



# Alstonville Anglicans

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May 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](http://www.anglicans.live)**

**Bank account: BSB 705 077 / Acc:00032931**

## 28<sup>th</sup> May – 4<sup>th</sup> June

28 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Sunday</b>
	9am	Holy Communion
	4pm	Messy Church Bonfire
29 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Monday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	10am	Anam Cara
	10am	Deadline for bulletin items
30 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Tuesday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office <b>Closed.</b>
31 <sup>st</sup> May		<b>Wednesday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am	Anam Cara
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
1 <sup>st</sup> June		<b>Thursday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	9.30am	Play Place
	6pm	Anam Cara
2 <sup>nd</sup> June		<b>Friday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	10am	Holy Communion
3 <sup>rd</sup> June		<b>Saturday</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> June		<b>Sunday</b>
	9am	Holy Communion

**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](#)**

# Join in Messy Church Pentecost fun!



**MESSY CHURCH BONFIRE**

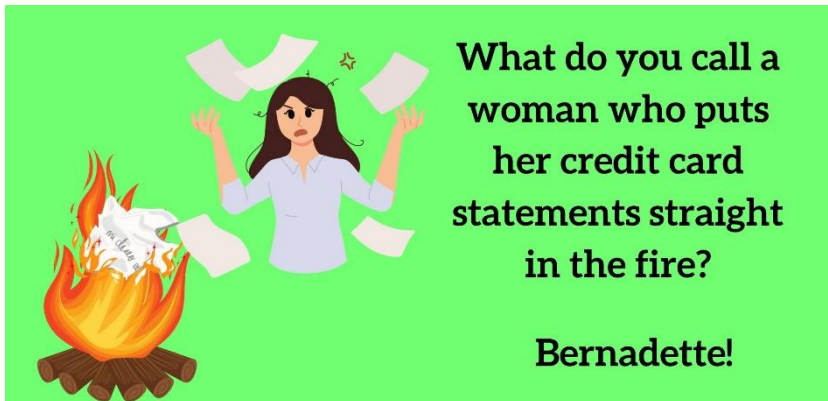
\*Charlie and Jenny's home  
\* Brockley Farm 1385 Bruxner Highway  
Phone: 0427 462 540  
Bring: chairs, mugs, rugs, sturdy shoes, torches ...

**SUNDAY 28TH MAY 2023 4PM**

Alstonville Anglicans [anglicans.live](http://anglicans.live)

The poster features an illustration of a diverse group of people sitting around a campfire at night, with mountains in the background under a starry sky. A red banner at the bottom contains the event details.

Reverend Desiree will be on annual leave from mid-May until mid-June. For any matters requiring a priest, Reverend Geoff will be locum in her place.



**What do you call a woman who puts her credit card statements straight in the fire?**

**Bernadette!**

The illustration shows a woman with a frustrated expression, her hands raised, as papers fly through the air. One paper is being thrown into a large, bright fire burning on a pile of logs. The background is a solid light green.

## **AREA Bunning BBQ Fundraiser**

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June at Bunnings Ballina. Three churches are providing a team of 5 volunteers. Our team needs 5 keen helpers from 1.30-4pm. If you can help to raise urgently needed funds, please contact John Noble on 0414 285 132.



**Alstonville Religious  
Education Association**

## **2023 AREA BREAKFAST**

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June

*Alstonville Uniting Church*

Main St Alstonville 7:30am – 9:30am



Cereal, Hot Food, Tea, Coffee

Hear Bruce Fleming speak about his  
work at Alstonville High School

\$25 per person

All funds raised go to AREA to support  
Bruce's work

## Sermon Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May

### By Geoff Vidal



Carol and I have had a bit of a hectic homecoming from our great trip to Europe. I am so pleased that here in the Parish we have Rev Doug who led us last Sunday and who will do tag team with me over the next few weeks until Desiree returns.

The Friday congregation have heard me talk about noticing different things during our travels in Europe. Not just differences from what we find in Australia, but vast differences between cities such as Turin and Venice and Paris. The cathedrals and churches we visited were all different and of course we found the food was different in different places. We also noticed that people were different in the various places.

The thing I have been reflecting on is that, with the variety of cultures and situations that exist, people in a beautiful Italian cathedral or people under a tin roof in Arnhem Land are all worshipping the same God. In vastly different ways, worshipping people are connecting with same Creator God. Even though there are widely differing ideas of that God, there is connection. I'm sure that if every one of us was to attempt to describe God, we would each have something different to offer.

Despite the differing ideas people have of our Creator God, there is one thing that everyone has in common. That is a sense that, somehow, the way in which we are connecting with God isn't adequate. There are many different ways in which

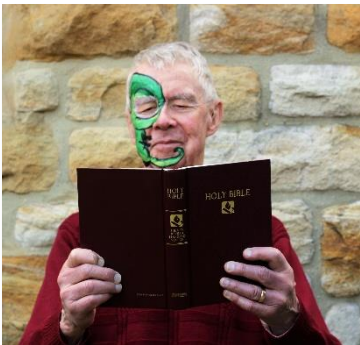
people connect with God, but we all have room to improve that connection.

We need a willingness to understand more. Not so much facts, but ideas. I'm convinced that reading the Bible and pondering what we have read leads to greater understanding. Rereading and thinking; I know that I need to do more. Oswald Saunders (a missionary leader) wrote over 40 Christian books but is best known for saying "the only book you need to study to know what the Bible says is the Bible"

So, I am encouraging Bible reading; to read and think and read again. There **will** be new understandings.

Take every opportunity to think about what Bible is saying. Your new significant understanding might not be what you hear in a sermon or what someone writes in a Christian book or what someone else says in conversation. But I am convinced that with regular Bible reading you are sure to find something new that is really helpful in connecting you with God.

I have known people who have done some study of their Bible and, quite unexpectedly, have discovered a new understanding of a verse that they have known for years. They have told me "it's as if I had just read that verse for the first time."



I suggested to the Friday people that it is really worthwhile to read the Gospel for the next Sunday in advance (when the newsletter comes out). It is helpful to be ready for what is probably coming up in the sermon. Read the Gospel and think and wonder "what do I reckon about that? How does this help me know God?"

Well, the reading today (John 17) is a pretty tough one to do homework on or even to work with in formal studies. This passage would be a real doozy to tackle in a home group. It's known as Jesus High Priestly prayer; probably spoken at the end of the Last Supper or perhaps on the way to Gethsemane.



Scholars believe that the prayer is intended to summarize, in his own words, Jesus' relationship with the Father and the relationship he would like his disciples to keep with him and the Father.

As Jesus begins this prayer, he makes the statement "this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." That seems a straightforward definition. Eternal Life is not something measured in time, but relationship. It is in knowing God that we have complete fulfilment of our being.

But then Jesus says (in v4) "I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do".

It's not easy to understand why Jesus says this while having dinner with his disciples before he was crucified. I spent some time researching this. I found the experts explain it by saying that at this time, even before the crucifixion, the glory of Jesus is already loose in the world. The things that Jesus has previously said and done have glorified God. So, Jesus' desire to bring glory to God has been achieved already.

And (in v11) Jesus, standing in front of his disciples, says "Now I am no longer in the world". How can Jesus be praying this



when he is physically present with his disciples? The explanation must be tied in with an understanding of this “world” that Jesus says he is no longer in, being, not the physical earth, but “worldly things”. Do you remember that in a Baptism, we promise

that we will turn away from sin, the **world** and the devil.

I’m sure there are better ways of explaining this passage than I can give you. There are certainly a number of different ideas about what the Gospel writer is really telling us about Jesus praying. Could it be possible that **all** the different ways of interpreting this passage (and much more of the Bible) are correct? Perhaps the several different interpretations are each correct.

The last two Sunday readings were from John 14 and today are into John 17. We have skipped 16:12 in which Jesus says “I still have much to tell you, but you cannot yet bear to hear it. However, when the Spirit of Truth comes, he will **guide** you into all truth.”

In Europe there are guides everywhere. Guidebooks are helpful but real, live guides have the advantage of being interactive. Guides answer questions and are able to take you to the important things quickly. A guide helps you see new things. What new things has a guide shown you?

One of the Bishops in Brisbane, Bishop Jeremy Greaves, says he thinks that this information that “when the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all truth” suggests that we are always on a journey into truth. The church has always



suggested that a life of faith is a journey. We move from the font at the back of a church building to the Lord's Table at the front. Our liturgy takes us on a journey through the Bible in a 3-year Cycle. As he encourages us to journey on, Thomas Cranmer (the brilliant person who pioneered the Anglican Prayer Book) uses the words "Hear, mark, learn and inwardly digest".

Bishop Jeremy is helpfully pointing out that our Christian journey leads us into truth. To encourage people to move on in the journey, he asks "I wonder how many of you believe all the same things that you did when you were a child? As you did 10 or 15 years ago? Even 5 years ago?" That is nice, polite way of him saying to the people of Brisbane Diocese, "surely you haven't just stayed in the same place with your faith - surely you have travelled along in your Christian life over the years".

Life is a journey from childhood to adulthood and older age and our faith is a journey of growth also. Ideally, our faith journey takes us to stronger connection with God. As with all journeys, there might well be some zig zags, some steep parts and tough patches, and maybe some dead ends. But, if we keep travelling, eventually we'll come closer to God. The reality is that if we stop travelling on this journey, if we stay in the same place, we will not get any closer to God.

I like the expression "dancing". Bruce Fleming spoke of it last week. We dance around all the possible meanings of tough bible passages such as this John



17 reading today. Our dancing with scripture, our dancing with Jesus, with prayer and reflection and with the help of the Holy Spirit, will bring us to know the truth. If we dance long enough, we will find the truth.

It might be that, in the long run, our truth is different to the truth other followers of Jesus have found in other places and other churches. But let's be confident that, when we are open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, whatever truly connects us with God is the truth.

This is something to keep in mind as celebrate Pentecost next Sunday. As we remember Jesus' promise of the presence of the Holy Spirit - the guide to all truth.

### Sentence of the Day

'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me,' says the Lord; 'and let the one who believes in me drink. For out of your heart shall flow rivers of living water.' John 7.3

### Collect

Almighty God,  
at the feast of Pentecost  
you sent your Holy Spirit to the disciples,  
filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel:  
empower us with that same Spirit  
to witness to your redeeming love  
and draw all people to you;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## John 7.37-52



<sup>37</sup> On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, <sup>38</sup> and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water." ' <sup>39</sup> Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified. <sup>40</sup> When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, 'This is really the prophet.' <sup>41</sup> Others said, 'This is the Messiah.' But some asked, 'Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he? <sup>42</sup> Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?' <sup>43</sup> So there was a division in the crowd because of him. <sup>44</sup> Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. <sup>45</sup> Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, 'Why did you not arrest him?' <sup>46</sup> The police answered, 'Never has anyone spoken like this!' <sup>47</sup> Then the Pharisees replied, 'Surely you have not been deceived too, have you? <sup>48</sup> Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? <sup>49</sup> But this crowd, which does not know the law—they are accursed.' <sup>50</sup> Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them, asked, <sup>51</sup> 'Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?' <sup>52</sup> They replied, 'Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee.'



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](mailto:enquiries@eac.nsw.edu.au)  
or phone 02 6681 5054

