



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*

26th September 2021 EIGHTEENTH 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

Dear friends,

For a bearer of good news our Lord has a good deal to say about judgement. Hear today's Gospel (this translation is a bit different to the one inside the pew sheet): *'If your hand should ensnare you, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into the Life than for one who has two hands to go away into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire.'*

In the New Testament the word we translate 'hell' is Gehenna. Gehenna was an actual place. It was the rubbish tip outside the city of Jerusalem, where city waste was taken and burned. So noxious and so much dark history was associated with the site that it was taken up as a metaphor by preachers like Jesus for what it would be like to face God with a lot of bad stuff of your conscience. Jesus says you'd be better off to have one eye and a clean conscience than to face God with two eyes that have caused you to stumble – for those two eyes to be filled with envy, for instance, or for me to come before God with two hands that I have used to acquire a thousand goods I didn't need. I'd be a better specimen of the human race if I had only one hand, but that hand had spent its life raised in prayer, washing and tending to residents in aged care, or making lopsided music to delight my neighbours.

This is Gospel – this is Good News – because it's good advice. Never think that the short-term or apparent cost of facing your faults, and taking the nobler path, will outweigh the benefit. It will lead into life. It will lead to our Lord.

Maybe it's not literally the hand I need to cut out, but the habit, not literally the eye, but the way of seeing things. (There is a rather notorious story of Origen, a monk and teacher of the Faith in the second century, taking a similar teaching of Jesus so literally he did indeed operate on himself... Not a good idea, folks!)

Whatever it is, it is not the flawed parts of ourselves that define us. They can be overcome ('cut out'), and we will not be the worse for it.

What truly defines us, is the formative power of the Saviour's love. The great mystic St Catherine of Siena says all other influences on us and within us can be overcome, 'by strength of the fire of divine, most ardent, and immeasurable love.' Let us lay ourselves open to that fire Jesus speaks of. A fire that is, in the end, a fire of love.

Yours in Christ, Katie

PRAYERS AND READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

THE COLLECT (PRAYER OF THE DAY)

O God, your Son has taught us that those who give a cup of water in his name will not lose their reward: open our eyes to see those who are in need, and teach us to set no store by riches and earthly rewards, so that, in surrendering ourselves to serve you in your children, we may labour for the treasure that endures; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Esther

When the king and Haman came in for the banquet with Queen Esther, the king said to her, “This is the second day we’ve met for wine. What is your wish, Queen Esther? I’ll give it to you. And what do you want? I’ll do anything—even give you half the kingdom.”

Queen Esther answered, “If I please the king, and if the king wishes, give me my life—that’s my wish—and the lives of my people too. That’s my desire. We have been sold—I and my people—to be wiped out, killed, and destroyed. If we simply had been sold as male and female slaves, I would have said nothing. But no enemy can compensate the king for this kind of damage.”

King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, “Who is this person, and where is he? Who would dare do such a thing?”

Esther replied, “A man who hates, an enemy—this wicked Haman!” Haman was overcome with terror in the presence of the king and queen.

[...]

Harbona, one of the eunuchs serving the king, said, “Sir, look! There’s the stake that Haman made for Mordecai, the man who spoke up and did something good for the king. It’s standing at Haman’s house—seventy-five feet high.”

“Impale him on it!” the king ordered. So they impaled Haman on the very pole that he had set up for Mordecai, and the king’s anger went away.

[...]

Mordecai wrote these things down and sent letters to all the Jews in all the provinces, both near and far, of King Ahasuerus. He made it a rule that Jews keep the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar as special days each and every year. They are the days on which the Jews finally put to rest the troubles with their enemies. The month is the one when everything turned around for them from sadness to joy, and from sad, loud crying to a holiday. They are to make them days of feasts and joyous events, days to send food gifts to each other and money gifts to the poor.

(7.1-6, 9-10; 9.20-22; CEB)

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

If the Lord had not been on our side, now may Israel say: if the Lord had not been on our side, when our enemies rose against us,

Then they would have swallowed us alive: when their anger was kindled against us.

Then the waters would have overwhelmed us, and the torrent gone over us: the raging waters would have gone clean over us.

But praised be the Lord: who has not given us as a prey to their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler: the snare is broken, and we have gone free.

Our help is in the name of the Lord: who has made heaven and earth.

(124)

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of James

Most important, my brothers and sisters, never make a solemn pledge—neither by heaven nor earth, nor by anything else. Instead, speak with a simple “Yes” or “No,” or else you may fall under judgment.

If any of you are suffering, they should pray. If any of you are happy, they should sing. If any of you are sick, they should call for the elders of the church, and the elders should pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. Prayer that comes from faith will heal the sick, for the Lord will restore them to health. And if they have sinned, they will be forgiven. For this reason, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous person is powerful in what it can achieve. Elijah was a person just like us. When he earnestly prayed that it wouldn’t rain, no rain fell for three and a half years. He prayed again, God sent rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

My brothers and sisters, if any of you wander from the truth and someone turns back the wanderer, recognise that whoever brings a sinner back from the wrong path will save them from death and will bring about the forgiveness of many sins.

(5.12-20; CEB)

Hear the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark

John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone throwing demons out in your name, and we tried to stop him because he wasn’t following us.”

Jesus replied, “Don’t stop him. No one who does powerful acts in my name can quickly turn around and curse me. Whoever isn’t against us is for us.

“I assure you that whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will certainly be rewarded.

“As for whoever causes these little ones who believe in me to trip and fall into sin, it would be better for them to have a huge stone hung around their necks and to be thrown into the lake.

“If your hand causes you to fall into sin, chop it off. It’s better for you to enter into life crippled than to go away with two hands into the fire of hell, which can’t be put out.

“If your foot causes you to fall into sin, chop it off. It’s better for you to enter life lame than to be thrown into hell with two feet.

“If your eye causes you to fall into sin, tear it out. It’s better for you to enter God’s kingdom with one eye than to be thrown into hell with two. That’s a place where worms don’t die and the fire never goes out.

“Everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? Maintain salt among yourselves and keep peace with each other.”

(9.38-50; 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

Blessing of Animals— Next Weekend!

Next Sunday there will be another service in the afternoon to mark Saint Francis’ Day. We will be gathering on Zoom for a time of children’s song, a dramatic rendition of the story of Saint Francis and the wolf of Dubbio, and a blessing of animals.

It would be great to see some of the parish and extended animal family tuning in and turning out for this service, a time to laugh, sing and revive our spirits in the presence of our Lord.

Check out our [website](#) or parish Facebook page for further details, and please invite others too!

Prayer Vigil

Common Grace invites you to join in an online Prayer Vigil for Aboriginal Deaths in Custody: tonight (Sunday 26 September), 7:30-8:30pm on Zoom. More details are on the [Common Grace website](#).

Daylight Saving

Don’t forget that clocks go forward an hour next weekend—before we meet for worship on Sunday morning!

In memoriam

This week came sad news of the death of Lance Nickson, who was known to many in our parish. His funeral will be at 1:45pm on Monday 27th at St Agnes’, Glen Huntly, followed by a committal at Altona Memorial Park at 3:45pm. Both services will be live streamed: see www.facebook.com/CraigEvansFuneralsVictoria

Lectionaries and Calendars

It is time once again to place your orders for next year’s Australian Anglican lectionaries and calendars. Do consider buying extra calendars as gifts! You can order using the [online form](#) or by contacting the parish office.

Annual Parish Meeting

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday 31 October, and as last year we will need to use Zoom. Please don’t hesitate to contact the vicar or one of the wardens if you are keen to join in but unable to use Zoom.

The parish electoral roll will soon be updated in preparation for the meeting. If you wish to join the electoral roll and intend to participate in the meeting, please complete the form available [online](#) or from the office.

Documents relating to the Annual Meeting will be added to [this page](#) on our website over coming weeks.

Please send **reports for the Annual Meeting** to parish@anglicanaltlv.org.au by Monday 11 October.

Looking ahead: dates for the diary

3 October

Blessing of Animals: 4-5pm on Zoom

31 October

Annual Parish Meeting: 10:30am on Zoom

Readings for next Sunday: 3rd October (Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost)

Job 1.1, 2.-10; Psalm 26; Hebrews 1.1-4, 2.5-12; Mark 10.1,13-16

For our prayers:

The world and nation: For relations among Australia, the US and the European powers, presently in tension.

The Church:

World Council of Churches: For the church in Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Peru. For Christians who are facing persecution and martyrdom, and for those who pray and grieve for them.

Anglican Church of Australia: The Diocese of Tasmania (Bp Richard Condie, Missioner Bp Chris Jones, Clergy & People).

Diocese of Melbourne: Archbishop Philip and Bishop Kate; St James' Anglican Church Glen Iris (Samuel Crane).

Our parish & community: For those living in inadequate accommodation, and for better provision of public housing.

Agencies supported by our parish:

Newport Outlets.

Those with particular needs at this time: Nancy, Joyce, Vivienne, Tom, Belle, Sam, Jim, Cathy, Mabel.

The communion of saints:

Those who have died recently: Lance Nickson.

Year's mind: James Featherby (28), Doreen McAnda (1), Joan McFarland (1), David Penman, bishop (1), Alexander Lambert (2).

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

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Churchwardens:

Lily Griffin
Anita McAnda
Scott Pitcher

Child Safe Officer:

The Rev'd Katie Bellhouse

This week in our parish:

Sunday 26th September

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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

Monday 27th

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

Tuesday 28th

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

Wednesday 29th

9am Morning Prayer, on Zoom

5:30pm Evening Prayer, streamed on Facebook

7:00 pm Point Cook Small Group, on Zoom

Thursday 30th

9am Morning Prayer, streamed on Facebook
5:30pm Holy Eucharist, streamed on Facebook

Friday 1st October

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

Sunday 3rd October

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

8am Morning Prayer, streamed on Facebook
9:30am Service of Scripture and Prayer, on Zoom
4pm St Francis service, 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 #.)