



Alstonville Anglicans

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Sunday 3rd April 2022



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.

Liturgy for 3rd April

Sentence of the Day

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves. Psalm 126.6

Collect

O God,
the Redeemer of all who trust in you:
heed the cry of your people,
and deliver us from the bondage of sin,
that we may serve you in perfect freedom
and rejoice in your unfailing love;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings John 12:1-8

¹ Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ² There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³ Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵ "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" ⁶ (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷ Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

Messages

Worship & Spirituality



Join us for Easter

Here is your itinerary for your

**personal,
authentic
and timeless**

Easter Experience

with Alstonville Anglicans

from 14 April – 17 April

6-8 the Avenue Alstonville.

anglicans.live



The Easter Experience begins with

Maundy Thursday 6pm 14 April

We gather at **6pm** on **14 April** for a meditative Eucharist. There are many symbols to guide our worship through Maundy Thursday

- including the commandment to love,
- love in action through the act of foot-washing,
- and the Institution of the Eucharist, a feast of bread and wine where we remember Jesus is in us and with us.



**Maundy Thursday
All-night Vigil
from 7pm Thursday 14 April
to 8am Friday 15 April**

The all-night vigil is in the **Church Sanctuary** and begins on the evening of Maundy Thursday 7pm and continues through the night until Friday morning 8am. The vigil is an act of **silent prayer** when we are symbolically with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, near the Mount of Olives. Jesus said to his disciples “Watch and Pray.” So, we watch. And pray. In silence. With Jesus.

For some, swimming in silence is easy. Others need some guidance – this is okay. The silence is supported by meditative music, a visual display and some cue cards to help you step into silent prayer.

All members of the community are invited to sign-up for an hour between 7pm Thursday 14 April and 8am Friday 15 April to be with Jesus in the silence of the night.

As a gift of prayer, participants are invited to receive a stone to hold during silent meditation and before leaving place the stone near the Altar as a symbol of self-offering. At the end of their

hour each participant is invited to light a candle before leaving.

What to do?

- Sign up for an hour of silent meditation on Maundy Thursday. (Sign-up sheet is on the church door and our website).
- On arriving at the Church, sign-in and sanitise.
- Choose a pebble to pray with.
- Enjoy the silence with others for an hour (or more).
- When you are ready to leave, place the stone near the altar, light a candle in the baptismal font and depart in peace.

FAQ

Why do we observe the all-night vigil on Maundy Thursday?

In the Scriptures Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane before he died the next day. He asked for help saying to his disciples "Watch and pray with me." We symbolically spend time with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane through silent prayer.

Where is the all-night vigil held?

In the church sanctuary, enter through the front door.

What do I wear?

Wear something warm if necessary. Come as ...you. Shoes optional. Slippers normal.

Can I come if I didn't sign up?

We need a minimum of two people for each hour. You are welcome so please feel free to come.

Am I allowed to talk?

This is a moment in your life where you are given freedom not to talk. Give yourself and others the freedom and gift of silence and notice what happens in you.

Can I bring my dog?

We have had a new carpet placed in the church and ideally, we prefer not to have pets shedding hair etc. However, we are aware that late at night people, especially those who live alone, may feel safer with their dog and this may help them come to church to enjoy the silence. If you feel it necessary to bring a dog for your personal safety, please take full responsibility for your pet not

disturbing the silence of others. There is a carpet sweeper in the vestry for you to clean up any hair your four-legged child may have left behind.

Can I bring a friend or a partner?

The more the merrier, guide them in what is expected by offering them this information.

The all-night vigil ends with

**Morning Prayer at 8am on
Good Friday 15 April.**



**The Good Friday Service is
at 10am on 15 April**

On Friday the 15 April at 10am we meet for worship. The Good Friday service is a solemn occasion where we gather with Mary, the Mother of God, Mary of Magdala and some of

Jesus' friends to be with Jesus at the Cross, the place of his death.



Easter Dawn Service on 17 April 6am

The climax of our easter journey is the dawn service held on the 17 April 6am in the Church.

- At **5.30am gather outside the church door** for the lighting of the Easter Fire.
- At 6am the Fire is blessed, and the Paschal Candle is lit.
- We walk into the church prayerfully, led by the Paschal Candle.

The Paschal Candle symbolises our faith in the Resurrection of Christ. Through chant, we remember how the presence of God, sometimes called Shekinah, has been our faith ancestors and will always be with us. The Paschal Candle is decorated with bees, butterflies and other symbols of the risen life. The candle is signed with the Alpha and Omega, Greek letters that

remind us that Christ is the beginning and end of time and that all time belongs to Christ.

The Dawn service includes the renewal of our baptismal promises and we are sprinkled with water to remember the grace of our baptism. The service concludes with



Easter Service (including families) 9am 17 April

The Easter Service at 9am and includes the first Eucharist with the new Paschal Candle. Children are included in the worship of this service. The Scriptures, sermon and prayers will sustain us in our resurrected faith.

To summarise:

- 14 April Maundy Thursday Service 6pm
- 14 April All-night vigil 7pm – 8am 15 April
- 15 April Good Friday Morning Prayer 8am

- 15 April Good Friday Service 10am
- 17 April Easter Dawn Service 6am (arrive at 5.30am and gather around the Easter fire)
- 17 April Easter Eucharist 9am



Community Engagement

Passover Dinner



The Social Committee invite you to a Passover Dinner.

Sunday 10th April 5.30pm

\$15 per person

Please RSVP by 6th April to Amanda Middleton, Carol Vidal or Susan Fitzpatrick to register and pay

Anglicare North Coast 2022 Northern NSW Flood Appeal

We will use our emergency relief processes to provide direct and efficient support to affected households.



**Donate Now- Please reference your deposit
'Lismore 2022'**

Use the QR code

or navigate to **www.anglicarenorthcoast.org.au**
and click on 'donate here'

Or use the following details to deposit from your bank account.

Bank account: Anglicare North Coast BSB: 705077

A/C: 00041320

Community-On-the-Verge



Help yourself to what is ripe and ready for picking. If you are keen to be involved as the garden evolves, please contact Alan Larsen on 0409 655 123 or Barbara Fewtrell 0429 385 713.

Reminder: End of Daylight Savings



Daylight Savings ends on Sunday 3rd April at 3am. Our clocks will go back 1 hour at that time.

Good Governance

COVID Update

- Masks not required but encouraged especially when singing.
- Social distancing is still advised as is adequate ventilation.
- Hand sanitiser will remain available but is not compulsory.
- Morning tea will continue to be served outside at the present time.
- The Covid Committee appreciates everybody's understanding, tolerance, and compliance.

Sign Up for Planned Giving

Forms for signing up for Planned Giving are now available from the website and in the church foyer and parish office.

Mission Giving

Our missions for 2022 will be CMS and ABM. \$3000 to each.

Empowering Leadership

Wardens & Parish Councillors for 2022

Rector's Warden: Bruce Sharp

Warden: Jenny Noble

Parish Councillors:

Des Fitzpatrick

Kay Fry

Charlie Handley

Graham Ireland

Amanda Middleton

Mark Stuckey

Robyn Hannah

Margaret Brown

Other Appointments:

Treasurer: Anne Bryce

Social Committee Coordinator: Amanda Middleton

Thank you for your willingness to serve our Parish.

Sermon Notes

for 27th March 2022

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 4th SUNDAY in LENT



The Parable of the Prodigal Son, or of the Lost Son, is one of the best known and most accessible of Jesus' parables. Personally, I think that it's a precious gift to us and I always see it as a privilege to preach a sermon on it when it appears in the lectionary.

Whenever I think about lost things, I remember when my son was at school in Brisbane. Over the six years he was there he lost an incredible amount of things. I can feel my anxiety levels increase just thinking about it. School hat, several jumpers, cricket helmet, sports gear, mobile phone. He wasn't the only one of course. In the winter months so many boys lost their jumpers that lost property department wiped their hands of the situation and just put a big wheelie bin outside for jumpers. He even lost his whole school bag once. I think I clocked up a record as the father or parent who visited the school's lost property most often.

Lost. We can all relate to the sense of frustration, anxiety, incompleteness and even panic when something or someone is lost.

The Lost Son parable is set in the context of a normal family with normal problems.

As always, context is important. The Parable of the Lost or Prodigal Son is one of three Gospel Parables in Chapter 15 - the others are the Lost Coin and the Lost Sheep. Together, they challenge us to try to understand the reasons for these emotions and what lies behind them. Why has Jesus told these stories and what can we learn from them?

Coming as they do in response to verses 1 and 2 indicates that it is basically teaching about how God acts towards sinners. His mercy is as reckless as a shepherd who abandons ninety-nine sheep to recover one lost one.

I always find it fascinating the different names that exist for this Parable. The Parable of the *Lost Son*, *Lost Sons* (plural) or of the *Prodigal Son*. But it's also known as the Parable of the *Forgiving Father* - hence emphasising the Father's key role. We see a wayward and greedy young man abandon his father, family and community for the 'high life'. When this doesn't live up to expectations, he finds himself broken physically, emotionally and spiritually. It was his choice to leave so he has no one to blame but himself. Every time I read the parable I'm amazed by the father's loving reception of him on his eventual return. The welcome he receives speaks of God's boundless mercy and unconditional love. It's debatable how genuine his repentance is at verse 18. Many commentators write that his return home is more out of self-preservation than true repentance. This makes the welcome he receives even more surprising.

This parable speaks of the great depth of God's welcome and mercy. Even if we return only because our desires have failed to bring the wealth and happiness we expected, or because our sins didn't offer as much satisfaction as we had hoped, or simply because we just couldn't make it on our own, God

welcomes us back! In writing about this parable the early Church Fathers said it was a parable about you and me.

Do you relate to the father, unconditionally loving and receiving back the lost child, or do you relate to the son, returning home after a period of selfishness?

I'm sure we can all relate to the lady who searched the whole house for one particular item!

Even if we don't have a farming background, I'm sure we can relate to the shepherd who searched for a valuable, vulnerable sheep!

Losing something or someone means separation. The lost person or object is somehow outside our care and protection. The parables of the lost sheep and the lost son in particular illustrate that the lost one is somehow assumed to be in the darkness, to be vulnerable.

Also, without the lost one, the whole flock or family is somehow lesser, weaker, incomplete. When something or someone is lost, something in us is lost as well and there's a real grief there.

By way of possessions my mind of course goes to all the things that have been lost by so many in the recent floods. While we say that material things are not as important, many of those things were associated with precious memories and are not replaceable – there is a real grief there.

While the three parables have many unique features that I have not mentioned, one of the main features that unites them is that there is **rejoicing** when what was lost, is found. The **shepherd** finding the lost sheep: ⁵ *When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices.* ⁶ *And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours,*

saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost." ⁷

The **woman** finding the lost coin: ⁹ *When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost."*

The **father** on the lost son's return: ²² *But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.*

African Biblical scholar Paul Isaak says that the older brother, by refusing to join the father's joyous celebration, has himself become 'lost'. (Hence he says it should be called the parable of the Lost Sons).

Archbishop Justin Welby points out that the parable of the Lost Sons doesn't claim to be the end of the story. Does the older brother eventually join the feast? Can the younger brother settle back into home and family life?

Yet the rejoicing in each parable illustrates that because we have such a merciful and forgiving God, despite the unexpected turns that life takes, the uncertainty of our lives, we can embark trustingly and rejoicingly on the journey with him. The Good News today from this parable is that forgiveness and mercy and unconditional love are our resources for the journey.

Today's parables call us to be a community that **shares God's joy** in dispensing mercy, forgiveness and welcome. How do we express that joy in our own lives, in parish life and in the wider community?

A prayer: *O God who seeks and saves the lost, make us open to your call in our lives now and in the future, that we may*

know the joy of our homecoming and the welcome of your embrace. Amen.

Some Resources

Regarding the community rejoicing together when ones that are lost are welcomed, www.loveyourneighbour.org has some excellent tips and ideas to help us break down barriers in our communities, as does the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre:

<https://www.asrc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ASRC-Words-that-Work-4pp.pdf>

Daniel Eng, *The Widening Circle: Honour, Shame, and Collectivism in the Parable of the Prodigal Son*, Expository Times 2019, Vol. 130 (5), 193-201.

Justin Welby, *Family – Caring for the Core*, Chapter 2 in Reimagining Britain: Foundations for Hope. Bloomsbury, 2018.

Regular Reminders

Worship & Spirituality

Church Open

The Church will be reopening for meditation during office hours, commencing Monday 28th February.

Mothers Union: third Monday of each month. Contact Pam on 0417 258 991 or Joyce 0407 690 874 joyce@stephanies.com.au

Anam Cara



Anam Cara Praying for you Monday mornings 10am

Anam Cara Wednesdays 9am
& **Thursdays** 6pm

Community Engagement

Play Place



Play Place 9.30-11.30am Thursdays during school terms.

Sew Helpful



Sew Helpful 1st & 3rd Mondays 1pm

Pastoral Care

If you or anyone you know is ill or in hospital, please let the office or Lynne Watt our Pastoral Care Coordinator know. Also, if you do visit anyone could you email Lynne? wattlg@bigpond.com.

Pastoral Care Meeting

Wednesday.6th April 11am in the Meeting Room.

Prayers

Please remember Jan and David and Cathy in your prayers this week.

Alstonville Anglicans

Ministers all the baptised!

Rector The Reverend Dr Desiree Snyman 0402 764 969
priest@anglicans.live

Associates The Reverend John Kidson 0411 394 213
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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website: anglicans.live

Bank account: BSB 705 077 / Acc:00032931

The Anglican Op Shop: 1 The Avenue, Alstonville **Tel:** 6628 8777

Dates 3rd April to 10th April

3rd April Sunday 9am Holy Communion
4th April Parish Office 9am – 12pm
Op Shop 9am – 3pm
10am Anam Cara praying for Community
5th April Tuesday Parish Office Closed (Please refrain from
accessing the office at this time)
6th April Parish Office 9am – 12pm
Anam Cara 9am
Op Shop 9am – 3pm
Pastoral Care Meeting 11am
Property Committee Meeting 3.30pm
Messy Church Planning Meeting 4.30pm
7th April Parish Office 9am – 12pm
Op Shop 9am – 3pm
Play Place 9.30am
Anam Cara 6pm
8th April Parish Office 9am – 12pm
Friday 10am Holy Communion
10th April Sunday 9am Holy Communion