



Alstonville Anglicans

Sunday 26th March 2023

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

Bank account: BSB 705 077 / Acc:00032931

Dates 26th March to 2nd April

26 th Mar		Sunday
	9am	Holy Communion
	5.30pm	Passover Meal / Messy Church
27 th Mar		Monday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	10am	Anam Cara
28 th Mar		Tuesday
		Parish Office Closed
29 th Mar		Wednesday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am	Anam Cara
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
30 th Mar		Thursday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	9.30am	Play Place
	6pm	Anam Cara
31 st Mar		Friday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	10am	Holy Communion
1 st April		Saturday
2 nd April		Sunday
	9am	Holy Communion Palm Sunday
	10.30am	Justice for Refugees Peace Walk

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. http://www.welcomeBooklet_v3.pdf

Lenten Life Groups



Lenten study groups are now running.
Contact Greg Ezzy: 0412 660 742.

Family Cross

Lyn & John Watt. Please remember them in your prayers.

Clair Benstead Funeral

The funeral for Clair Benstead will take place at 10.30am on Monday 27th March. The service will be live streamed. Please click on the following link.

<https://streaming.naoca.com.au/e/714541c9-e2fd-4a50-bda1-5411d2a86ce6?pin=1949>

Birthday Thanks

Leone Frogley would like to thank everyone for their warm and heartfelt birthday wishes and for the beautiful cake. She felt very loved.

Plants for the Fete

Our 2023 Fete is coming up in May. Could you please start potting up suitable plants labelled with a name, description and a flower colour if applicable.

Are you interested in helping refugee families to settle in our community?

Ballina Region for Refugees has recently settled two refugee families in our region through a new government program. The key to success is to give the refugee family local support for the first year through a Community Support Group (CSG). The Group will help with opening a bank account, enrolling in school, applying for jobs/training, getting a driver's license, learning English, how to negotiate shops and local services etc. Ballina Region for Refugees provides full training and funding.

Ballina and Alstonville Parishes would love to create a joint Community Support Group. We need at least 5 people, hopefully more, to form the Group. Are you interested in being part of this? Would you like to know more? Contact Rev Cathy Ridd on 0427 836 988 or revridd@gmail.com

Confidential Prayer Program for Year 12 EAC students.

For some years the Parish of Ballina has run a confidential prayer programme for year 12 EAC students. We would love to include the Parish of Alstonville in this ministry.

Each person on the prayer team receives a name of one of the Year 12 EAC students to pray for through the year. There is no contact at all between the person praying and the student, although the students do know they are being prayed for. From time to time, members of the team have the opportunity to write a letter if they wish, otherwise the letter is written by myself.

It is not an arduous ministry and I find it a real privilege to be part of the Year 12 students journey each year.

Any interested people can contact Pat Kerr at pat.kerr.01@gmail.com or via Ballina Parish office 6686 2094.
Pat Kerr

Safe Ministry and Faithfulness in Service Training

Thanks to all those who quickly responded to your letters. As a Result, we will be having the following workshops.

1. Faithfulness in Service – Saturday 1st April 9am -12pm
For anyone who missed the previous workshop.
This training is required for all volunteers across all our church ministries. The approval runs for 3 years.
2. Safe Church Awareness Renewing – Saturday 22nd April
Initial Training – a Saturday in August (date to be advised)

Cards & Cuppa

Next term Emmanuel Anglican College Year 8 students are inviting senior members of the community to the College on a Thursday to play cards and have a cuppa. If you are interested, please RSVP to enquiries@eac.nsw.edu.au or ring 6681 5054.



**EMMANUEL
ANGLICAN
COLLEGE**

Learning ~ Living ~ Leading
Celebrating 25 Years
1998 - 2023

**YEAR 8 WELLBEING
INVITES
OUR COMMUNITY SENIOR CITIZENS
TO**

Cards & Cuppas



Come along to
Emmanuel Anglican College's
Ezzy Centre

to enjoy a round of cards and morning tea
from 11.20am to 12.00noon
on each of the following days;

Thursday 4 May 2023
Thursday 18 May 2023
Thursday 1 June 2023
Thursday 15 June 2023
Thursday 29 June 2023

Please RSVP to enquiries@eac.nsw.edu.au
or phone 02 6681 5054



Community Engagement



How many psychiatrists does it take to change a light bulb?

One.... but the light bulb has to want to change.

Justice for Refugees

*Alstonville!
Stand up for justice!
Welcome refugees!*

Join us for a peace walk from the Alstonville Anglican Church at 10.30 am.

11am Public Assembly includes guests speakers, musicians and prayers from different faith traditions.

**Walk with us
2 April 2023**

WALK FROM
ALSTONVILLE ANGLICANS
6 THE AVENUE AT 10.30AM

11AM AT
FREEBORN PARK
CNR MAIN AND DALEY
ALSTONVILLE

anglicans.live



Easter Giveaway

Good Friday 10am
Easter Sunday 6am
& 9am

anglicans.live





Join us for Easter

Here is your itinerary for your

personal,

authentic

and timeless

Easter Experience

with Alstonville Anglicans

from 6 April – 9 April

6-8 the Avenue Alstonville.

anglicans.live



The Easter Experience begins with

Maundy Thursday 6pm 6 April

We gather at **6pm** on **6 April** for a meditative Eucharist. There are many symbols to guide our worship through Maundy Thursday

- including the commandment to love,
- love in action through the act of foot-washing,
- and the Institution of the Eucharist, a feast of bread and wine where we remember Jesus is in us and with us.



Maundy Thursday All-night Vigil from 7pm Thursday 6 April to 8am Friday 7 April

The all-night vigil is in the **Church Sanctuary** and begins on the evening of Maundy Thursday 7pm and continues through the night until Friday morning 8am. The vigil is an

act of **silent prayer** when we are symbolically with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, near the mount of Olives. Jesus said to his disciples "Watch and Pray." So, we watch. And pray. In silence. With Jesus.

For some, swimming in silence is easy. Others need some guidance – this is okay. The silence is supported by meditative music, a visual display and some cue cards to help you step into silent prayer.

All members of the community are invited to sign-up for an hour between 7pm Thursday 6 April and 8am Friday 7 April to be with Jesus in the silence of the night.

As a gift of prayer, participants are invited to receive a stone to hold during silent meditation and before leaving place the stone near the Altar as a symbol of self-offering. At the end of their hour each participant is invited to light a candle before leaving.

What to do?

- Sign up for an hour of silent meditation on Maundy Thursday. (Sign-up sheet is on the church door and our website).
- On arriving at the Church, sign-in and sanitise.
- Choose a pebble to pray with.
- Enjoy the silence with others for an hour (or more).
- When you are ready to leave, place the stone near the altar, light a candle in the baptismal font and depart in peace.

FAQ

Why do we observe the all-night vigil on Maundy Thursday?

In the Scriptures Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane before he died the next day. He asked for help saying to his disciples "Watch and pray with me." We symbolically spend time with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane through silent prayer.

Where is the all-night vigil held?

In the church sanctuary, enter through the front door.

What do I wear?

Wear something warm if necessary. Come as ...you. Shoes optional. Slippers normal.

Can I come if I didn't sign up?

We need a minimum of two people for each hour. You are welcome so please feel free to come.

Am I allowed to talk?

This is a moment in your life where you are given freedom not to talk. Give yourself and others the freedom and gift of silence and notice what happens in you.

Can I bring my dog?

We have had a new carpet placed in the church and ideally, we prefer not to have pets shedding hair etc. However, we are aware that late at night people, especially those who live alone, may feel safer with their dog and this may help them come to church to enjoy the silence. If you feel it

necessary to bring a dog for your personal safety, please take full responsibility for your pet not disturbing the silence of others. There is a carpet sweeper in the vestry for you to clean up any hair your four-legged child may have left behind.

Can I bring a friend or a partner?

The more the merrier, guide them in what is expected by offering them this information.

The all-night vigil ends with

Morning Prayer at 8am on Good Friday 7 April.



The Good Friday Service is at 10am on 7 April

On Friday the 7 April at 10am we meet for worship. The Good Friday service is a solemn occasion where we gather with Mary, the Mother of God, Mary of Magdala and some of Jesus' friends to be with Jesus at the Cross, the place of his death.



Easter Dawn Service on 9 April 6am

The climax of our easter journey is the dawn service held on the 9 April 6am in the Church.

- At **5.30am gather outside the church door** for the lighting of the Easter Fire.
- At 6am the Fire is blessed, and the Paschal Candle is lit.
- We walk into the church prayerfully, led by the Paschal Candle.

The Paschal Candle symbolises our faith in the Resurrection of Christ. Through chant, we remember how the presence of God, sometimes called Shekinah, has been our faith ancestors and will always be with us. The Paschal Candle is decorated with bees, butterflies and other symbols of the risen life. The candle is signed with the Alpha and Omega, Greek letters that remind us that Christ is the beginning and end of time and that all time belongs to Christ.

The Dawn service includes the renewal of our baptismal promises and we are sprinkled with water to remember the grace of our baptism. The service concludes with

Easter Service (including families) 9am 9 April

The Easter Service at 9am and includes the first Eucharist with the new Paschal Candle. Children are included in the worship of this service. The Scriptures, sermon and prayers will sustain us in our resurrected faith.

To summarise:

- 6 April Maundy Thursday Service 6pm
- 6 April All-night vigil 7pm – 8am 15 April
- 7 April Good Friday Morning Prayer 8am
- 7 April Good Friday Service 10am
- 9 April Easter Dawn Service 6am (arrive at 5.30am and gather around the Easter fire)
- 9 April Easter Eucharist 9am



Sermon Notes 26th March 2023

Wake-up! Grow-up!

A man knocks on his son's door: "Jaime wake up" he says.

Jaime answers: "I don't want to get up!"

The father answers: "you have to get up and go to school!"

Jaime says: "I don't want to go to school."

"Why not?" asks the father.

Jaime says, "I'll give you 3 reasons why I won't go to school.

1. It's dull.
2. The kids tease me.
3. The teachers pick on me."

The father says "Wake-up! Grow-up! I am going to give you three reasons why you must go to school.

1. It's your duty.
2. You are 45 years old.
3. You are the headmaster."



The art of prayer, spirituality and authentic religion is waking up. We are invited to wake up to reality. In Ephesians the writer says, "Sleepers awake!" Some describe the journey of spiritual growth as "waking up!" I see in the text for today a map that landscapes our soul's journey to spiritual maturity

that we may use as a guide to growing-up in God. May it inspire us to dive deeper into God.

The scriptures says that as Jesus walked along, they came across a man blind from birth. The disciples ask: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents? Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents."

This is a religious question and Jesus wants them to wake up from religion!

The disciples are operating according to the equation that if there is suffering there must be sin.

Jesus breaks this equation.

Jesus breaks that religious belief.

The equation of suffering = sin only survives if God is the Great and Angry Judge in the Great Somewhere in The Great Out There. Growing up spiritually means learning to see God differently and experience God within.

One task is to explore different images of God.

The image of God as almighty father is used only 12 times in Scripture, yet it remains a dominant image in church liturgy. Why? Why is it that people are so offended at other images for God? All it is, is an image. Perhaps we can gently suggest that sometimes we are guilty of the sin of idolatry: that we worship the image of God and not God. The image may point the way to God – we need to look at the way it is pointing and not

the image doing the pointing. The journey to spiritual maturity requires using more and more images for God until we use no images – the way of illuminated darkness described by the unknown English mystic in the Cloud of unknowing who says that between me, and God is this cloud of unknowing that only love can pierce.

The Scriptures say that: "When he (Jesus) had said this (broken free from religious equations), he spat on the ground and made mud with saliva and spread the mud over the man's eyes." Jesus is redoing Genesis; this is about being recreated. In Genesis 2 we read that God a pottery maker takes some mud and fashions humankind out of the mud. God then breathes into the mud creature, and it begins to live. Mud in the Hebrew language is *adamah*. And from the mud, the *adamah*, God creates *adams*, mud creatures, humans. We are all *adams*, mud creatures. God then breathes into us God's breath. We are mud clods, mud creatures, *adams*. But we have also been breathed into by the God of the Universe. We are thus sacred, we are divine. We are sacred mud clods. We get it so right. We get it so wrong. The getting it right is the divine breath within us breathing out. The getting it wrong is mud clod in us stumbling in darkness.

The anointing with mud also recalls 1 Samuel 16 where the prophet anoints David King and Psalm 23 (God anoints my head with oil). The man born blind is anointing as a king in the new creation. This is the journey of all of us, when we are Christs, when we are anointed with the mud of the lamb, we are anointed kings and queens of the new creation."

The Scriptures then say: "Go and wash in the pools of Sent. Then he went and washed and came back and he could see." What could he see, what could we see? Perhaps he could see his unity with God. Later in John's Gospel we will hear Jesus explains: "I and the Father are one. I am in God. God is in me. I am in you, and you are in me."

The boundaries between you and God are an illusion. They do not exist. That is what the blind man sees for the first time: that the divisions between him and God, within himself and between other people are an illusion. And then he says I am (the man). God says "I am" at the burning bush. Jesus also says "I am" at his arrest in John 18. Your *I am* and the *I AM* of God and the *I am* of other people coincide. I AM is a literary feature of John's Gospel, it implies being. In John 18 when Peter is asked if he is one of Jesus' followers, he denies Jesus saying, "I am not the man". In orders Peter's non-being is contrasted with the being of the man born blind who says "I am the man." The baptism, being able to see, knowing that your *I am* coincides with God's *I am*: that is **ultimate union, or "oneing" to use Julian of Norwich's term**. We are not saying that you are God. It is just that unity with God is so real and so strong that you

don't know where your *you* begins and where God ends. It is about becoming naked before the naked God, stripped away from our attachment to the ego. Catherine of Genoa, a famous mystic, went through the streets saying: "My deepest me is God!" Paul says it is no longer I that live but Christ who lives in me. It is total and utter unity with God – this is the adventure of spiritual maturity.

In v21 the parents of the blind man say "he is of age". This is the coming of age for each of us. Like Jesus, we are so filled with the presence of God that we become a source for that presence for other people. I love that the blind man washed in Sent. That is the message: that having been baptized in unity with God, we are of age, we are Sent as God-soaked men and women to drench the world with God's healing presence. **We no longer say prayers. We have become prayer.** We call Christ the anointed one. If we allow the journey from darkness to sight, from immaturity to full maturity to take place, we become *little Christs* – anointed ones so filled with the presence of God that we become a source of that presence for others.

Sentence of the Day

'I am the resurrection and the life,' says the Lord; 'whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.' John 11.25–26

Collect

Gracious God,
out of your love and mercy
you breathed into dust the breath of life,
creating us to serve you and one another:
call forth our penitence and acts of love,
and strengthen us to face our mortality,
so that we may look with confidence for your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

John 11.1-45