



Alstonville
Anglicans

Second Sunday in Lent

28 February 2021

Welcome



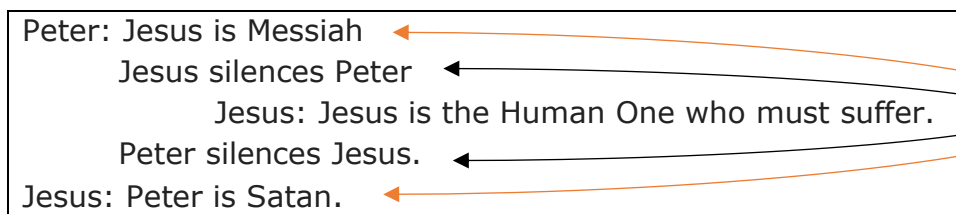
Sharing the Good Life

We acknowledge the Bundjalung people,
Traditional custodians of the Land.
Our doors are open: LGBTQIA+ welcome here.
Streaming licence: One License

Thought for the week.

Mark 8.31

Of all the gospels, Mark's is the most radical, and the most demanding, it's a manual for revolution. In Mark 8 we are now forced to choose sides, we are either for Jesus or a sell-out. We cannot be fence sitters with splinters in our buttocks. Notice the pattern in the reading as ABCBA, kind of like a ham in a sandwich.



Jesus says who do you say that I am? Peter says you are the Messiah. Jesus swears him to silence. Jesus then says that he is the Son of Man, the supremely human one, and that for his vision of humanity shaped by love he will suffer and die. The religious people will not respond to the love Jesus has unveiled but will rather be disgusted at it. Jesus's inclusive welcome is a threat to their position, prestige, and power. This is the opposite of what everyone expects, so Peter takes Jesus aside and rebukes him. Jesus then rebukes Peter. Verse 33: "You are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." The centre of the conflict is not outside of us, it is within, it is about the strength of our choice and commitment. Will we go the way of Jesus or will we sell out?

Liturgy for 28th February

Sentence of the Day

If you want to become a disciple of Jesus, deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow him. Mark 8.34

Collect

God of all times and places,
in Jesus Christ, who was lifted up on the cross,
you opened for us the path to eternal life:
grant that we, being born again of water and the Spirit, may
joyfully serve you in newness of life
and faithfully walk in your holy ways;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Readings

Mark 8:31–38

³¹ Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." ³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶

For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Messages

Worship and Spirituality portfolio



Lenten Study – Way of Love

Rev Desiree will be facilitating two groups Wednesdays 11am-12.30pm, Thursdays 4pm-5.30pm commencing 24th & 25th February. Please add your name to the list provided. The Way of Love study guide is also available for those wishing to form a Lenten study group. Guides available parish office.



Messy Church

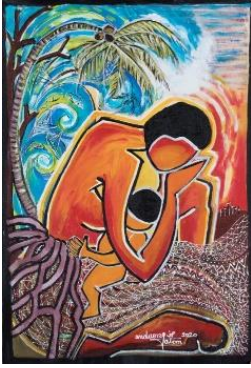
Blessing of the Bags

Sunday 28th February, 4pm
A blessing of school bags and all school endeavours for 2021.
RSVP: anglicans.live/contact



SRE – Scripture in Schools

Prayers are asked as this ministry begins in our local schools. If you are interested in teaching scripture in school please contact Merlene Hellyar: 0428 116 744



World Day of Prayer

Friday 5th March 10am in the Ministry Centre. This year we are hosting the World Day of Prayer. The country is Vanuatu and the theme is "**Build on a Strong Foundation.**" The guest speaker is Mike Wolfe.



Sew Helpful

Sew Helpful will now be meeting on the 2nd and 4th Mondays only.
Contact Carol: 0427326832

Empowering Leadership

2021 Parish Council

Rector's Warden: Bruce Sharp

Warden: Jenny Noble

Parish Councillors:

Phil Crandon, Des Fitzpatrick, Margaret Brown, Charlie Handley, Graham Ireland, Robyn Hannah, Carol Vidal
Amanda Middleton

Loving God, thank you for being our shield and strength.

You are a God of compassion and faithfulness. Please protect, nourish and sustain our church leaders, the parish council, the ministry coordinators and the layministers

through the work of your Holy Spirit. May they find rest and encouragement in your loving care. In Jesus' holy name. Amen.

Good Governance

COVID 19 & Church Services

With the resurgence of COVID 19 in Sydney and Victoria, NSW Health has some new regulations for church services.

- 1. Masks:** - these are recommended for all members of the congregation. At the present time members of the congregation are forbidden to sing. In our churches, masks will be made available at the door, so people have an option. (stocks are in the COVID box)
- 2. Food:** - Morning tea is still allowed as long as social distancing is observed. At St Bartholomew's morning tea will be served outside. (reduces the risk by 95%). Milk and sugar will be on the outside tables to help with social distancing at the counter.
- 3. Numbers:** - These cannot be increased so St Bartholomew's is in the hall and Tregeagle is outside.
- 4. Cleaning:** - Chairs need to be wiped over with detergent solution and dried after usage.

Church services have been inspected to ensure compliance. Please remember this is the current law.

Volunteers Needed – Concierge

Members of the congregation are very much needed to provide a hand sanitising and welcoming face to the Op Shop. If you can spare 3 hours a week or fortnight on a Monday, Wednesday or Thursday between 9am and 3pm please call Paul Earner 0416280140.



Op Shop

Our Op Shop is now open Monday, **Wednesday** and Thursday. Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers.



Repurposing Plastic

We have an opportunity to recycle plastic milk bottle tops and bread tags. These items are sorted in our area and sent to Adelaide where they are melted down and repurposed to assist people with disabilities. Items can be left at the collection point at the Op Shop. Contact person is John Noble.

Community



QLD Ballet Gala 5th – 20th March
Charlie Slater will be performing in all performances including a solo.
Speak to Sherry Ann Lowe for more information. 0402492531

Offertory Options

Alstonville Anglicans - Offertory Options

We give thanks to God for all people making offertories to the vision of God's Kingdom here on earth.

Your offertory can be made using the following options:

- Direct transfer to our bank account BSB 705 077 /
Acc:00032931
- Parish Provider - Direct debit through Anglican Funds -
Forms available from the office
- Cheque to Alstonville Anglicans (PO Box 451, Alstonville
2477 or Offertory Plate)
- Offertory envelopes
- Cash

Thank you for your support.

Sermon Notes

Rest

Sunday 21st February

When despair for the world grows in me
And I wake in the night at the least sound
In fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
Rests in his beauty on the water,
and the great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things
Who do not tax their lives with forethought
Of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
Waiting with their light. For a time



I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.¹

Wendell Berry's evocative poem makes resting in "the grace of the world" an enticing prospect. So why is it that I so rarely seek that place of rest. I have plenty of

excuses – busy mind, busy heart, too much to do. An ego trip really, and it is a kind of slavery.

The Israelites in Moses' time escaped the slavery they had endured in Egypt and, a generation later, Sinai appeared in the distance; the Holy Mountain, an "awesome, dread-filled place that signalled divine presence that was in no sense user friendly." ²In Brueggmann's description it "surged and shrieked with divine presence"; upon which dwelt the "hidden, inscrutable savage God" who, "like a fairy tale ogre, threatens all who approach".

Speaking for the God of the Mountain, Moses told them that this mountain was, in fact, the offer of a new identity, a life in covenant with God. That is *all* he said – no detail. Israel, without reservation, and one might say a little too readily, answered as one: "Everything the Lord has spoken we will do." (Exodus 19.8)

Low and behold, this new God turns out to be the one who "outmatched and outmuscled Pharaoh, terminated the brick quota, and ended the hot demanding brickyards" ³of slavery. This new God offers a charter for an alternative existence outside the categories of Pharaoh, a charter for freedom. And strikingly, this new God actually speaks directly to them.

As you no doubt know, the mountain God of freedom speaks at Sinai but ten times, after which God communicates only through Moses. Of the ten utterances, the first group of three concerns *love of God*, love in this



context being a covenant word for honouring treaty commitments. Another group of six concerns parents – killing, adultery, stealing, false witness and lying. The first three, then, concern *love of God* and the latter six concern *love of neighbour*. Sandwiched in between is the sabbath command, which links the first three and the God of *restfulness* with the last six concerning the neighbour who *needs* restfulness.⁴

So, in between these two groups of commands, the great God of freedom places the central provision of a charter for freedom that prevails to this day.

Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God: you shall not do any work – you, your son, or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but *rested* on the seventh day; *therefore* the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it. (Exodus 20.8-11)

Patrick Miller Jr commented that this striking command not only stands at the centre of the decalogue but “dominates the horizon of commands at Sinai.”⁵ It is pivotal to the covenant of freedom. And it *remains* pivotal to our way of life.

Further to this, the end of this exciting meeting at Sinai, culminates in a repetition of the earlier oath of allegiance and obedience.

All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient. (Exodus 24.7)

Israel signs on gladly and without reservation to God's proposition, but this time it is *informed* consent. The commands of YHWH were infinitely kinder than Pharaoh's, and even included a day of rest!

It is also clear that the sabbath command at Sinai (in Exodus 20.8-11) refers to the litany of creation at the beginning of Genesis. (1 – 2.4a) This litany attests that the Creator God is a God of *blessing*, capable of assigning life and well-being to every aspect of creation. Firstly, God blesses sea monsters and winged creatures, bringing order from chaos; secondly God blesses humans as God's regents in maintaining an order of abundance; and thirdly God blesses the seventh day, which God made holy as a day of rest intrinsic to the structure of the created order of fruitfulness.

6

So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it because on it God *rested* from all the work that God had done in creation. (Genesis 2.3)

The day of rest is, I repeat, intrinsic to the structure of the created order of fruitfulness – Brueggemann's words. But we rarely take in the idea that God *rested* on the seventh day. Is it too difficult to imagine that after six days of extraordinary labour, God might have been tired?

We are used to a different God, the God of the catechism,

the God of classical theology, in both of which God never rests; that God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, without whose *constant* activity creation would vanish. But our God *rests*! Walter Brueggemann is pretty blunt about this:

God rests because the world will work, because the tasks of creation have been delegated, and because creation, blessed as it is, knows the will and energy of the creator ... God rests because God engages in self-care ... ⁷

Furthermore, the human creature, in the God-like responsibility of regent, is in the image of God. "It belongs to the image to reflect the sabbath of the creator, and where it is not so reflected, the image is violated and distorted."⁸

The final iteration of the sabbath command in Exodus has a fortissimo coda to the music of creation. Following the Sinai adventure, God addresses Moses about the priesthood and the construction of a tabernacle, a holy place for the indwelling of God. The tabernacle, says God

... is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested *and was refreshed*. (Exodus 31.17)

"And was refreshed."⁹ That tabernacle is both a reminder and a sacrament of a holy reality, as is our church building, as is our sanctuary, as are the wide-open spaces of our beautiful world. They are keys that open the door of the



cathedral of the heart, the personal holy space in which the indwelling God resides, where sabbath rest and refreshment are ours to keep forever, and by which grace the music of creation is preserved.

As Wendell Berry wrote, "I come into the peace of wild things ... I rest in the grace of the world, and am free."

Amen.

Doug Bannerman © 2021



¹¹Wendell Berry *New Collected Poems* (Counterpoint, 2012)

²Op cit Walter Brueggemann p141

³ ibid

⁴ ibid

⁵ See Patrick D Miller Jr "The Human Sabbath: A Study in Deuteronomic Theology," *The Princeton Bulletin* 6, no. 2 (new series 1985) 81-97

⁶ op cit Walter Brueggemann

⁷ ibid

⁸ Walter Brueggemann p148

⁹ It is notable that the Hebrew verb form that translates as "refreshed" occurs only 3 times in the OT, in Exodus 23.12, Exodus 31.17 and 2 Samuel 16.14. This reflexive verb form *niphal* is associated with the noun *nepesh*, which is often rendered as "self" or "soul."

ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers all the baptised!

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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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Calendar 2021

28 th February	Holy Communion 9am
	St Peter & St Paul's Service 10am & AGM
	Messy Church Blessing of the Backpacks 4pm
1 st March	World Compliment Day
	Anam Cara Praying for You 10am
3 rd March	Anam Cara 9am Lent Study 11am-12.30pm
4 th March	Lent Study 4-5.30pm Anam Cara 6pm
5 th March	World Day of Prayer
7 th March	Holy Communion 9am
8 th March	Anam Cara Praying for You 10am
	International Women's Day
10 th March	Anam Cara 9am Lent Study 11am-12.30pm
11 th March	Lent Study 4-5.30pm Anam Cara 6pm
14 th March	Holy Communion 9am
	St Peter & St Paul's Service 10am



Life Transformed: The Way of Love in Lent

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<p>Reflections from "Living the Way of Love" by Mary Bea Sullivan (Church Publishing, 2019). Used with permission.</p>	<p>Feb 17 Bless Notice the pattern of your breathing. Pray for awareness of blessings. Gen. 2:7</p>	<p>18 Worship How does community help or hinder your growing in Christ? John 1:12-13 John 15:5</p>	<p>19 Rule of Life How can you build pauses into the day to reflect on the work of the Spirit?</p>	<p>20 Rest How might you connect with others in the spirit of renewal? 1 Kings 19:11-12</p>	<p>21 1st Sunday of Lent</p>	
<p>22 Worship What is most meaningful to you in worship? BCP, p. 281</p>	<p>23 Pray Go for a walk today and pray with your feet, each step with intention. Isa. 2:3a</p>	<p>24 Way of Love Where do you see the seven practices of the Way of Love in this story? Luke 5:19</p>	<p>25 Bless Who has taught you to live a Jesus-filled life? Who have you taught? 2 Cor. 4:16</p>	<p>26 Go Where can you go and intentionally provide kindness? Matt. 5:4</p>	<p>27 Rest How do you incorporate rest in your life? Jer. 6:16</p>	<p>28 2nd Sunday of Lent</p>
<p>Mar 1 Learn What passage of scripture is important to you Why? Isa. 40:8</p>	<p>3 Go Where are you being encouraged to "show up"? Matt. 23:44-45</p>	<p>4 Pray Take 20 minutes in contemplative prayer today. Matt. 4:18-22</p>	<p>5 Bless Intentionally smile at least ten times today. Phil. 4:4</p>	<p>6 Turn Today, intentionally listen devoutly to another. Mark 4:23</p>	<p>7 3rd Sunday of Lent</p>	
<p>8 Go Where can you seek and serve Christ in someone unlike you? Jer. 30:22, 31:4-5</p>	<p>10 Rest How can you incorporate rest from technology today? Matt. 11:28</p>	<p>11 Learn How is the Jesus who walked this earth beckoning you to meet him? Mark 10:46-52</p>	<p>12 Worship In your prayers today, what new words or thoughts touch you? Phil. 4:6</p>	<p>13 Pray Try praying with Anglican prayer beads. Luke 18:1</p>	<p>14 4th Sunday of Lent</p>	
<p>15 Bless What challenges are you facing today? Job 11:18</p>	<p>17 Rest What can you say "no" to so you can say "yes" to prayer, rest and joy? Lev. 23:3</p>	<p>18 Learn Practice lectio divina with this scripture. Luke 15:17-24</p>	<p>19 Go Create a prayer representing how you seek to serve God and follow Jesus. Matt. 5:15</p>	<p>20 Rule of Life How do others experience the love of Christ through you? Gal. 5:22-23</p>	<p>21 5th Sunday of Lent</p>	
<p>22 Turn What relationships do you need to mend? Isa. 55:8-9</p>	<p>24 Learn Slowly read this passage aloud. How does this speak to the world today? Matt. 4:18-22</p>	<p>25 Worship What seminal moments have informed a need to return to Christ? Ps. 51:10</p>	<p>26 Go Where might God be asking you to take your great love into the world? Isa. 48:6b</p>	<p>27 Pray What are you thankful for? 1 Chron. 29:15</p>	<p>28 Palm Sunday</p>	
<p>29 Pray Listen to the daily office today at missionstclair.com Ps. 55:17</p>	<p>31 Bless When you reflect on financial giving, are your palms open? Matt. 12:43-44</p>	<p>Apr 1 Worship How do you want to prepare people to remember you? 2 Cor. 1:3-4</p>	<p>2 Turn How did you turn back towards God's love when you made a big mistake? Luke 15:18</p>	<p>3 Learn Who might you have a conversation with to learn about God? Ps. 119:105</p>	<p>4 Easter Day</p>	