



ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALTONA / LAVERTON

St Eanswythe's Altona :: St Clement's Altona Meadows :: O Te Wairua Tapu Ki Poipiripi



*To proclaim God's love and life in Christ:
growing in faith † serving others † nurturing a common life*

22nd August 2021 THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

8am Morning Prayer, streamed on Facebook
9:30am Service of Scripture and Prayer, on Zoom

Welcome...

...whether you are sharing in worship online or reading this pew sheet quietly at home. The life of our parish continues, as together we praise the Lord, reflect on God's word, and pray for the world, the church, our community and each other.

We look forward to gathering again in person as soon as possible.

Our parish lies on the country of the Kulin nation. We recognise and honour the Indigenous custodians of this land over countless generations, and we pay our respects to their elders, past and present.

We commit ourselves to the path of reconciliation, justice and healing (including to Pay The Rent to local First Nations people).

SHARING THE PATH OF FAITH

reflections from the clergy and our parish community

Greetings to you.

On the next page you will find in our readings some rather bold pronouncements by the apostle Paul.

We aren't fighting against human enemies but against rulers, authorities, forces of cosmic darkness, and spiritual powers of evil in the heavens! (Eph. 6.12)

The news last Monday, about the lockdown being extended, disappointed me. I got the impression from the news and in conversation that while many people, however worn out, support the restrictions, others are fed up and frustrated by them. As I was preparing the pew sheet, some words of St Paul in one of our readings struck me. Fighting against rulers and authorities?! Oh dear! I'm far too tired for that...

Of course, then I reread the sentence. The authorities he is speaking of are not human governments: *we are not fighting against human enemies* – or, more literally, 'enemies of flesh and blood'. They are spiritual forces: *cosmic forces of darkness and powers of evil*. Intriguing..

There is an ancient teaching of St Augustine of Hippo about evil. He says evil isn't something substantial in itself; it is the absence of the good. That is, God has not made some evil things to set alongside good things. Evil is what eats away at the good things the Lord has created. Take a wound, for instance:

'The wound...is not a substance, but a defect in the substance of the flesh which is in itself good, a symptom of the flesh's lack of health.'

Slightly different in the case of a virus. It is a bacteria, a real thing – but not an inherently evil one. It reproduces itself unconsciously, as far as we can tell, seeking to live and to thrive. The problem is it does so at the expense of other creatures – at the expense of human health and even life. It eats away at something infinitely precious to us.

In this sense an evil has befallen our world. The isolation measures are, for better or worse, an attempt to shield one another from it. But they, too, come at a cost. Plenty of the goods of our lives are absent: friends, grandchildren, basketball games, usual employments; for the Christian, we are going without the sacrament of the Lord's body, the bread of life. The lack of these things eats into our spiritual wellbeing. Because they are things worth missing. They are good – worth 'hungering' for!

Something I am appreciating about Zoom (a little reluctantly at first!), is not the illusion of being virtually in the same room as others. We are not in the same room as others, not in the same space. But how I am appreciating being able to see the faces! To hear the voices! To *remember* some of the greatest goods that are absent from my life at the moment! To share the prayers and the praises, the hopes, disappointments, frustrations, the laughter and deep spiritual joy of the Gospel. Whatever deprivations assail us for a season, the goodness of this life given to us abides, and is reflected in the faces around us, even 'viewed' at a distance.

Meanwhile, check out Ephesians 6.14-17. The armour of God is as near to hand as the Spirit of the Lord himself...

Love and prayers to all the saints in Altona, Altona Meadows, Laverton and Point Cook, Katie

PRAYERS AND READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

THE COLLECT (PRAYER OF THE DAY)

Everliving God, your Son, Jesus Christ, gave himself as living bread for the life of the world: give us such a knowledge of his presence that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life to serve you continually; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

A reading from the first book of Kings.

Solomon stood before the LORD's altar in front of the entire Israelite assembly and, spreading out his hands toward the sky, he said:

'LORD God of Israel, there's no god like you in heaven above or on earth below. You keep the covenant and show loyalty to your servants who walk before you with all their heart. This is the covenant you kept with your servant David, my father, which you promised him. Today, you have fulfilled what you promised. So now, LORD, Israel's God, keep what you promised my father David, your servant, when you said to him, "You will never fail to have a successor sitting on Israel's throne as long as your descendants carefully walk before me just as you walked before me." So now, God of Israel, may your promise to your servant David, my father, come true.

'But how could God possibly live on earth? If heaven, even the highest heaven, can't contain you, how can this temple that I've built contain you? LORD my God, listen to your servant's prayer and request, and hear the cry and prayer that your servant prays to you today. Constantly watch over this temple, the place about which you said, "My name will be there," and listen to the prayer that your servant is praying toward this place. Listen to the request of your servant and your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Listen from your heavenly dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive!

...
'Listen also to the immigrant who isn't from your people Israel but who comes from a distant country because of your reputation—because they will hear of your great reputation, your great power, and your outstretched arm. When the immigrant comes and prays toward this temple, then listen from heaven, where you live, and do everything the immigrant asks. Do this so that all the people of the earth may know your reputation and revere you, as your people Israel do, and recognise that this temple I have built bears your name.'

(8.22-30, 41-43; CEB)

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

How lovely is your dwelling-place: O Lord God of hosts!
My soul has a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

The sparrow has found her a home, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young: even your altar, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

Blessed are those who dwell in your house: they will always be praising you.

Blessed are those whose strength is in you: in whose heart are the highways to Zion;

Who, going through the valley of dryness, find there a spring from which to drink: till the autumn rain shall clothe it with blessings.

They go from strength to strength: they appear, every one of them, before the God of gods in Zion.

O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob.

Behold, O God, him who reigns over us: and look upon the face of your anointed.

One day in your courts is better than a thousand: I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of ungodliness.

For the Lord God is a light and a shield, the Lord gives favour and honour: and no good thing will he withhold from those who walk in innocence.

O Lord God of hosts: blessed are those who put their trust in you.

(84)

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter to the Ephesians

Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and his powerful strength. Put on God's armour so that you can make a stand against the tricks of the devil. We aren't fighting against human enemies but against rulers, authorities, forces of cosmic darkness, and spiritual powers of evil in the heavens. Therefore, pick up the full armour of God so that you can stand your ground on the evil day and after you have done everything possible to still stand. So stand with the belt of truth around your waist, justice as your breastplate, and put shoes on your feet so that you are ready to spread the good news of peace. Above all, carry the shield of faith so that you can extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is God's word.

Offer prayers and petitions in the Spirit all the time. Stay alert by hanging in there and praying for all believers. As for me, pray that when I open my mouth, a message may be given to me to boldly make known the mystery of the gospel. I'm an ambassador in chains for the sake of the gospel. Pray so that the Lord will give me the confidence to say what I have to say.

(6.10-20; CEB)

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL

A reading from the Gospel according to John

Jesus said: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in them. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me lives because of me. This is the bread that came

down from heaven. It isn't like the bread your ancestors ate, and then they died. Whoever eats this bread will live forever." Jesus said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

Many of his disciples who heard this said, "This message is harsh. Who can hear it?"

Jesus knew that the disciples were grumbling about this and he said to them, "Does this offend you? What if you were to see the Son of Man going up where he was before? The Spirit is the one who gives life and the flesh doesn't help at all. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. Yet some of you don't believe." Jesus knew from the beginning who wouldn't believe and the one who would betray him. He said, "For this reason I said to you that none can come to me unless the Father enables them to do so." At this, many of his disciples turned away and no longer accompanied him.

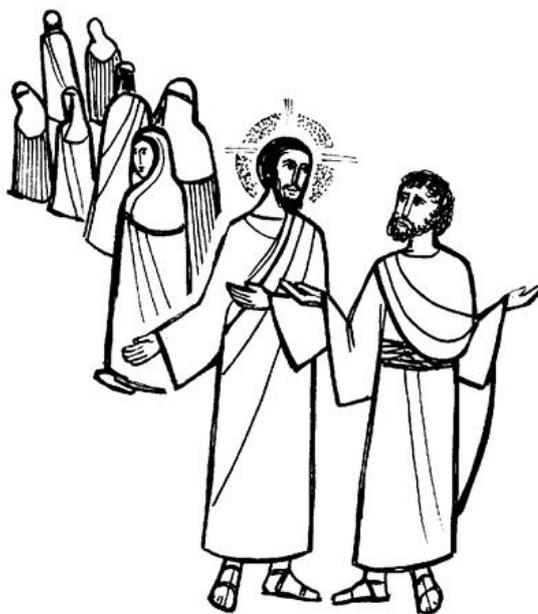
Jesus asked the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?"

Simon Peter answered, "Lord, where would we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe, and have come to know that you are the holy one of God."

(6.56-69; CEB)

Hear the word of the Lord:

Thanks be to God.



NOTES AND NEWS

for your information and prayers, from around and beyond the parish

Prayer

Through this week we will continue our lockdown pattern, meeting online at 9am for Morning Prayer and at 5:30pm for Evening Prayer. Do join in as you are able, as we pause to pray together (see details on next page).

Services streamed on Facebook can be found at www.facebook.com/anglicanaltlay

Services on Zoom can be joined at zoom.us/j/9726172254 (passcode 93981005)

Changes of plans

The service of ordination for two deacons, Andrew Seedhom and Mark Tibben, has been postponed due to further restrictions announced this week. Also deferred is the commissioning service for the Rev'd Dave Thompson as Priest-in-Charge of Brimbank Anglican Parish. Please keep Andrew, Mark, and Dave in your prayers as they await revised plans for these significant events.

For the St Eanswythe's Patronal Festival on 12 September, sadly it is unlikely to be possible for us to hold a combined service with the whole parish. Plans for that Sunday will have to be confirmed closer to the time - please watch this space.

Daily Prayer app

The Diocese of Melbourne Prayer Diary app follows the daily readings for Morning Prayer and provides a short devotion and prayer each day. Available for Apple and Android devices: search for "ADOM Prayer Diary" to download.

Looking ahead: dates for the diary

12 September

St Eanswythe's Patronal Festival

10 October

Blessing of Animals: 4pm at St Clement's

Readings for next Sunday: 28th August (Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost)

Song of Songs 2.8-13; Psalm 45.1-2, 6-9; James 1.17-27; Mark 7.1-8, 14-23.

Take some time to prepare for worship together by exploring the readings beforehand. Some things to notice might be:

Is anything here particularly relevant to my situation at this time?

Is there anything here that doesn't immediately make sense to me?

What comes just before and just after this section of the Bible?

Does this remind me of something elsewhere in the Bible?

For our prayers:

The world and nation: For peace and security for the people of Afghanistan. For those in Haiti suffering the aftermath of earthquake and storms.

The Church:

World Council of Churches: For the church in Liberia and Sierra Leone. For Christians who are facing persecution and martyrdom, and for those who pray and grieve for them.

Anglican Church of Australia: The Diocese of Riverina (Bp Donald Kirk, Clergy & People).

Diocese of Melbourne: Archbishop Philip and Bishop Kate; All Saints' Clayton (Charlie Fletcher, Abraham Amuom, Jeremiah Paul).

Our parish & community: For those seeking to support the needs of neighbours near and far.

Agencies supported by our parish:

Anglicare Victoria—prison chaplaincy ministry.

Those with particular needs at this time: Hannah, Jemma, Kay, Vicky, Tania, Nancy, Joyce, Vivienne.

The communion of saints:

Year's mind: Muriel Hudson (22), Joyce Stapleton (22), Trevor McDonald (24), Mary Truman (25), Jesse James (26).

To add a name to the public pew sheet prayer list, either those needing prayers now or those to be remembered on the anniversary of their death, please contact one of the clergy.

You can also contact one of the clergy by email or phone, for prayers to be included when we gather for Morning and Evening Prayer on Zoom.



Keeping in touch...

- ⇒ Pew sheets are available on our website at www.anglicanaltlav.org.au/pew-sheets
- ⇒ Visit www.facebook.com/anglicanaltlav for photos, links, news and other updates.
- ⇒ If you don't already receive our weekly email including news, changes of service times, and other updates, please send your email address to parish@anglicanaltlav.org.au

Giving...

- ⇒ Deposits can be made to the parish Bendigo Bank account at any time (BSB 633 000, account number 157 594 722, account name "St Eanswythe's Altona with St Clement's Laverton Anglican Churches"). For pledge giving please include your name or envelope/reference number. For further details see anglicanaltlav.org.au/giving

The Anglican Parish of Altona/Laverton

www.anglicanaltlav.org.au

(03) 9398 1005 parish@anglicanaltlav.org.au PO Box 48, Altona VIC 3018

Vicar:

The Rev'd Chris Lancaster
0423 199 850 chris.lancaster@anglicanaltlav.org.au

Assistant Curate:

The Rev'd Katie Bellhouse
0416 378 748 katie.bellhouse@anglicanaltlav.org.au

Assistant Priest & Maori Minister:

The Rev'd Danny McRoberts
0448 841 196 dann.mcroberts@gmail.com

Churchwardens:

Lily Griffin
Anita McAnda
Scott Pitcher

Child Safe Officers:

Sandra Hansen (St Clement's)
Anita McAnda (St Eanswythe's)

This week in our parish:

Sunday 22nd August

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

8am Morning Prayer, streamed on Facebook
9:30am Service of Scripture and Prayer, on Zoom

Monday 23rd

9am Morning Prayer, on Zoom
5:30pm Evening Prayer, streamed on Facebook

Tuesday 24th

9am Morning Prayer, streamed on Facebook
5:30pm Evening Prayer, on Zoom

Wednesday 25th

9am Morning Prayer, on Zoom
5:30pm Evening Prayer, streamed on Facebook

Thursday 26th

9am Morning Prayer, streamed on Facebook
5:30pm Evening Prayer, on Zoom

Friday 27th

9am Morning Prayer, on Zoom
5:30pm Evening Prayer, streamed on Facebook

Sunday 29th August

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

8am Morning Prayer, streamed on Facebook
9:30am Service of Scripture and Prayer, on Zoom

Services on Facebook can be accessed at www.facebook.com/anglicanaltlav

Services on Zoom can be accessed at zoom.us/j/9726172254 (passcode 93981005)

(Or by phoning (03) 7018 2005—when prompted, enter 9726172254#;
then when asked for a participant ID, press #.)