



# Alstonville Anglicans

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April 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.

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## April

30 <sup>th</sup> April		<b>Sunday</b>
	9am	Holy Communion
1 <sup>st</sup> May		<b>Monday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	10am	Anam Cara
	10am	Deadline for bulletin items
	1pm	Sew Helpful
	3.30pm	Op Shop Meeting
2 <sup>nd</sup> May		<b>Tuesday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Closed
3 <sup>rd</sup> May		<b>Wednesday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am	Anam Cara
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	3.30pm	Property Committee Meeting
	4pm	Messy Church Meeting
4 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Thursday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	9.30am	Play Place
	6pm	Anam Cara
5 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Friday</b>
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	10am	Holy Communion
6 <sup>th</sup> May		<b>Saturday</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> May		<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](#)



**MOTHER'S DAY FETE – SATURDAY 13 MAY 2023  
(8am to 1.00pm)**

**List of Stalls and Coordinators**

<b>STALL</b>	<b>COORDINATOR</b>
BBQ	Brian Delaney
Beautiful Baskets	Jenny Noble
Cakes & preserves	Robyn Beck
Cards and woodwork	Carol Stone
Craft & knitted knockers	Mary Ireland & Lorna Simpson
Colouring-in competition	Marg Brown
Devonshire tea in Church	Jenny Noble & Carol Vidal
Face painting	Jodie Nunn
Flower arrangements	Gladys Charter
Pancakes and cuppa	Diana Westall & Barb Campey
Plants	Barbara Fewtrell
Produce	Ken Brown
Raffle	Susan Fitzpatrick
Steptoe	Barry Campey
Splat the Rat	Paul Earner

**If you are available to assist with any of the stalls, please contact the coordinator asap.**

**Items needed for Fete Stalls**

**Cakes** – Cakes, Biscuits and Preserves are needed for this stall, the more the better. Ingredients must be listed.

**Produce** – Fruit and vegetables required, anything you can spare.



time. A labyrinth is many things including a type of walking prayer or meditation. As you enter the labyrinth you head towards the centre before unexpectedly being flung to the outer rims. As you follow the path it draws you closer to the centre again before leading you to the edge. Faithfully following the concentric paths leads you ultimately to the centre – a place of womb-like safety and stillness. The centre is the still point of the turning world, where (in the words of TSA Elliot)

“the dance is,  
but neither arrest nor movement.  
And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered.  
Neither movement from nor towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline.  
Except for the point, the still point,  
There would be no dance,  
and there is only the dance.”



The labyrinth is a metaphor for our spiritual lives for none of us have a straight line to God. Like the Labyrinth we too walk towards the centre which is God before being suddenly flung out to the edges.

### **Luke-Acts Labyrinth**

The whole Gospel of Luke is structured like a labyrinth with Jerusalem as its centre. The Gospel edges forward all the time to Jerusalem where the climax of the story happens. Jerusalem is a symbol for our life in God where the marriage between heaven and earth happens in us such that we become the living temple of God’s presence. However, the story moves towards Jerusalem in circles, not a straight line. The story moves towards Jerusalem and then journeys away. This is symbolic of our pathway to God. Who among us has arrived at a deeper faith via a straight path? Our own stories are about two steps forward, three steps back, moving around in circles and then finding God’s path again. The story takes two steps forward towards Jerusalem, one step back, before moving towards Jerusalem again.

### **Where is God in the labyrinth?**

Is the centre, the still point, the place where “most of God” is? Or is it at the entry? In the Gospel where is God? Is it in Jerusalem the centre of the story? In our lives where is God? Is “most of God” contained in the moments when we manage to collapse into the centre or when we are lost in darkness literally walking in circles?

It seems to be in these circles of walking away from the path that God rocks up. For example in today's story, two disciples are leaving Jerusalem. Jerusalem, and their faith and their hopes for the future are behind them. They have literally turned their backs on the spiritual path. They are seven miles away from Jerusalem. It is while they are walking away from Jerusalem, while they are off centre, while in confusion, the Resurrected Christ rocks up. God is everywhere but most present on the road to Emmaus.

### **Where is Emmaus?**

The road to Emmaus is the place we go to if we are tired of it all. Emmaus is where we go when the false optimism of others makes us nauseous and poisons our already darkened mood. Emmaus is the place of low energy, low patience. Frederick Buechner writes that Emmaus is:

*The place we go to in order to escape – a bar, a movie, wherever it is we throw up our hands and say, "Let the whole damned thing go hang. It makes no difference anyway." . . . Emmaus is whatever we do or wherever we go to make ourselves forget that the world holds nothing sacred: that even the wisest and bravest and loveliest decay and die; that even the noblest ideas that men have had – ideas about love and freedom and justice – have always in time been twisted out of shape by selfish men for selfish ends.*

When I hear myself say "I think I need a drink" or when I am in a better place, "I think I need a run" then I know I am on the Emmaus path again. After I have binge-watched the fourth season of the latest Netflix offering, it sometimes occurs to me that maybe I am on my way to Emmaus again. Indeed, I am a slow learner. When my husband arrives home from work with yellow chips and a slab of chocolate I know it's time to pay attention – I have learnt through observation that Emmaus is nearby.

### **Easter hearts and broken hearts**

It is on the road to Emmaus that the Resurrected Christ is present as a friend walking the road of life with us, a spiritual mentor drawing attention to God moments. Although the Emmaus story is a powerful experience of Resurrection, it is only an Easter story in so far as real space is given for darkness, doubt, and the absence of life. Tucked away in the encounter of the Easter Christ is the translation of one unusual Greek word that translates into four English words: "but we had hoped." Four words, yet they are utterly heartbreaking and surely a summary of what it means to gain maturity. But. We. Had. Hoped. But we had hoped – a phrase that is

so devastating because it not only speaks of the grief of loss in the present – it speaks to the emptiness of the future – a hole in future imaginings.

But we had hoped – these words ring true for so many people that we have each walked alongside on the road to Emmaus. But. We. Had. Hoped: that the marriage would be forever...that the sick friend would recover...that the child would come home...that the family member would overcome addiction...But we had hoped.

Life is beautiful but there is also heartbreak and failure. And too often we gloss over this. We are a culture that can't look darkness and brokenness in the eye. Someone shares the news of the death of a loved one, we sympathise and then change topic. Sometimes people even avoid those who have suffered loss; not because they do not care, but because they don't know how to be or what to say – we are at a loss with loss. We find it hard to pause in the spaces of "but. We. Had. Hoped" and rush past with "She'll be right mate!" The message is that there is still fear but the fear does not define you. There is still brokenness, but brokenness only defines you.

To be Easter people of the Resurrection we must be a people that makes space for broken hearts. We must be able to admit our darkness, our hurt and our betrayals. We admit to broken hearts not as a gateway to Resurrection but because its part and parcel of the mystery of being human. We are invited and allowed to admit and to accept disappointment – the cancer that returned – the addiction that was never overcome – the job that didn't materialise – the prayer that was never answered – the longed-for child that was never born ...

The image of Emmaus since early childhood has been burnt into my consciousness as a symbol of what it means to be a friend, a human, a partner, a parent, and church to each other. The walk to Emmaus is this: We walk alongside each other, listening in conversation. As we walk Jesus is present within us and between us and nourishes us with food that is not just food. Everything is sacramental and a path to tasting God. Cleopas and an unnamed disciple were on the walk to Emmaus. Why is the other disciple not named? He is not named because he is every man, woman or child who incarnates the Resurrection through love to another. The Resurrected Christ shows up not as a third person but as the energy of love communicated from the wholeness of one person's love to another. This exchange of energy, or Resurrected love, invigorates the Resurrected Christ in the other and this is when the Christ "disappears from sight".

One of my favourite Godly Play stories relates the mystery of Easter powerfully.

The final plaque of "The Faces of Easter" by Jerome Berryman is as follows:

*"that afternoon Jesus died. The sky grew dark. Jesus was taken down from the cross and buried in a cave a great stone was rolled over the opening of the cave to close it like a door.*

*Saturday was so quiet you could almost hear the whole earth breathing.*

*On Sunday, it was the women who had the courage to go on to the tomb just to be close to Jesus.*

*They wanted to remember even if it was sad.*

*When they came to the tomb they found that the stone had been rolled back and that the tomb was empty.*

*Jesus had died on the cross, but somehow, he was still present with them as he is with us, especially in the bread and the wine.*

*When you look at this side – crucifixion – you know that the other side is Easter.*

*When you look at this side – Easter- you know that this side – crucifixion – is still there – and you cannot pull them apart. This is the mystery of Easter and that makes all the difference."*

## Sentence of the Day

'I am the good shepherd,' says the Lord. 'The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.' John 10.11

## Collect

God of all power,  
you called from death our Lord Jesus,  
the great shepherd of the sheep:  
send us as shepherds to rescue the lost,  
to heal the injured,  
and to feed one another with understanding;  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## John 10.1-10