, we had imagined a second minister would be employed
2. We are still coming to terms

of the impact of COVID on church life

3. Numbers are reduced on Sundays @ 6
4. The parish goals include developing ministry to families

I would ask that we pause the Sundays @ 6 service and relook at our situation in the new year.

I have a keen interest in offering a space for people to deepen their faith through a discussion on Scriptures and world issues. However, the parish may be better served if this were on a different day of the week (we could explore this in the new year).

Further, it is necessary that I am proactive in balancing the time and energy I have available against the goals and needs of the parish. I hope to create space to focus more intently on ministry to families.

I realise that many will be disappointed by this news but I ask that we be kind and patient with each as we continue to live into God's vision for our lives in ways that good for us.

Good Governances Parish Finances June 2020

We all know how COVID-19 has impacted us personally, and that many are experiencing job loss and financial constraints, so how is Alstonville Anglicans faring in the current climate?

We are most grateful to all those who have changed their method of offertory to regular electronic banking, and also to those who regularly "post" their offertory. Thank you. Fortunately too, the Diocese secured Jobkeeper for our staff as well as reduced payroll expenses till the end of September, and waived the Diocesan Pledge payments. This means we are able to maintain our ministries, albeit in a different / distanced format. Regrettably, our Mother's Day Fete went by the way, and due to the Op Shop closure, our overall income has been dramatically reduced. However, it is very pleasing to report that the first three days of Op shop operations (6,9,13 July), approximately \$5,000 was received. Great work gals/guys!

We have kept a careful watch on our expenses. However, you will have noted that solar panels were installed on the ministry hall. This was organised late last year. Whilst an initial large expense, it does considerably reduce

ongoing electricity costs, and is important environmentally. You will also have noticed that work has finally commenced on the Op Shop expansion. This has taken several years of planning and will provide a better storage and display of goods and result in increased sales. This work is being paid for from Term Deposits that had been put in place by the faithful stewardship in years gone by. Thank you. Some other expenses have been unexpected, like new computer technology to enable strong, quality on-line transmission of our Sunday services to you and the wider community. Our on-line reach through Facebook, Website, Instagram, Youtube has been most successful and very gratifying. Well done!

So, how are we faring financially?

Total **Income** to 30 June was \$94,311.33, being approx \$85,938.67 below budget forecast for this

period. Offertory received was \$43,975.45, being \$9,000 below budget, but only \$5,000 less for the same time in 2019. Op shop income was \$33,152.50, being \$62,348 below budget, and \$50,000 less for the same time in 2019.

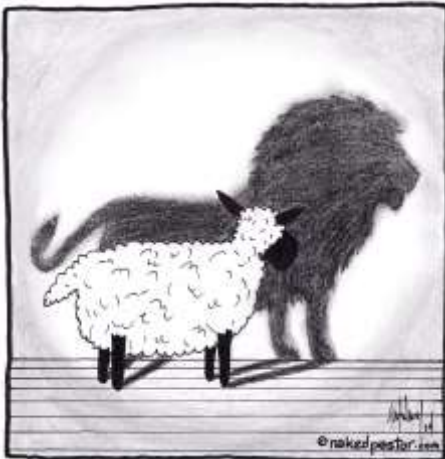
Total **Expenses** to 30 June was \$150,900.19, being approximately \$24,349.81 below budget forecast for this period.

So, whilst we're not flying high, we're not sinking either. We all need to keep a very careful watch on what we spend as to what we receive. It is hoped the regular EFT offertory process will continue as this provides a more steady stream of income. It is also hoped that deferred commitments, like some mission support, will be upheld in coming months. And, we will continue to reduce expenses where practicable to ensure our ongoing financial viability.

If you have questions about our financial situation I would welcome an opportunity to chat with you.

Thank you for your continued prayerful and financial support.

Susan Fitzpatrick, Warden/Treasurer.



Sharing the Good Life

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people,
traditional custodians of the Land.

Our doors are open: LGBTQIA+
welcome here.

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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.

Empowering Leadership

On 26 July 2020

Parish council and other ministry coordinators will be dedicated. We thank them for their willingness to serve. We welcome new Parish Councillor Graham Ireland.

Diana Eagles

Prayers will be offered for her and Rob on Sunday 26th July at 9am followed by a morning tea.

Diana and Rob are departing for Brisbane on the 28th July but we hope to have them back in Alstonville again.



ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers	all the baptised!	
Rector	The Reverend Dr Desiree Snyman 04 02 764 969 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
Parish Office:	The Ministry Centre, 8 The Avenue, Alstonville	
Telephone:	6628 0231	
Postal:	PO Box 451, Alstonville NSW 2477	
e-mail:	office@anglicans.live	
website:	anglicans.live	

The Anglican Op Shop 1 The Avenue, Alstonville **Tel:** 6628 8777