

Acknowledgement of Country

From time immemorial the Wurundjeri people have cared for this land, nurtured it, depended on it and given honour and thanks to the Creator.

As we acknowledge their faithful custodianship of the land, and the sacred stories they have told; as we offer our respect to their elders, past, present and emerging, guide us Lord in caring for them, this land, and each other with the help of the Holy Spirit of Dreaming.

Sentence: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. *Isaiah 2. 3a;*

Collect: Faithful God, whose promises stand unshaken through all generations; renew is in hope, that we may be awake and alert, watching for the glorious return of Jesus Christ, our Judge and Saviour, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The first reading is from The Book of Isaiah 2:1-5

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

Hear the Word of the Lord; Thanks be to God

Psalm 122 - said by alternate half verses;

- 1 I was glad when they said to me;
'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'
- 2 And now our feet are standing;
within your gates, O Jerusalem.
- 3 Jerusalem is built as a city;
where the pilgrims gather in unity.
- 4 There the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord;
**As he commanded Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the Lord.**
- 5 There are set thrones of judgement;
the thrones of the house of David.
- 6 O pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
**may those who love you prosper.
and prosperity in your palaces.**
- 8 For the sake of my kindred and companions;
I will pray that peace be with you.
- 9 For the sake of the house of the Lord our God;
I will seek for your good.

The second reading is from the Letter to the Romans 13:9-14

The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word. 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Hear the Word of the Lord; Thanks be to God

*The Lord be with you, and also with you
The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 24. 36-44;
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ*

Jesus spoke to his disciples: 'About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord, Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Faith Matters!! Advent 1 - Hope

It feels like my commissioning ceremony was just yesterday. I listened to Bishop Kate speak about having the cure of souls with her, leading the parish as an Anglican Community and discerning a future with the parish as we move forward, And now Advent arrives, Advent arrives abruptly disrupts our lengthy season of Ordinary Sundays. It presents a sharp contrast to the normal flow of worship and ministry. It shifts outside the area where things that have become normal to us. As we enter a comfort zone in our worship, discipleship and are dangerously close to accepting the way things are and the way things have been as normative, Advent comes and shocks us into action.

The gospel text wake us up, to disrupt our comfortable, ordinary season of life. Matthew reminds us that our current reality—"eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage"—will not put us on the side of the sheep, on the good side of Christ's final judgment. This week's Gospel reading comes from a long speech, Jesus's last one in Matthew. At the end of it, Jesus explains with unmistakable clarity that when the Son of man returns, we will be judged on how we tended to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned.

It is on this day that we have our Annual Parish Meeting looking at the things that have happened in the last year, and deciding if we are going to disrupt the comfortable way we have been doing things. Are we going to do things because this is how they have always been done, or are we going to use the gospel text to wake and energise our faith into action. As well as completing compliance requirements for the Diocese, the APM is a day that we reflect on what our parish does to tend to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned.

Whatever our parish circumstance, the Word of God remains the same. So does our resurrection hope - which is eternal and unchangeable. Advent hope is about transcending the ordinary and every day business of the parish, and releasing heaven into our space on earth.