



**Community News**  
**14 May 2023**  
**SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
**MOTHER'S DAY**



**Church Services**

**Sunday: NO NELLIGEN SERVICE**

**8am** Holy Communion

**9.25am** 2 EAR FM

**10am** Prayer and Praise

**6.30pm** Soaking

**Readings:**

Acts 16:11-15 (page 900)

Psalms 106: 1-6, 20-24 (page 485)

1 Peter 3:8-22 (page 985)

Matthew 20:20-24 (801)

**Readings**

**Monday:** Psalm 149; John 15:26-16:4

**Tuesday:** Psalm 138; John 16:5-11

**Wednesday:** Psalm 148:7-15; John 16:12-15

**Thursday:** Psalm 47; Matthew 28:16-20

**Friday:** Psalm 47; John 16:20-23

**Saturday:** Psalm 47; John 16:23-28

**Sunday:** Psalm 68:32-35; 1 Peter 5; John 17:1-11

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant that we may walk in his way, rejoice in his truth, and share his risen life; who lives 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:**

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**ANGLICAN NEWS:** <http://anglicancg.org.au/news-and-events/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.

**BBECET:** Thank you to all those attended or supported the wonderful gathering at City Church last Saturday, between ticket sales and donations, after expenses, we were able to deposit \$1642 into the BBECET account which will help to allow scripture teaching in our three primary schools and high school. Forty nine people were in attendance. John Hoggan.

**CREATIVE WORSHIP:** Preparation for Pentecost. Meeting in the church on Tuesday at 1.00pm. Please come along if you are interested.

**GLEAN:** Will go ahead on Wednesday.

**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.

**FINANCIAL WELL-BEING WORKSHOP:** Mission Australia is hosting a free financial well-being workshop at the Bay Pavilions in Batemans Bay on 31st May. I thought it may be of interest to some members of the Church community. Topics include: An introduction to financial well-being & budgeting; No interest loans & energy accounts assistance payments; Buy now pay later services; Scams & digital identity; Gamble Aware counselling. If you want details (you need to book for it) see Gayleane or there is a flyer on the noticeboard in the Narthex.

#### **PRAYERS AND PRAISE:**

- Continuing prayers for those going through tough times and illnesses.
- Give thanks for answered prayers and healing.
- Prayers for those coping with Covid, may they have mild symptoms and a complete quick recovery.
- Congratulations to Rev Ann Burt on being appointed Locum at St Johns Moruya.

**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, Susan Bateman.

**Bible Study Answers: Read Acts 17: 16 - 31. What is the Areopagus in Athens?** The Areopagus was both a place, the Areopagus hill on slopes of the Acropolis, and also the name of the Athens judicial council that considered and tried major crimes and religious disputes. The Areopagus is the setting for the

Apostle Paul's Areopagus sermon during his visit to Athens. However, it is unclear whether Paul gave his speech before the Areopagus council in the setting of a judicial investigation or trial, or on the physical location of the Areopagus hill as an informal speech. The Areopagus likely would not have met on the actual Areopagus hill by the time of Paul's visit, but rather in the agora or the Stoa Basileios. The imagery that Paul describes in his searching is very much the image of the hill as even today it is littered with the remnants of many lesser temples flowing down from the Acropolis. Where Paul spoke is not significant but it is clear that he spoke to the elite and educated of Athens who would likely have formed the membership of the Areopagus council. In this way it might be considered analogous with other passages that show apostles appearing before the Sanhedrin.

What had distressed Paul in Athens and gave impetus and passion to his debating and proclaiming? He was distressed by the wide scale worship of idols. There seemed to be a separate idol for everything.

**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?** The Athenians had a long and proud tradition of logic and debate of public issues, including religion and philosophy (the Stoics) and also of self-indulgence and excess (the Epicureans) that is possible in a long-term affluent society. They had many gods for which they had temples and idols but no real belief that these gods were in control of human life, they saw gods as distant, unpredictable, fractious and needing to be appeased. They were often afraid of not praying to the correct gods about the things they sought – and their gods were jealous of each other leading to a religion of fear and uncertainty. Paul used their culture and plethora of gods to engage them by saying he saw them as extremely religious, even to the point of praying to an unknown God. He then made the argument that he knew and could name that unknown God for 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? He bases his discourse on God as the omnipotent creator of heaven and earth responsible for human existence and intending to appoint a judge over life. They hear this and Paul quotes their poet Arastus (verse 28) to show that the Greeks are included as God's children in creation. However, when Paul speaks of the resurrection of the dead they cannot accept his teaching and only a few believed. Their intellectual approach could not accept Paul's assertion of Christ's divinity as evidenced by his resurrection.

How might this passage assist us as we look at presenting the gospel today? We live in a neo-pagan post-Christian pluralistic world where all religions are considered equally valid and a significant number of people reject all religion but especially, because of its claims of exclusivity of salvation, Christianity. Pluralistic, we live in a country with many different faiths that are increasingly reflected in our culture. Therefore unwitting syncretism, blending of different faiths together, is a risk to the clear proclamation of Jesus e.g. a significant number of our common exercise and martial arts disciplines have a basis in other religions and it is not always clear where the barrier between the spiritual and the physical element of the discipline lies. A challenge is that the current culture treats all religions to be of equal value and veracity (by definition rather than studied distinction) and therefore any Christian claim to being the single objective truth is seen as arrogant or even abhorrent. Post-Christian, the majority of the nation now has no cultural Christian underpinning and so any conversation that we initiate that assumes Christian concepts (e.g. universal sin) will be nonsensical to their ears – how can they recognise the need for a saviour if they have no concept of sin and needing to be saved. This means that we need to find a different approach to start our faith discussion than we did a generation or two ago. Neo-pagan or new pagan, we are seeing a resurgence of worship of elemental spirits. This is most evident in the New Age movement and those spirits are usually associated with aspects of the created order e.g. earth, wind, fire or of human behaviour e.g. love, war, power. In modern garb these spirits approximate the gods of the Greek pantheon that Paul encountered and spoke against in Athens and so this passage has much to say to us today.

## Sunday 14 May

I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the father but through me.

**Traditional:** Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise - ([52](#)) [Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise \(Tune: St Denio - 4vv\) \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#)

**Contemporary:** O Praise The Name (Anástasis) ([52](#)) [O Praise The Name \(Anástasis\) Lyric Video - Hillsong Worship - YouTube](#)

Read. John 14: 15-21. 15 "If you love me, keep my commands. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."

Thoughts: I will not leave you as orphans - Jesus was teaching them that he must leave them and these words of John record how he comforted and assured them. Change is always difficult when it involves loss of relationships and presence but Jesus knows that in physical form he is very limited – he can only be in one place at any time and he moves slowly, he is limited by his human form. It makes him very present and very visible but it constrains his capacity to be with and care for all the disciples that his father sees and desires across the whole world. He will leave so that we can be restored to a direct (Adam in the garden like) relationship to our Father but he will send the Holy Spirit so that we can have God's comforting, protecting and enabling presence with us in all places and all times - there are no orphans in the Kingdom of God, his love reaches us all. God reminds us that we are to extend the love that he gives to us to all who love him and keep his commands (this passage) and elsewhere even to our enemies that they might come to know the King.

**Song:** No Longer Slaves <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8TkUMJtK5k>

**Prayers:** Gracious God, immortal, invisible God only wise. You are a mystery as deep as the sea; the more we search, the more we find, but we may never see you face to face. You reveal yourself to us in Jesus, your Christ. Reveal yourself through him who is the way the truth and the life so that in this broken world that we might turn to you and be restored to life in abundance.

Pray for the violence in Sudan and Ukraine to cease and peace to be restored.

Pray for the work of Bush Church Aid and our link partners Simon and Angela Owen at Cloncurry, give thanks that Simon is to be ordained an Anglican priest in the Diocese of North Queensland on Thursday 18 May enabling even more ministry in Cloncurry and the surrounds.

Gracious Lord, we thank you that you watch over us and hear our prayers. We give thanks for all mothers and for the gift of physical life that they give and nurture to maturity. You who became human through a woman, grant to all mothers the courage they need to face the uncertain future that life with children can bring with optimism and hope. Help us to be gracious and generous to each other. Heal and restore our brokenness and provide for our families. Lead us into a new season of worship and give us a deeper understanding of what it is to praise God in all things and worship him alone.

**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:** God Himself is Present ([52](#)) [Ensemblex - God himself is present - YouTube](#)

**Contemporary:** In Christ Alone ([52](#)) [In Christ Alone -Keith and Kristyn Getty -with lyrics! - 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 1: 6 - 14. What event does this describe? What event does this foreshadow and how are the two events alike?**

**What are disciples instructed to do between these two events?**

**What does it mean to you to be a witness to Jesus Christ?**

**What gave the power and authority to the disciples to be effective witnesses?**

