



Alstonville
Anglicans

Pentecost 18 on Sunday 4th October 2020

This week...

- Sunday@9am Anglican Service in the Ministry Centre
- Sunday@10am online via webpage www.anglicans.live
- Wednesday 9am & Thursday 6pm at St Bartholomew's
- Friday 10am Anglican Service in the Ministry Centre



Sharing the Good Life

We acknowledge the Bundjalung people,
Traditional custodians of the Land.
Our doors are open: LGBTQIA+ welcome here.
Streaming licence CCLI#690910

Thought for the week

The Parable of the Earth



Over billions of years the Gardener of the Universe created a beautiful blue planet and filled it with life and caused humans to tenant it. However, the tenants thought they knew better and rather than work with the Gardener decided to dominate this world and fought amongst each other for the

position of most power. They cut down the trees, killed the animals, poisoned the spoils and hurt and killed each other as well as enslaving the animals and other humans in order for their tribe to be the biggest and strongest.

The Gardener of the Universe was so upset that the humans were destroying rather than promoting life on this beautiful world that the Gardener decided to bring into being a child who would try to tell them about the wonderful life- enhancing fruit that could be had from their world. The child came to them and told them they could have abundant life if they would but attune themselves to **love**; the Life of the Universe.

Some heard the child and believed, but most could not give up their power, control and domination so took the child and killed the child horribly.

As the millennia rolled by the number of humans on the planet grew. Some remembered the child and the Gardener and sort to follow the love promoting way of life.

On October 4th each year one person in particular is remembered, a monk named Francis. For him the earth and all its creatures belonged to the Gardener and were his brothers and sisters to be loved and

cherished. Francis saw that the Gardener's beautiful planet needed saving along with the humans who were destroying it.

Today unfortunately, the domination continues and the power of humans to destroy grows ever stronger, and yet the Spirit of the Child and Gardener still call us to love and peace. The story is not finished. It is not too late to reject power and domination and live in love and glorious harmony with each other and this beautiful planet we call Earth.

However, the consequences of human behavior begin to grow dire and the foretastes of the great burning are already being felt.

Liturgy for 4th October

Sentence of the Day

Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, let us press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3.13b-14

Opening Song

- 1. When your Father made the world,**
before that world was old,
in his eye what he had made
was lovely to behold.

Help your people to care for your world.

*The world is a garden you made,
and you are the one
who planted the seed.*

*The world is a garden you made,
life for our food, life for our joy,
life we could kill with our selfish greed.*

2. And the world that he had made
the seas, the rocks, the air
all the creatures and the plants

he gave into our care.
Help your people to care for your world.

*The world is a garden you made,
and you are the one
who planted the seed.*

*The world is a garden you made,
life for our food, life for our joy,
life we could kill with our selfish greed.*

3. When you walked in Galilee,
you said your father knows
when each tiny sparrow dies,
each fragile lily grows.
Help your people to care for your world.

*The world is a garden you made,
and you are the one
who planted the seed.*

*The world is a garden you made,
life for our food, life for our joy,
life we could kill with our selfish greed.*

4. And the children of the earth
like sheep within your fold,
should have food enough to eat
and shelter from the cold.
Help your people to care for your world.

*The world is a garden you made,
and you are the one
who planted the seed.*

*The world is a garden you made,
life for our food, life for our joy,
life we could kill with our selfish greed*

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Readings

Psalm 19

A Psalm of David. ¹ The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. ² Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. ³ There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; ⁴ yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, ⁵ which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. ⁶ Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hid from its heat. ⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple; ⁸ the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes; ⁹ the fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. ¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb. ¹¹ Moreover by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. ¹² But who can detect their errors? Clear me from hidden faults. ¹³ Keep back your servant also from the insolent; do not let them have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. ¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Matthew 21:33-46

³³ "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴ When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵ But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent

other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷ Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' ³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" ⁴¹ They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time." ⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'?" ⁴³ Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. ⁴⁴ The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." ⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶ They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.



Prayers

Season of Creation 2020 Prayer

Creator of Life,

At Your word, the Earth brought forth plants yielding seed and trees of every kind bearing fruit. The rivers, mountains, minerals, seas, and forests sustained life. The eyes of all looked to You to satisfy the needs of every living thing. And throughout time the Earth has sustained life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal, and growth, you open your hand to give creatures our food in the proper time.

In your Wisdom, you granted a Sabbath; a blessed time to rest in gratitude for all that you have given; a time to liberate ourselves from vicious consumption; a time to allow the land and all creatures to rest from the burden of production. But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits. Our demands for growth, and our never-ending cycle of production and consumption are exhausting our world. The forests are leached, the topsoil erodes, the fields fail, the deserts advance, the seas acidify, the storms intensify. We have not allowed the land to observe her Sabbath, and the Earth is struggling to be renewed.

During this Season of Creation, we ask you to grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet. Strengthen us with the faith to trust in your providence. Inspire us with the creativity to share what we have been given. Teach us to be satisfied with enough. And as we proclaim a Jubilee for the Earth, send Your Holy Spirit to renew the face of creation.

In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Final Song

1. Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred
let me bring your love;
where there is injury,
your pardon, Lord;
and where there's doubt,
true faith in you.

*O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,*

*to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

2. Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life,
let me bring hope;
where there is darkness,
let me bring your light;
and where there's sadness ever joy.

*O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

3. Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life

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Reflection

Exodus 17:1-7 Matthew 21:23-32 Which One Am I?

Can you believe that it is now seventeen Sundays since Pentecost? Seventeen Sundays since we began using green liturgical colours. Green is the colour for living and growing. That means, for hundreds

of years, church people have spent most of each year identifying themselves as “Greenies”.

So, it’s not a new thing for church people to have a focus on Creation as many denominations choose to do in the month of September. This is our fourth



Sunday thinking about Creation and this week the focus is on water. Our bodies need us to drink water; plants need water to grow and we need water for washing. In science at high school, I was taken by water being called the “universal solvent”. Water dissolves most things. Even most of our Alstonville red mud.

Our lectionary today has chosen for us, in addition to the Gospel, a most appropriate reading from Exodus Chapter 17. In Exodus, God’s people were learning a lesson. After years of slavery where they needed the Egyptian leaders to look after them, they are now in the desert learning that they needed God to look after them.

For Jewish people, it’s important to regularly retell their history stories. (I was impressed by one New York rabbi who encouraged positivity by writing that it was necessary to think more of the Exodus from Egypt than the horror of the 1940s Holocaust.) In Exodus today, there’s one of the many murmuring stories. The people were thirsting and complained against Moses. Can you imagine Church people complaining about their leader? Well, when Moses did as God asked him, water flowed from a rock. God provided life-giving water. We are not able to thank God enough for the gift of water that we seem to take for granted as we turn on our taps today. We can show God our appreciation by our careful conservation and management of this gift of water

So, it's helpful in this month of Creation, and this Sunday of water, to have Exodus give us something to think about. But, you know, we only scratch the surface of what's in the Bible. We only scratch the surface in our regular Sunday readings. There's so much to think about and so many different ways of looking at the messages God gives us.

Last week we heard Matthew telling about Jesus' parable of the workers in the vineyard. Some workers spent the whole day in sun in the vineyard, others worked half a day and others just a short time late in the day, but they all got the same pay.

I told the Friday congregation that this was a good example of how generous God is. Our generous God giving people things they are not entitled to and probably don't expect.

And then I came to Church on Sunday and Desiree explained this same lesson, seeing it from a different angle. I went wow! Isn't that interesting! Isn't that good! Desiree made a lot of sense to me when she said, "My reading of the parable is that Jesus evokes debate about justice and economics". That's what being God's people is all about. Being involved in the welfare system. How are the people around us coping and being treated? That's why we have Anglicare (where Desiree got the figures she gave us) and St Vinnies and the Salvos). God's people are to debate and to be outspoken about the way Kings and Governments lead their people.

Today's Gospel reading has skipped quite a bit of what Matthew has to report since the story of the workers' pay. We've skipped over the very important events of the triumphant entry to Jerusalem and the cleansing of the Temple. (Jesus overturning the money changers' table and setting the animals free).

Now, today, we have Jesus' brilliant response to questioning of his authority. Jesus answers a question with a question; "was John's baptism from heaven or was it of human origin?" If it was from

heaven, then surely you should have believed him? If the answer is no there will be trouble with the people who follow John.

Then Jesus began another parable by asking the question "what do you think". Jesus is being similar to a teacher preparing students for HSC indicating this is important. Make sure you know this!

Jesus tells the chief priests and the elders of the people a parable of two sons, one of whom says to his dad "I am not going to work in the vineyard", but eventually does. And the other son who is full of promises to go, but who disappears and never gets to do any work. Jesus wants people to consider the issue. To think about something pretty straight forward. This is a multiple-choice question with only two answers to choose from. Which son did the father's will? Of course, they rightly choose the first son as the one who 'did the will of his Father'.

This is excellent teaching technique. Jesus has led his audience, so critical of what he has said and done, to actually own their answer. Jesus has led his audience to make their own decision about the way to do the Father's will.

It is not a question of saying the right words and going through the right rituals. We are actually called to do what the Father wants. It's the way we live that counts; not the things we say.

Jesus is attacking the so-called 'religious people' who go through the motions of being God-directed people, mouthing the right words and performing the right rituals, but not putting their lives where their words are.

Then, what Jesus says after this is probably the most difficult thing for people to hear and to accept. A statement which doesn't seem fair to the people who always come to church. Jesus says to these good religious people, "I tell you; tax collectors and prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you." (Tax collectors and prostitutes were considered as sinners absolutely beyond acceptability. They were pagans.)

So, is this the most annoying thing that Jesus ever said? "Bad people are going into the Kingdom of God ahead of you!" Jesus is being very challenging, but he is actually asking people to reflect and decide; well which of these two sons is me? Which do I personally think is the way of righteousness?

In the Western world, over centuries, Christian morals and ethics had gradually become the accepted values of the nations. However, in our rapidly changing and increasingly secularized world, Christian values no longer play this important role in society at large. It's interesting that even atheists have argued that society will suffer without religious morals and values. Our society is in danger of losing its soul and Christianity has the opportunity to prevent that when we demonstrate lives that show evidence of God's kingdom. We pray "your will be done on earth as it is in heaven". When we show that we are striving to do God's will; if we Church-goers, who listen to the Gospel, are doing what we are saying, things can change. When we don't; when the so-called sinners of our day don't see any example of the right way to go about things, where can they put their hope and trust? Where can they learn?

So, there's big messages in today's readings but, as always, there is good news. The good news is that change can really take place. No



matter what that first son said to his father, he can do the right thing. What we have done in the past does not have to guide what happens in the future.

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Housekeeping

Our notices are organised under our mission goals.



Office

The office will be closed on the 5th of October 2020. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday Thursday, Friday 9am to 12pm.

Worship & Spirituality

St Peter & St Paul's

The next service will be Sunday 11th October 10.00am.

Friday@10am

Friday@10 will now have a seated morning tea following the service.



Prayer

We are praying for you.

Every Monday 10am



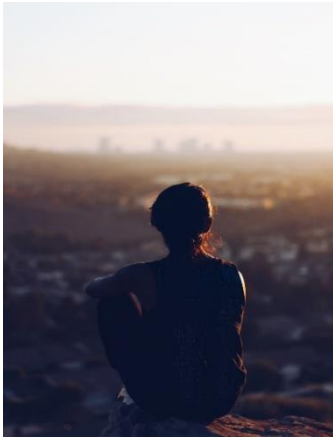
Worship & Spirituality

Meeting to co-ordinate the worship at 9am.

This meeting has now been scheduled for

Wednesday 7th Oct 6pm.

**Pastoral Care Meeting
Wednesday 7th October 11.00am**



Anam Cara

Anam Cara means soul friend. Guided Meditation is offered Wednesdays 9am.

On **Thursdays at 6pm**, an abbreviated compline (prayer at the end of the day) is offered after which we surrender to uninterrupted delicious silence. Arvo Part's Spiegel im Spiegel marks the halfway point of our meditation and blesses us at the end of the hour.



Memorial Sunday

Sunday October 25, 9am.

During the service, an opportunity is offered to remember loved ones.

Through music, words and rituals we remember and honour friends and family who have died.

Come. You will be warmly welcomed and safely held as you respect your loved ones who have died.

Community Engagement



Play Place

Please note that Play Place will be taking a break for the school holidays. We will be back on the 15th October.

Sew helpful

Sew helpful will be in recess for the duration of the school holidays.





Vacancy: Live Streaming Production Technician

We are seeking people who would like to be technicians to assist this ministry. Full training and support provided. Please talk to Rev Desiree or Robyn Hannah. At the end of the training you will be highly experienced in videography and well-versed in social media. This role is responsible for growing our capacities in filming events and conducting Live Streams.

- The Live Streaming Production Technician is the go-to person on-site for all live stream videos.
- This role involves ensuring everything is ready to go prior to shooting.
- They assist with sound and lighting, and make sure all the cords are in the right place and out of the way.
- The Live Streaming Production Technician stays on-site throughout the shoot to make sure everything stays in position and steps in when needed.
- Renumeration is \$40 per hour (kidding ... you are paid with gratitude)



October is Mental Health Month. This helps to raise awareness around mental health and wellbeing. **Tuning In** means being present. It means being aware of what's happening within you, and in the

world around you.

- Tune In to your senses – what can you sense right now? What can you feel?
- Tune In to your communities – what's happening that you can be part of, or that you can help others be part of?
- Tune In to stigma – how do attitudes and understandings of mental health and wellbeing impact people's ability to live the lives they want?

Firstly, taking a moment to Tune In can help still and focus your mind, it can help you understand what's going on for you and others.

Secondly, Tuning in can help you find a new perspective, and it can help you reflect and be present. It can help build self-awareness, help

make effective choices, reduce the impact of worry, and build positive connections.

Lastly, Tuning In to communities and the impact of mental health stigma can help ensure that people who need support have safe places to talk about their experiences and reach out.

Tune In to Mental Health Month and help create a world we can all Tune In to.

NSW Mental Health Access Line: 1800011511
Life Line: 131114 Beyond Blue: 1300224636

Finance

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

Parish Provider these are the details: **BSB: 705 077 /Acc: 00032931**
Cheques can be posted to PO Box 451 Alstonville 2477 or placed in our locked letterbox. Before 12pm Fridays.

ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

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