



Community News
7 May 2023
FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



Church Services

Sunday:

8am Holy Communion
9.25am 2 EAR FM
10am Holy Communion
6.30pm Worship

Readings:

Acts 7:55-60 (page 891)
Psalm 31:1-5 (page 439)
John 14:1-14 (page 877)

Readings

Monday: Psalm 115:1-7; John 14:21-26
Tuesday: Psalm 145:10-13; John 14:27-31
Wednesday: Psalm 122; John 15:1-8
Thursday: Psalm 96:1-6; John 15:8-11
Friday: Psalm 57:8-12; John 15:12-17
Saturday: Psalm 100; John 15:18-21
Sunday: Psalm 66:7-19; 1Peter 3:8-22; John 14:15-21

Saving God, who called your Church to witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us so to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be reconciled to you; through him who died for us and rose again and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

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PHONE: 44725822 (Thursday and Friday) or contact Doug on 0428 907200.

DIRECT DEPOSIT: Anglican Investment & Development Fund. BSB: 702 389 Account: 05202562 Ref: AnglicanBBay2562

CHURCH: The church office is open Thursday mornings 9am-12pm and Fridays 9am-3pm.

PARISH CONTACTS:

RECTOR: Doug Newman 0428 907200 dnewman1956@gmail.com

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ANGLICAN NEWS

2023: A year to Stand! Please extend this newsletter to someone to encourage them.

HOUSEKEEPING: Books are available for worship – to avoid multiple people handling them they will remain in the back of the pews. The Common Cup is available for our Communion Worship. **Intinction is not allowed** and we continue to offer individual cups for those who do not wish to use the Common Cup.

Masks: There is no requirement to wear a mask to attend church but you are invited to wear a mask to reduce community risk.

Hand Sanitizing: COVID and Flu remain active – please sanitize your hands and be mindful of each other's space.

LEAVE AND CONFERENCE: Doug will be at Clergy Conference 8 -11 May. Reverend Mary Clarke will take the Thursday service.

CHORAL EVENSONG: Dear Clergy and Parishes, Please find attached and below the details of two Choral Evensong events to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.

Coronation Evensong at St Saviour's Cathedral, 4pm Sunday 7th May. The zoom link below will go live at about 3:30pm.

Zoom link for the Coronation Evensong at St Saviour's Cathedral Goulburn.

<https://adcg.zoom.us/j/93277652460?pwd=bmZmZlQ0eiNNMG9WUFdidnM0VTRyZz09>

Meeting ID: 932 7765 2460

Passcode: 482332

Choral Evensong to Celebrate the Coronation at St Paul's Manuka at 5pm Sunday 7th May

GLEAN NOTICE: Wednesday 10th May GLEAN will be on in the hall from 1.30pm to 3.00pm. ♥**JESUS POST RESURRECTION APPEARANCES = HEART HARVEST**♥. If you want to have a look: Matthew 27:57-28:20. Mark 15:42-16:20. Luke 23:50-24:53. John 19:38-21:25.

MOTHERS DAY LUNCH: I have booked a table for 15 at the Cat Club at 12pm. The table is booked under Gayleane Overy. Sadly I couldn't reserve any larger quantity as they were filling up fast.

ANGLICAN RENEWAL: A national ARNA E-Gathering is planned for Saturday 27 May (day before Pentecost). This will include worship and a focus on prayer led by Jill Weber as our key-note speaker. Jill is the Global Convenor for the Order of the Mustard Seed, Elder and Spiritual Formation Director at Emmaus Rd Church UK and a key leader within 24-7 Prayer movement. The gathering will also introduce this year's Pentecost Retreat Podcast which commences on 29 May. Batemans Bay will be a regional gathering hub – please gather at church for 3.30 – 5.30pm. A light fellowship meal will be provided at 5.30pm.

PRAYERS AND PRAISE:

- Continuing prayers for those going through tough times and illnesses.
- Give thanks for answered prayers and healing.
- Please keep Bishop Ian, Jill, and the SOMA Team in prayer as they travel in Vietnam.

PASTORAL CARE & PRAYER: For support ring Elizabeth Dean 44724330.

LONG TERM PRAYER REQUESTS: Please take time to read our prayer list and ask God for one or two people on it to pray for, not necessarily people you know: Phillipa Shepherd, Veronica Newson, Judy Charman, Dora Coma, Michael Kovacs, Harry Lewis, Ian Oliver, Wendy and Chris Berger, Jay Stewart, Helen Plumb, Marina Vander-Burgh, Keith Sutherland, Iain Ritchie, Rodney Hay, Susan Dean, Robin Hay, Noreen Ralston-Birchall, Ian Overy, Rebecca Coughran, Bob Day, Rachel Harding, Tony Hughes, Jason King, Annette Stewart, Jess Hughes, Judy Stewart, Tommy King, Jonathon and Leticia, Bronwyn Lithgow, Lisa Brookes, Chris Black, Ruby Brown, Jane Wilkinson.

Bible Study Answers: John 14: 1-11. What is Jesus describing and what imagery/ metaphor does he use? What does he promise his disciples? Jesus is describing heaven and uses the imagery of it as a large house with many rooms - enough rooms for all of them as his brothers and sisters in his father's house. Jesus promises the disciples that he will go before them and prepare the way for them, he will then return and take them to this house with him.

The disciples question where Jesus is going and how they will get there. Jesus response is I am the Way, the Truth and the Life – what does this response mean to you? Jesus is saying expressly that he, and he alone, can take us on the path to heaven. He alone can provide redemption and salvation leading to life. Many find this truth difficult and confronting, Jesus is saying that the only way to eternal life is through belief in him. Culturally we are regularly told that all people have equal rights in humanity's sight and are therefore to be valued and respected because they are human. This implies that all people are inherently good and all people should therefore go to heaven – it is seen as judgmental to require people to accept Jesus as the only way to heaven; surely many say all religions (paths) lead to God and heaven. A reasonable study of other religions and world views will quickly indicate that for many of them their intended eternal ending is not the Christian heaven described by John but each has their own desired end-state e.g. Elysium, Aaru, Svargaloka, Nirvana, Valhalla, self-fulfillment, enlightenment, Paradise. The Christian view is that all people are to be loved, respected and valued not because they are born human but because whether they believe it or not, we humans are all created in the image of God and are loved by God as God loves us so we are to love others. Jesus invites and calls every person to follow him to God but he does not compel us to follow. This means that I can invite people to know Jesus but their response is between them, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

How do you feel about Jesus statement that he is the unique and only way to heaven? What evidence does he give for this statement? (Hint – see also John 10: 25 -35) I have no difficulty in accepting Jesus statement, indeed for my faith to be coherent it is necessary that I do so. Jesus argument that he knows the way and that he can take me there is based on his identity – he is the son of God, the incarnate, physical embodiment of God but also the uncreated Logos from outside of time, he is God with the Father and the Spirit. Scripture tells us that no man (or woman), including Moses, has ever seen God – so how can they show us the way to the unseen God. Jesus can because he has seen the Father, he sees what the Father is doing, and he is in the Father and the Father is in Him – they are one. Therefore Jesus knows the way.

Read John 14: 12-17. If Jesus leaves, then this will happen so that the disciples (and us) can work as agents of God. What does Jesus say we will be able to do? How will God make this possible? Share when have you seen this happen? God will send us another helper (paraclete) – the Holy Spirit. This happened at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit before that reserved or anointing selected people and prophets to set them aside for God's service and tasks was literally and liberally poured out for all humanity. What was once the strict reserve of prophets, priests and kings was made available to all who would call upon the name of Jesus and be baptized into faith in him. Pentecost was a once off event but one which initiated a continuous move of the Holy Spirit that means that every believer can now, as the Spirit leads and enables them, minister with the inferred authority of God i.e. as an agent or representative of God. I see this happen often when God shows me that he has already prepared the way for what I understand he is asking me to do. A simple example from several weeks ago was affirming my sense that I should focus on the Stephen reading this week rather than the reading from John which was affirmed during a prayer with Rose.

Sunday 7 May – Give all to God

I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the father but through me. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit we can stand against all that comes for us and declare the praises of God in all places. May the glory of God be revealed in our witness to him who loves us.

Traditional: Rock of Ages https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cv4qQgiO5fQ&list=PL-Wo7lu6CksuTKdkFbx68JxCo0xmtG81A&index=191&ab_channel=ChetValleyChurches

Contemporary: Give us Clean Hands [Give Us Clean Hands \(Lyrics\) - Chris Tomlin - YouTube](#)

Read. Acts 6: 1-10; 7: 55-60. In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." ⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶ They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷ So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. ⁸ Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue — Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia—who began to argue with Stephen. ¹⁰ But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke. ... [so they tried him and then stoned him to death – continuing in chapter 7]

^{7:55} But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷ At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, ⁵⁸ dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he said this, he fell asleep.

Thoughts: The death of Stephen has strong echoes of Christ's death, especially in Stephen's prayer and statement of forgiveness of his killers. We are meant to see this. Stephen is following God's call fearlessly and even unto death and his life will be an example of how to minister the gospel in difficult circumstances – serve with grace and speak the truth with love – both things are needed, and God by his Holy Spirit empowers such a ministry. The church always needs more Stephens, those who share practically and passionately and encourage others to share, those who gather up the people at the outside or on the fringes of our church and community as Stephen drew the Greek widows into the community dominated by Jewish widows and made certain that their needs were also met. When our church meetings and hospitality loses focus on welcoming and bringing in the stranger, and this often occurs not intentionally but by simple omission or failure to look beyond our normal patterns of meeting together then we are all impoverished. The disciples saw their role as shepherds and teachers, but they understood that all the flock needed to work together to be pastors. A final disturbing thought – the death of Stephen was the catalyst of a significant persecution of Jewish believers by other Jews, led by a zealous young man called Saul. This persecution provided the initial impetus to make the new Christian Jews flee Jerusalem and travel through Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth carrying the gospel out from Jerusalem.

Prayers: Great Shepherd of the flock, grant us grace to give freely and to reflect your generosity in our lives and our hearts. Let us trust that when we are generous, you will ensure that our needs are met. Help us to have the heart of Stephen that we may both serve our community and speak tenderly to them of Christ's call to follow him. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we give ourselves to the service of God and others, that our communities may flourish. Bless your servant Charles, being consecrated as King this week, may he reign with humble wisdom and gracious justice for the peace of all in his kingdom.

Pray for the violence in Sudan to cease and peace to be restored and this violence will not overflow into neighbouring countries especially South Sudan. Continue to pray for peace in Ukraine.

Pray for the work of Mission Aviation Fellowship connecting and moving students and teachers to and from remote homelands areas in the Northern Territory.

We pray for all those in our community who are in sorrow, sickness, discouragement or any other trouble. We particularly pray for those feeling isolated, anxious or depressed, give them patience and a firm trust in your goodness. Help those who care for them, and bring them, with all of us all into the joy of your salvation.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

Traditional: Praise My Soul https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60JgQoJK9J8&ab_channel=ChetValleyChurches

Contemporary: O Praise the Name [O Praise The Name \(Anástasis\) Lyric Video - Hillsong Worship - YouTube](#)

Blessing: The peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord, and may the blessing of God the father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you now and forever. **Shalom**

Bible Study: Read Acts 17: 16 - 31. What is the Areopagus in Athens? (you may need to Google this <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Areopagus>). What had distressed Paul in Athens and given impetus and passion to his debating and proclaiming?

How does Paul establish/ground his conversation/ debate with the Athenian philosophers and crowd? What do they (the ancient Greek culture) value and how does Paul use this to argue for faith in God with them.?

Note that he does not use the name of Jesus at all in this discourse – what does he say to present the gospel to them? What causes them to stumble and not believe?

How might this passage assist us as we look at presenting the gospel today?

