



Alstonville
Anglicans

Sunday 26th November 2023

Welcome



**Our entry in the Quota Creative Christmas Tree Event!
Great work everyone!**

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

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26th November – 3rd December

| | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 26 th November | 9am | Sunday Holy Communion |
| 27 th November | 9am-12pm 9am-3pm 10am 10am | Monday Parish Office Op Shop Anam Cara Deadline for bulletin items |
| 28 th November | 9am-12pm 11am | Tuesday Parish Office Closed Barry Campey Funeral |
| 29 th November | 9am-12pm 9am 9am-3pm | Wednesday Parish Office Open Anam Cara Op Shop |
| 30 th November | 9am-12pm 9am-3pm 9.30am 6pm | Thursday Parish Office Open Op Shop Play Place Anam Cara |
| 1 st December | 9am-12pm 10am 5.30pm | Friday Parish Office Open Holy Communion Play Place Christmas Party |
| 2 nd December | | Saturday |
| 3 rd December | 9am 10.30am | Sunday Holy Communion Advent Life Group |

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](#)

Funeral

The funeral of Barry Campey will take place on Tuesday 28th November at 11am.

Spirit Ability

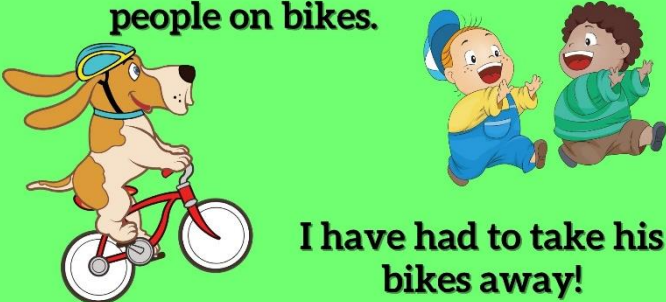
Christmas celebration Monday 4th December 5-8pm.



Spirit Ability
Providing Spiritual and emotional support to Christians living with a disability, their carers, families and supporters.
Monday 4th December 5-8pm
Christmas celebration!
Alstonville Anglican Hall
6-8 The Avenue, Alstonville 0428 404 783

To Make you Smile

My dog has been chasing people on bikes.



I have had to take his bikes away!

Advent Life Groups

These will be offered on the first 3 Sundays of Advent 3rd, 10th and 17th December 10.30-11.30am in the church and online.

30th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women in the Diocese of Grafton

Saturday 2nd December 10am at Christ Church Cathedral Grafton.

Everybody welcome. RSVP via the link below.

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/748834352707?aff=oddtcreator>

Acknowledgement of Associate Clergy, LLM's and Lyn Stuckey

On Friday 1st and Sunday 3rd of December the Associate Clergy and LLM's will be given their renewed licences. We will also acknowledge Lyn Stuckey's service as head Sacristant. Lyn will be cutting back on her sacristant duties.

Blessing of the Ballina Labyrinth

Saturday 9 December at 9.30 am, St Mary's Ballina

You're invited to the community blessing of the labyrinth at St Mary's Anglican Church, Ballina. Walk the labyrinth, and be part of the blessing with water and bubbles.

Music by the Threshold Choir

Refreshments available from the Coffee Cart

Bring a hat/umbrella/sunscreen, and a picnic rug or chair to sit on. Bring your kids and grandkids too!

The Israel / Palestine Conflict.

The link below offers a perspective on this conflict from Reverend Gregory Jenks.

<https://gregoryjenks.com/publications/one-land-two-peoples/>

Sermon Notes Sunday 19th November

Desiree Snyman

Why does Jesus speak in parables? Is it not easier to state simply what he wants? The kingdom of God is an integral, holistic transformation of people and society. Entering a parable, moving around within the parable, creates the opportunity for a transformation of consciousness, and the world evolves differently. Mere information is not enough to facilitate a total change on personal and political levels.

The parable of the three slaves is best understood as the second aspect of a three-chapter story. In the preceding verses, the parable of the **ten**



bridesmaids asks us to be wide awake for the surprising work of God. The parable of the **3 slaves** is the middle chapter and is followed by the parable of **the sheep and the goats**. In Biblical interpretation, the central aspect of a series is usually the hinge, the middle "chapter" of Matthew 25 is the key to understanding the whole. The first "chapter" prepares the reader for the

second "chapter" while the third "chapter" vindicates the actions of the second "chapter". In the light of this argument, the message of the first "chapter" is to be awake for a new insight which comes in chapter two.

Let us step inside the parable, look around, and notice what Jesus wants us to see.

The Nobleman

The nobleman is not the God figure but an absentee lord who bleeds the land dry even in his absence. Greed is such a drive for him that even in his absence he expects his assets to yield a return. This interpretation is offered in the light of sociological background. Only the wealthy could "travel abroad." The nobleman's wealth was because of injustice. Exorbitant tax required that landowners take out loans with their farms as surety. As they defaulted on their loans, the subsequent land grab by nobleman joining field upon field increased their prosperity at the expense of the poor. The synoptic Gospels refer to those who join field to field leaving many vulnerable, poor and in debt. In Matthew 24 Jesus offers a similar critique against the temple wealth. The initial hearers of this parable would have resented the nobleman who goes away for a long time, he represents the cause of their economic suffering. This is made clear in Luke's telling of the Parable which is a direct reference to King Herod: In Luke 19.11 – 27 the image of the noble man is Herod:

So (Jesus) said, 'A nobleman went to a distant country to get royal power for himself and then return. He summoned ten of his slaves and gave them ten pounds, and said to them, "Do business with these until I come back." But the citizens of his country hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, "We do not want this man to rule over us. When he returned, having received royal power, he ordered these slaves, to whom he had given the money, to be summoned so that he might find out what they had gained by

trading. On his return the first two slaves are welcomed into the oppressive paradigm of the nobleman hence he congratulates them.

(As an aside, after the death of Herod the Great in about 4 BCE, the two sons of Herod, Herod Archaelus and Herod Antipas, left Palestine for Rome to have their claim to the throne validated. When Jesus says "a nobleman went to a distant country to get royal power" he is probably alluding to the Herods).

The first two slaves

On his return the first two slaves are welcomed into the oppressive paradigm of the nobleman hence he congratulates them. In order to "feather their own nest" the first two slaves are prepared to copy the actions of the nobleman to secure their comfort at the expense of the poor.

The third slave

The third slave speaks truth to power and criticises the harsh man who reaps where he does not sow. The nobleman agrees with this interpretation and throws him out into outer darkness. What is the outer darkness? The outer darkness is where the outcast, the excluded ones, the suffering ones, the lonely ones live. The outer darkness represents the Gospel ideal of solidarity with the oppressed. The outer darkness is to be with those who suffer, who are hungry, naked and in prison. In the words of the beatitudes, the outer darkness is where the blessed ones live: blessed are the poor, blessed are those who mourn and blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake. To be in outer darkness is to stand outside the oppressive paradigm. This opinion is confirmed by the third "chapter" of the parable, the parable of the goats and sheep. Those who are part of God's kingdom, the sheep, are those who stood in solidarity with the oppressed by feeding the hungry, visiting those in prison and clothing the naked.

The parable of the talents in action today

The parable of the talents is a warning to truth tellers and whistle blowers that the odds are stacked against them. If they choose to buck the system, the odds are not in their favour. This month legislation protecting whistle blowers is being reviewed. Truth tellers and whistle blowers stand to lose everything if they challenge toxic culture or expose corruption: their income, the jobs, the mental health, their physical health and

sometimes even their relationships. The parable is a stark warning of the cost of discipleship if one is asked to speak truth to power. As the parable warns, "even what they have will be taken away from them."

Examples of this parable in the world today are many. For example, the first two slaves are like exploitive financial services who "reap where they do not sow" and take advantage of the poor with excessive bank charges and rates. The average Australian is facing cost of living pressures while banks are earning obscene profits. While profit is necessary for business, excessive profit is exploitive. One example of the third slave who chooses the outer darkness of solidarity with the oppressed is depicted in a Swedish cartoon regarding King Christian X of Denmark in dialogue with his prime minister who asks: "'What are we going to do, Your Majesty, if Scavenius makes all the Jews wear yellow stars?" (Erik Scavenius was the Danish foreign minister who became prime minister at the insistence of the Germans after the Danish government resigned in 1943.) The king responds by asserting, "We'll all have to wear yellow stars." (<https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/a-star-is-borne/>).

The first two slaves are rewarded and welcomed by the master into his "joy," buying into his acquisitive agenda (25:21, 23). In contrast the whistle blower, the third slave is vindicated later in Matthew 25 as he is invited into the kingdom: "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (25:34). This is so much better than entering "the joy" of the master in the previous parable. We are faced with this choice: do we want the "joy of the master" or "kingdom of God prepared for you before the foundation of the world."

Sentence of the Day

O shout to the Lord in triumph all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness and come before his face with songs of joy. Psalm 100.1

Collect

God of power and love,
who raised your Son Jesus from death to life,
resplendent in glory to rule over all creation:
free the world to rejoice in his peace,
to glory in his justice, and to live in his love.

Unite the human race in Jesus Christ your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Matthew 25:31-46

³¹ 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" ⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." ⁴¹ Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'