



Alstonville Anglicans

Sunday 30th July 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

30th July – 6th August

30 th July		Sunday Holy Communion
	9am	
31 st July		Monday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	10am	Anam Cara
	10am	Deadline for bulletin items
1 st August		Tuesday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Closed
2 nd August		Wednesday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am	Anam Cara
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	11am	Pastoral Care Meeting
	3.30pm	Property Team Meeting
	4pm	Messy Church Meeting
3 rd August		Thursday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	9am-3pm	Op Shop
	9.30am	Play Place
	6pm	Anam Cara
4 th August		Friday
	9am-12pm	Parish Office Open
	10am	Holy Communion
5 th August		Saturday
6 th August		Sunday
	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](#)

Pastoral Care Meeting

Wednesday 2nd August 11am in the Ministry Centre.

Working Bee

Sunday 30th July from 1pm to shampoo the carpet in the church. People are needed to operate the shampooers and move the pews. Contact Grahame Ireland 0427285073 or Bruce Sharp 0412783921.

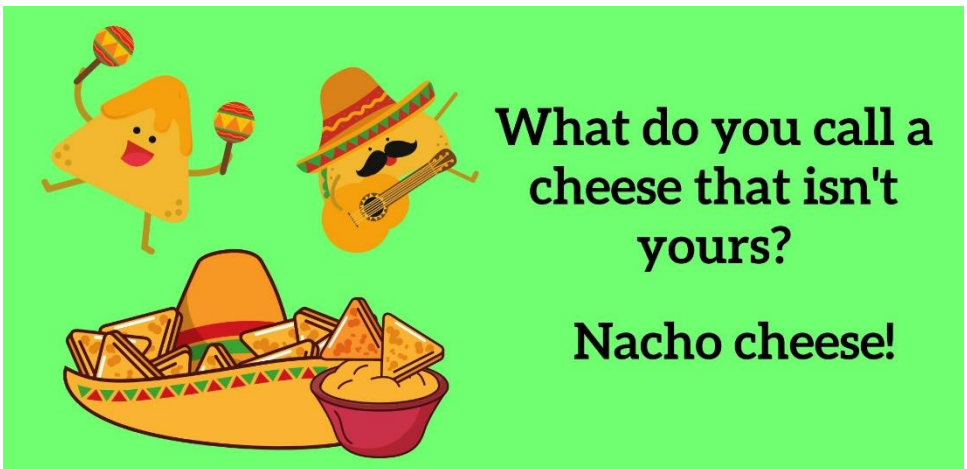


Spirit Ability

Spirit Ability is a fellowship group for Christians living with a disability.

Monday 7th August 6-8pm
The evening will include a meal & sharing time.

To Make you Smile



What do you call a cheese that isn't yours?

Nacho cheese!

Sermon on Genesis 28:10-19a for Sunday 23rd July

By Desiree Snyman

Anointing

I want to focus on the experience of anointing. Jacob's experience with a dreaming-stone that he anoints is our entry point. The stone, likely a meteorite, is a fragment of the heavens that settles onto the land. This stone, born of the heavens and the earth, births a vision from the earth to the heavens. Jacob's vision is of a ladder. Like a cosmic tree, it yields a flow of energy between this world and the heavenly spirit world. Jacob's cosmic spirit dream of a ladder uniting earth to heaven with winged messengers (angels) flowing up and down is reminiscent of the ancient archetypal tree of life found across the ages in diverse cultures. The tree of life appears in Jewish mysticism (Kabbalah) as a diagram where each of the numbered branches represents the attributes of God. In Norse mythology an enormous ash tree connects the nine worlds, including the underworld, the earth, and the realm of the gods. The Assyrian tree of life represents a series of nodes and cross branches with winged genies on each line. A winged genie is a bearded man with an eagle head and angel wings. See how similar it is to Jacob's ladder? In Christianity the tree of life is the cross. Saint Bonaventure taught that the healing fruit of the tree of life is Christ himself. In eastern Christianity the tree of life is the love of God. Saint Isaac the Syrian says that "Paradise is the love of God, in which the bliss of all the beatitudes is contained," and that "the tree of life is the love of God" (Homily 72).

The I Am that will later speak to Moses through the burning bush speaks to Jacob through the meteorite-stone: Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go. Jacob is stunned. He calls the wilderness spot "The Gate of Heaven." He sets up the baetyl or sacred stone as a pillar of witness. The pillar stone is a shrine at "Beth-El," the "House of El." El is a Canaanite Deity. Jacob anoints the iron-mineral petrified rock with christening oil. The rock pillar is now more than rock it is a "Living Being."



The Urartian tree of life, Urartu Helmet fragment (Public Domain, Wiki Commons).

That Jacob sets up a “pillar” is surprising. Hebrew religion later forbade erecting pillars as they were associated too closely with Canaanite religion and were seen as a phallus symbolising union with the gods. See Exodus 23:24; Deuteronomy 7:5; Leviticus 26:1, Hosea 3:4 and Micah 5:13.

Jacob offers a challenge: if this God that overshadows the mountains (El Shaddai) will give him bread and clothing on his journey he will embrace Elohim as his deity and that very stone as “El’s House” or Bethel. Jacob wants bread from stone and later Jesus in his own wilderness will be tempted to turn rocks into bread.

The anointing of the pillar stone is the very first time in Biblical history that anointing occurs. A wild, unmanufactured, undomesticated rock petrified from stardust and earth, in the middle of the desert wilderness, is anointed, “in-christed,” re-created as a Christ, an anointed one. The rock is ritually re-created as “Christ”. The anointing of the rock is significant, it announces that this is the place where God is experienced, touched, tasted. The rock is like an anchor to the spiritual realm that is always around us. Where else does anoint occur in the scriptures?

As we travel through the scriptures anointing is associated with priests and kings. A member of the Levite tribe, Aaron is anointed. The songbook, the psalms, sings about community saying “behold how good and how pleasant it is when God’s people dwell together in harmony. It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes (Psalm 133). It is not only priests that are anointed but kings and queens too. A prophet Samuel anoints Saul as the first king of the Israelites. Anointing empowers people to perform a certain task and protects them in carrying out their work.

In psalm 23 anointing is associated with healing. Sheep were driven to near madness with flies laying eggs in their eyes. The shepherd would anoint the sheep's head with oil which would wash out the flies and prevent further infestation, providing healing and relief to the sheep.

To summarise, anointing in the Hebrew Scriptures makes present three realities:

1. when something or someone is anointed, they are re-created ritually as a Christ, an anointed one, a place where God is found.
2. Anointing also empowers and protects people for a particular task, for example as a priest or a king.
3. Anointing is also a sacrament sign of healing.

In the New Testament it is Mary Magdalene who is most closely associated with anointing. Some authors suggest that Jesus learnt the practice of healing from Mary. The Feast Day for Mary Magdalene is 22 July. The "Bearer of the Anointing" Mary Magdalene is present at the critical moments in the Jesus story. In the same way that Jacob "in-Christed" the rock so too does Mary Magdalene "in-Christ" Jesus. Christ means anointed one. Jesus has this name because of Mary. Mary anoints Jesus as the Christ. When Mary anoints Jesus, she reveals to us Jesus' deep and true nature. Mary is the Beloved Disciple for two reasons. First, Mary understood the deep message of Jesus better than any of us, there is much we must learn from her. Second, she represents what it means to love with body, mind, soul, and spirit; she loved deeply and fully.

Mary is referenced a few times in Scripture but comes to prominence as we enter Holy Week and especially in John from chapter 12. The scene in John's Gospel is a sensory overload. Lazarus has been raised from the dead and is in the room, in a shaman-like state, neither fully present nor fully absent. He carries on him the stench of death. Into this odour of death Mary opens the perfume of Spikenard. She anoints Jesus' feet with oil and her tears and massages them dry with her hair. It is a shocking image and one few of us are ready for. She has anointed him, made him Christ, priest, and king.

Spikenard is only mentioned in one other book of the Bible. It is featured in the Song of Songs, which is written in the form of love poetry, expressing God's love for us. In the Song of Songs (1.12-14), the woman has anointed herself with spikenard as the king, the woman's beloved, is reclining on his couch.

While the king was on his couch,
my spikenard gave forth its fragrance.

My beloved is to me a bag of myrrh
that lies between my breasts.

My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms
in the vineyards of En-gedi.

When we read this passage of the Gospels where Mary anoints Jesus, we can put ourselves in the place of Mary and ask ourselves if we love Jesus as much as she did. Mary offers a story and a wisdom that we need to live the Gospel. Mary teaches us to not only listen to the Gospel, to spread the Gospel but to be the Gospel. All the canonical Gospels call Mary the apostle to the apostles. In our liturgy and theology let us restore Mary's voice and teachings to the story of the cross and Resurrection. Mary is there throughout the journey from the table to the cross from the cross to grave from the grave to the cave and from the cave to unitive consciousness. Let us also recapture the sacrament of anointing. Within the context of the resurrection, anointing becomes the ritual most closely associated with the passage from death of self to fullness of life, from egoic alienation to "union with God. As such, it conveys the very essence of Christianity's transformative wisdom.

Sentence of the Day

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8.38-39

Collect

O God, the fount of wisdom,
you have revealed to us in Christ
the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price:

grant us your Spirit's gift of discernment,
that, in the midst of the things of this world,
we may learn to value the priceless worth of your kingdom,
and be ready to renounce all else
for the sake of the precious gift you offer.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Matthew 13.44-58

⁴⁴ 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵ 'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. ⁴⁷ 'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁵¹ 'Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' ⁵² And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.' ⁵³ When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place. ⁵⁴ He came to his home town and began to teach the people in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said, 'Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power? ⁵⁵ Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?' ⁵⁷ And they took offence at him. But Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour except in their own country and in their own house.' ⁵⁸ And he did not do many deeds of power there, because of their unbelief.