



BALLINA & LENNOX HEAD ANGLICANS

An inclusive Christ-centred community, growing in our relationship with God and the wider community

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Bundjalung nation, and pay respects to their elders past and present.

THE BIRTH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST 21 JUNE 2020

Pastoral message from the Rector

Today we celebrate the Birth of John the Baptist. For me, he is one of the most charismatic people in the Bible. He grew to be a man and died tragically at the hands of King Herod, but his life was filled with energy. His parents thought that they could not have children but his mother, Elizabeth, conceived in her old age. We can read about this in the first chapter of Luke. There is a beautiful moment when Mary, after she had agreed to be the mother of the Christ child, went to visit her relative Elizabeth and the baby leapt for joy in Elizabeth's womb. I guess even from a very early time in John's formation, he was energetic.

John's birth attracted quite a lot of attention from the people in his home village. Being born to older parents would have been a talking point, but there was more to come. John's father Zechariah had had a bit of a debate with God when Zechariah was serving in the sanctuary, and because of this, God took away Zechariah's ability to speak until the child was to be born. People realised that he had seen a vision so that was another topic of conversation in the village. But there was still more to come.

It was the custom at that time for the first-born son to be given his father's name. When John was born, the villagers all expected that he would be called Zechariah. However, God had told Zechariah to call him John. Because Zechariah could not speak, they asked Elizabeth what name the child would be given. They were astonished when she said he was to be called John, and they argued with her. It wasn't until Zechariah wrote on a slate that his son was to be called John that the people believed them. It was also at that moment that God restored Zechariah's ability to speak and he proclaimed the prophecy that we know as 'The Song of Zechariah' (Luke 1:68-79).

John grew to be a man and lived in the wilderness, eating wild honey and locusts and wearing camel skin clothes. He was the one who called people to repent so that they could be ready to meet the Christ, the saviour of the world.

Do you ever look at a little baby and wonder what they will become in adult life? God's plan for us can result in some surprises along the way, just like there were for Zechariah and Elizabeth and John the Baptist if we say 'Yes' to God. As I read in the Bible about these amazing characters, like John the Baptist, I would say 'Yes' every time and I would not want it any other way! Happy birthday John the Baptist.

Every blessing



Matthew

Birthdays: Ria Mars, and Jeanette Weston.

News: SPECIAL COVID-19 APPEAL

To help maintain Parish ministry and the jobs of paid churchworkers through this crisis, the Diocese has opened a special appeal. Contributions to this fund will go first to maintaining paid roles of churchworkers across the Diocese, whether located in Parishes, the Registry or special ministries such as chaplaincies. Click here to find out more and learn about ways to donate: [The Anglican Diocese of Grafton COVID-19 Support Fund](#)

COVID Safe App: Matthew and Cathy encourage all parishioners with a Smart Phone to download the government's COVID Safe App. If you have any questions, please contact Cathy who is happy to help.

We pray for the family of Fran Shepherd who died on Monday, asking that God grant them peace as they prepare for her funeral on 22 June at St John the Baptist, Lennox Head. Space restrictions will limit attendance to those on the family's list.

PACT Prayer: -

Gracious Lord,
When we are living in times when we have to distance ourselves from one another, humble us, O Lord, that we might use the power of prayer to send out our love to others. Grant us your strength, O Lord, that we may overcome fear and loneliness, and rejoice in knowing the power of intercession with the Lord Jesus Christ at the helm. **Amen.**

ABM Reflection:

John the Forerunner, as our Orthodox sisters and brothers call him, came to prepare the way for God to come into the world. In this panicked and anxious world, how can we become channels for God's reign of love to come into the world?

- Pray that we might be used to bring God's love, hope and justice to our towns and cities, and to the Overseas Partners with whom ABM works; for Christ has no hands, no eyes, no ears, no body now – but ours.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of St John the Baptist's Cathedral, Murray Bridge.
- Give thanks for those who work to bring love, hope and justice to a world that longs for them.

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EAC Prayer Points: -

Prayer Points for Week 9, Term Two, we pray this week for:

- staff and community members who are dealing with ill health, and those who face surgery.

- - the smooth running of Primary Chapel
- - Staff as they finalise the kinder - Year 11 reports.
- - Students doing end of Semester Assessment Tasks, and the Yr 12 students on the final stretch of their HSC major works.

We give thanks for:

- - new students coming to join our school
- - the ongoing strategic planning for the college
- - the maintenance staff who are working so hard and helping to keep us Covid free.

Ballina Anglican Op Shop is seeking volunteers looking for friendship and an opportunity to serve our community. Morning and afternoon shifts are available. If you are interested, please phone Julie Harwood 0408 653 283, Ann Emery 0417 259 290, or the op-shop 6686 0868 for more information.

Financial Giving to the Parish

During this difficult time we continue to minister to our people and our community, although in different ways. Expenses still need to be met. To cover these expenses we will shortly be drawing cash from long term deposits. Our major sources of income to cover expenses are normally provided by the giving of Parishioners and the Op Shop. The Op Shop has ceased operating and giving by Parishioners has been by the various electronic transfer methods only. A small amount of cash has been received but this method is now not to be used.

You are encouraged to support the Parish through regular giving in the following ways:

Direct deposits through AfGD (Anglican funds Grafton Diocese) known as Parish Provider: Application Form is attached. Print, complete and scan it for return as an attachment to AfGD email address: office@afgd.com.au. Alternatively, you can complete the Application Form attached, photo it with your smartphone and send the photo to AfGD email address: office@afgd.com.au.

To minimise exposure to COVID-19 please do not use the postal system to deliver the form.

Direct deposit to the Parish of Ballina Working Account: this method enables you to use your bank to electronically direct transfer funds into the following account.

Account: Parish of Ballina Working Account: *BSB:* 705-077 *Account Number:* 00040134.
Use Reference: Offering.

This system enables users to make regular weekly, fortnightly or monthly payments.

Other ways for you to support the work of the Parish are being investigated.

Many of you may be unable to use either of these methods in which case we encourage you to make a catchup donation at some time in the future when current restrictions are lifted and you can afford the outlay.

Hugh McIntosh
Parish Treasurer
3 April'20

CONTACT US

Rector	The Ven Matthew Jones: 0458 862 098	
Associate Priest	The Rev Cathy Ridd: 0427 836 988 or revridd@gmail.com	
Office Admin	Cathie Guest is working from home 9.00am to 3.00pm, Mon -Fri	
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“COUCH CHURCH”: WORSHIPPING GOD AT HOME

21 JUNE 2020

THE BIRTH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

Ctrl+Click or Click on [Couch Church](#) to watch the service online.

Hymn: The Voice Of God Goes Out To All the World

The voice of God goes out to all the world;
his glory speaks across the universe.
The great King’s herald cries from star to star:
‘With power, with justice, he will walk his way.’

The Lord has said, ‘Receive my messenger,
my promise to the world, my pledge made flesh,
a lamp to every nation, light from light’:
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.

The broken reed he will not trample down,
nor set his heel upon the dying flame.
He binds the wounds, and health is in his hand:
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.

Anointed with the Spirit and with power,
he comes to crown with comfort all the weak,
to show the face of justice to the poor:
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.

His touch will bless the eyes that darkness held,
the lame shall run, the halting tongue shall sing,
and prisoners laugh in light and liberty:
with power, with justice, he will walk his way.

Luke Connaughton (1917 - 79)
TIS 282

Gathering Prayer:

Praise the Lord, all you saints!
Praise him, all you heavenly hosts!
So great a cloud of witnesses surrounds us.
They witness to God's mighty acts.
They witness to God's steadfast love.
Their witness guides us in our faith.
Give thanks to God for St John the Baptist:
Forerunner of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Sing praise to God, sing praise to him.
Sing praise and thanks for all his saints.
Amen

Sentence:

You will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.

Luke 1.76-77

Prayer of the Day:

Almighty God,
by whose providence your servant John the Baptist was wonderfully born,
and sent to prepare the way for your Son our Saviour
by preaching a baptism of repentance:
make us so to follow his teaching and holy life,
that we may truly repent,
and, following his example, may constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice,
and patiently suffer for the truth's sake;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings:

Isaiah 49: 1-6

Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away! The Lord called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me. He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." But I said, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord, and my reward with my God." And now the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honoured in the sight of the Lord, and my God has become my strength— he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Psalm 139: 1-11

O Lord, you have searched me out and known me:

you know when I sit or when I stand,
you comprehend my thoughts long before.

You discern my path and the places where I rest:

you are acquainted with all my ways.

***All sing: In our darkness there is no darkness with you O Lord,
the deepest night is clear as the day.***

For there is not a word on my tongue:

but you, Lord, know it altogether.

You have encompassed me behind and before:

and have laid your hand upon me.

***All sing: In our darkness there is no darkness with you O Lord,
the deepest night is clear as the day.***

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me:

so high that I cannot endure it.

Where shall I go from your spirit:

or where shall I flee from your presence?

***All sing: In our darkness there is no darkness with you O Lord,
the deepest night is clear as the day.***

If I ascend into heaven you are there:
if I make my bed in the grave you are there also.
If I spread my wings towards the morning:
or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there your hand shall lead me:
and your right hand shall hold me.

***All sing: In our darkness there is no darkness with you O Lord,
the deepest night is clear as the day.***

If I say 'Surely the darkness will cover me:
and the night will enclose me',

***All sing: In our darkness there is no darkness with you O Lord,
the deepest night is clear as the day.***

Acts 13: 16-26

Paul stood up and with a gesture began to speak: "You Israelites, and others who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance for about four hundred fifty years. After that he gave them judges until the time of the prophet Samuel. Then they asked for a king; and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years. When he had removed him, he made David their king. In his testimony about him he said, 'I have found David, son of Jesse, to be a man after my heart, who will carry out all my wishes.'

Of this man's posterity God has brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus, as he promised; before his coming John had already proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was finishing his work, he said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but one is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of the sandals on his feet.' "My brothers, you descendants of Abraham's family, and others who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.

Hymn: If We Have Died To Ourselves In Jesus

Refrain:

*If we have died to ourselves in Jesus,
then we shall arise to new life in him.
Alleluia, alleluia!*

We are fire and water,
we are symbol and sign of grace,
we are the mystery,
we are the image of God's own face.

Refrain:

In the water we seek him,
in the well-spring of all that lives;
all who are thirsty,
come to be filled with the life he gives.

Refrain:

In the fire we seek him,
in the hungers and pains we bear,

hope for the hopeless,
gently revealed in the love we share.

Refrain:

In our dying and rising,
we shall follow where he has gone,
pilgrims and lover,
he is our story and he our song.

Refrain:

*If we have died to ourselves in Jesus,
then we shall arise to new life in him.
Alleluia, alleluia!*

Marty Haugen (1950 -)
TIS 475

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, 'No; he is to be called John.' They said to her, 'None of your relatives has this name.' Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbours, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Jude. All who heard them pondered them and said, 'What then will this child become?' For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

Luke 1:57-66, 80(NRSV)

Sermon

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in one God,
who made and loves all that is.
We believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was born, lived, died and rose again
and is coming to call all to account.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who calls, equips and sends out God's
people,
and brings all things to their true end.
This is our faith, the faith of the Church:
We believe in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Intercessions:

Lord God, we bring before you the hungry and poor, those who are marginalised, the oppressed, the homeless and the dispossessed. We give thanks for the many worldwide agencies that bring relief in practical help to those in need, especially in refugee camps around the world, remembering the work of the UN, Red Cross, and Red Crescent. Father give wisdom and discernment to the leaders of the US and the UK, in this time of heightened racial hostilities, that further violence may be avoided.

God of peace, for all the saints, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Father fill us with your Spirit, and entrust each of us to proclaim your gospel within our parish and beyond. May we be like John the Baptist and prepare the hearts of those who are waiting to hear your promise of forgiveness and eternal life.

God of peace, for all the saints, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We pray for our community, for our families, and for those we work with, or socialise with, as we begin to enjoy the lifting of some restrictions. We pray for all who teach within our schools, and for those who are in leadership roles with the young within our community. We pray for our service clubs that care for the elderly, especially during the current COVID-19 shutdown.

God of peace, for all the saints, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Father we bring before you all those who are in need, those who are in pain, who are lonely, who grieve. We pray for those who, like Elizabeth and Zechariah, experience the pain of fertility problems. We pray for all in need of healing, especially:

Ria Mars, Joy Swinbourne, Lucy van Eck, Neil Maclean, Norma Meehan, Malcolm Streher, Josh Stanley, Bonnie Kerkenezov, Margaret Leadbeatter, Margaret Waller, Maureen Colburt, Lynda Garde, Rachael Hampton, Alton Rowe, Ros Rowe, Elaine Frederiksen, Karen and Ben Shaw, Pauline Suffolk, Marj Roder, and Rose Fox.

God of peace, for all the saints, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Father God, we give thanks that we can look forward to the inheritance of everlasting life which your Son, our Saviour, has promised to all who in faith follow him. Fill us with your life and power, that along with John the Baptist, and with all your faithful people of every age, we too can follow in the steps of your Son, that lead to you and eternal life. We remember especially today Fran Shepherd, who followed you faithfully and has received her inheritance of everlasting life.

God of peace, for all the saints, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray-

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 for ever. Amen.

Confession:

We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.
Let us then run our race, laying aside every weight and bringing our sins to the Lord in penitence and faith.
Heavenly Father,
You have loved us with an everlasting love,
but we have broken your holy laws
and left undone what we ought to have done.
We are sorry for our sins
and turn away from them.

For the sake of your Son who died for us,
forgive us, cleanse us and change us.
By your Holy Spirit,
enable us to live for you:
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Absolution

Hymn: O Day Of God, Draw Near.

O day of God, draw near
in beauty and in power,
come with your timeless judgement now
to match our present hour.

Bring to our troubled minds,
uncertain and afraid,
the quiet of a steadfast faith,
calm of a call obeyed.

Bring justice to our land
that all may dwell secure,
and firmly build for days to come
foundations that endure.

Bring to our world of strife
your sovereign word of peace,
that war may haunt the earth no more
and desolation cease.

O day of God, draw near
as at creation's birth;
let there be light again and set
your justice in the earth.

Robert Baggie Young Scott (1899 - 1987)
TIS 616

Sending Out Prayer:

God our strength and our hope,
grant us the courage of John the Baptist,
constantly to speak the truth,
boldly to rebuke vice
and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake;
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing