



# 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.

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 13 DECEMBER 2020

### Pastoral message from the Rector

I wonder if you can do as St Paul instructs the people of Thessalonica, when he says, 'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances.' This is quite a challenge I think, especially when things are not going well.

I struggle sometimes to give thanks when things are really challenging, such as we are experiencing in these COVID-19 times. I also struggle to rejoice at these times. However, St Paul tells us that is exactly what we should be doing, so I will keep trying.

I remember sharing the story of Corrie Ten Boom in a sermon some time ago and I think the story is worth repeating. Corrie tells of the time she and her sister were prisoners in a prisoner of war compound. The soldiers were cruel and thought nothing of raping and killing the women prisoners. One day the women were moved into a new building which was infested with fleas. Corrie's sister said to the women that they must thank God for their new dwelling. They complained that it was a flea infested pit and there was nothing to give thanks for. However, Corrie's sister insisted, so they collectively prayed and sang hymns and gave thanks for their new dwelling. As time went on, the women discovered that the soldiers would not come into the building because of the fleas. It was the fleas that protected the women from being raped and kept them alive. "Give thanks in all circumstances" has a very powerful meaning when seen in this light.

I encourage all of us to spend time thinking deeply about these words from St Paul. They are very challenging but can also be very life giving. If we can find things to give thanks for, even in the midst of our darkest moments, then there is a light that shines in the darkness. This is called faith and it gives us hope. May you all find it within you to 'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and to give thanks in all circumstances.'

Advent blessings

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew', written in a cursive style.

Matthew

**Birthdays:** Cliff Davis and Gaye Ibbotson.

**Anniversary:** Fran & Gary Legge

**Christmas Services:** Carols Service Wednesday 23 December 7.00pm; Blue Christmas Thursday 24 December 6.00pm; and Christmas Day Holy Communion 8.00am at St John the Baptist Lennox Head and 9.30am at St Mary's Ballina. **There will be no service** at either centre on Sunday 27 December.

**One of the requirements for the COVID-19 Safety Plan** for a service in the church is to have a team of volunteers. Could you do any of these jobs in St Mary's?:

- Registration
- Supervising Hand Sanitising
- Pewsheets and Order of Service handout
- Ushering
- Reading/Prayers

We would love to hear from you - Kerry 0407 257 129 or Cathie Guest 6686 2094.

**Ballina Anglican Op Shop** is seeking volunteers to assist in the transfer of donations from 2.30pm – 4.00pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons. The task involves transferring new donations from the front veranda to the shed and moving the donations from the shed to the sorting room to be sorted the next day. You will be working with experienced staff so no experience necessary. Interested persons can contact Ann Emery 0417259290 or Julie Harwood 0408653283 for more information.

**Annual Reports** for inclusion at the AGM are due to be received by the office by 29 January at the latest, sooner if at all possible. If you are responsible for preparation of a report from one of our groups can you please be giving consideration to that report at this time. If you have any questions, or wonder if you are on that list, please email Cathie at [office@anglicanballina.com.au](mailto:office@anglicanballina.com.au).

**Ballina Christian Education Committee (BCEC) and Ritchies IGA** If you want to support BCEC here is one very simple way to do it. Ritchies IGA has recently launched its new IGA Card to celebrate 150 years of service to the community. Now is the time to sign up with their online app. and nominate BCEC (formerly BSREA) as the Beneficiary. They give 0.5% of sales to nominated community groups. Every little bit helps - consider making BCEC your choice!

BCEC Puzzle Books are still available from the Church Office. Please ensure \$15 is paid if taken from the Church on Sunday. Thanks for your support. Please do not take books without payment or leaving an i.o.u. with name and details.

**Coffee & Chat** will meet for the last time this year on Thursday 17 December 10.30am at The Gallery Café, 46 Cherry St. To ensure a seat is booked for you, please let Kerry Johnston know that you are coming on 0407 257 129 by 2pm Wednesday. They will resume Thursday 14 January 2021.

**Wearing of Face Masks** It is recommended as per the Public Health Order Number 7 to wear masks when singing and when vulnerable people are in attendance to minimise the risk of spreading the virus. (Refer to the Bishop's letter included with this bulletin.)

### **Financial Giving to the Parish**

Whilst the Op Shop with successful trading during the COVID pandemic has been able to catch up on its budgeted transfers to the Parish funds there is still a shortfall in offertory giving, a major source of funds required to run the Parish.

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

**Direct deposits through AfGD (Anglican funds Grafton Diocese) known as Parish Provider:** Application Form is available from the Parish Administration Office. Complete and

post it to: PO Box 4, Grafton NSW 2460; alternatively scan or photo the completed form and send it as an attachment to AfGD email address: [office@afgd.com.au](mailto:office@afgd.com.au); or

**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; or

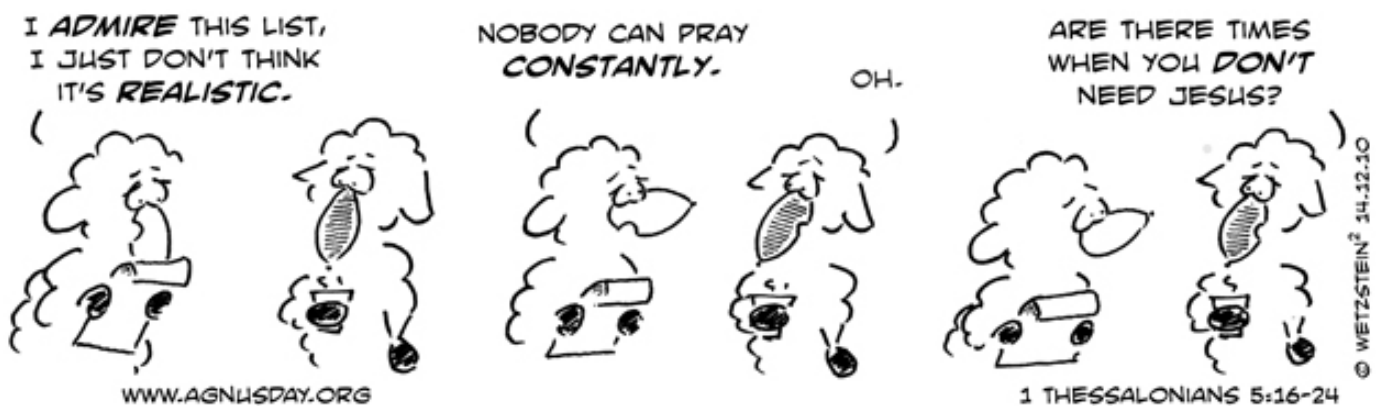
**At Sunday Services:** there is a box set aside for giving at St Mary's and St John the Baptist if you are attending Sunday worship and wish to give this way; or

**At the Admin Office:** giving by cash or EFTPOS can also be processed at the Admin Office during the week from 9.00am to 3:00pm.

Thank you.

Hugh McIntosh - Parish Treasurer

**PACT** Loving and caring Lord Jesus, only you can raise up the poor and lonely above the troubles they face in this world. Help us on this Advent journey, to look to you for answers, and encourage us to stop and give thanks, always, for the small blessings along the way. Lead us by your light to share your good news of love and forgiveness with others so that they will be encouraged to turn to you for the peace and joy they seek. Journey with us this Advent so that we too will be ready to celebrate your birth with joy. **Amen.**



## CONTACT US

**Rector**

The Ven Matthew Jones: 0458 862 098

**Associate Priest**

The Rev Cathy Ridd: 0427 836 988 or [revridd@gmail.com](mailto:revridd@gmail.com)

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Ballina and Lennox Head Anglicans

**Website** [www.anglicanballina.com.au](http://www.anglicanballina.com.au)

# “COUCH CHURCH”: WORSHIPPING GOD AT HOME

13 DECEMBER 2020

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*Don't forget to click on the link in your email to watch this service online.*

### Call to Worship

Christ is God's light for the world.  
Come, let us live in divine light.  
We are called to be people of God's light  
and we live in the light.

**Amen.**

### Hymn: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice! rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, O come, great Lord of might  
who to the tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times did give the law  
in cloud and majesty and awe.

*Rejoice! rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, O key of David, come,  
and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high  
and close the path to misery.

*Rejoice! rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, O branch of Jesse, free  
your own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save  
and give them victory o'er the grave.

*Rejoice! rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, O dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by your advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

*Rejoice! rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

Anon., Latin, 18<sup>th</sup> cent. or earlier  
TiS 265

### Gathering Prayer:

What words shall we use to tell of you, God,  
what words are adequate?  
Words are frail and faulty yet we will sing joyfully about you,  
for you love justice and righteousness.  
Our praise will resonate from deep in our souls,  
for you bring good news to the oppressed  
and heal the trauma of the broken-hearted.  
You bring liberation to those imprisoned  
and anoint those who mourn with soothing gladness.  
Shine your light of mercy on us, O God,  
that we might be people who reflect your light.

**Amen.**

## **Confession:**

*A new heart, Lord, create in me,  
a heart from sin and guilt set free;  
O close the gate and guard the door,  
that sin may enter in no more.*

God, you hovered over chaos,  
like a brooding hen, bringing order over chaos.  
But we – through thought, deed, misdeed and omission –  
have quenched the spirit of life that you give us.

*To you my soul I open wide;  
come, Jesus, and in me abide,  
and from the temple of my heart  
make all unrighteousness depart.*

We have turned our faces away.  
And now, we turn our faces back to you,  
light of all light,  
God of all gods,  
and ask for the light of your life to lift us again.

*O let your Holy Spirit's light,  
with all your heavenly radiance bright,  
flow through my spirit like a flood,  
eternal source of every good.*

Bring us out of chaos into the order of creation,  
for your name's sake,  
and for the sake of your goodness among us.

*Thus to my cleansed and contrite heart  
your heavenly riches, Lord, impart,  
so that your wisdom, truth, and grace  
may make my heart a fruitful place.*

**Amen.**

Response: Heinrich Georg Neuss (1654 - 1716)  
TiS 559

## *Absolution*

*Sentence:*

Bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the  
prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, the day of vengeance of our God.

Isaiah 61.1-2

## **Prayer of the Day:**

Eternal God,  
you sent John the Baptist  
to prepare the way for the coming of your Son:  
grant us wisdom to see your purpose  
and openness to hear your will,  
that we too may prepare the way for Christ  
who is coming in power and glory  
to establish his rule of peace and justice;

through Jesus Christ our Judge and our Redeemer,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever, and ever.

**Amen.**

## **Readings:**

### **Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11**

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion - to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

### **Psalm 126**

*Response: The Lord has done great things for us;  
we are filled with joy.*

When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage,  
it seemed like a dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter,  
on our lips there were songs.

*Response: The Lord has done great things for us;  
we are filled with joy.*

The heathen themselves said 'What marvels  
the Lord worked for them!'

What marvels the Lord worked for us!  
Indeed we were glad.

*Response: The Lord has done great things for us;  
we are filled with joy.*

Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage  
as streams in dry land.

Those who are sowing in tears  
will sing when they reap.

*Response: The Lord has done great things for us;  
we are filled with joy.*

They go out, they go out, full of tears,  
carrying seed for the sowing;  
they come back, they come back, full of song  
carrying their sheaves.

*Response: The Lord has done great things for us;  
we are filled with joy.*

A.P Watt, London  
TiS 80

### **1 Thessalonians 5:12-28**

We appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. Beloved, pray for us. Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

### **Hymn: O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing**

O for a thousand tongues to sing  
my great Redeemer's praise,  
the glories of our God and King,  
the triumphs of his grace!

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,  
that bids our sorrows cease;  
such music in the sinner's ears  
is life, and health, and peace.

He speaks, and listening to his voice  
new life the dead receive,  
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice,  
the humble poor believe.

My gracious Master and my God,  
assist me to proclaim,  
to spread through all the earth abroad  
the honours of your name.

Charles Wesley (1707 – 88)  
TiS 210

### **Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

TiS 210

## **The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according John.**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptising if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptise with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptising.

John 1:6-8,19-28 (NRSV)

### *Sermon*

## **Hymn: O Come, O Come Emmanuel**

O come, O dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by your advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

*Rejoice! rejoice!*

*Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*

Anon., Latin, 18<sup>th</sup> cent. or earlier  
TiS 265

## **Advent Creed:**

We believe in God the Father, creator of  
heaven and earth.  
The one who is full of patience,  
who is not afraid of silence,  
who does not need to fill each moment with  
activity and noise.  
The one who is beyond bluster and flurry,  
and who does not jostle for attention.

We believe in God the Son, Saviour of  
creation,  
who slipped into Bethlehem one night, mostly  
unnoticed,  
who lived thirty years without headlines or  
hurry,  
who frequently took time alone with his  
patient Father,

who waited for the right time to become the  
suffering servant,  
who stood quietly before the noise of his  
accusers,  
whose silence overpowered their words,  
who died, then rose again on a quiet Sunday  
morning.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens, empowers, renews and  
refreshes,  
sometimes arriving with obvious power,  
sometimes with the quiet breath of a whisper.

We believe in one God  
who patiently waits for us,  
and who longs for us to do the same. Amen.

## **Intercessions:**

Rejoice, for our God is near. Be glad, for the Holy One of Israel will come among us. Holy God, we bring to you our prayers for the world and for the church.

We pray for the peoples of the world, for all who know persecution, starvation, or war. Come to us and bring freedom and peace to your people.



Give wisdom to all in Federal, State and Local governments, that their decisions and choices do not hurt those who are in the greatest need. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Loving God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for your Church, for all who repent and prepare for your Son's coming. Bring us unity. We pray for all from whom we are separated by bitterness, jealousy or resentment. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Loving God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who suffer, for the sick, and especially those who have asked for prayer for healing: Ria Mars, Joy Swinbourne, Malcolm Streher, Josh Stanley, Margaret Waller, Lynda Garde, Rachael Hampton, Alton Rowe, Karen and Ben Shaw, Ron Roder, Rose Fox, Alex Arrighi, Gerri White's granddaughter, Phil Ross, and Milton Colburt.

We pray for those who are approaching death, and for all who mourn. Comfort the sick and the sorrowing. We pray for all who are lonely and friendless, for the unnoticed and unwanted. Gather to yourself the lost and the outcast. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Loving God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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.

### **Hymn: Lord Christ, True Peace of All Above**

Lord Christ, true peace of all above,  
sure hope of all below,  
establish in your grace and love  
your people as we go.

Your blessing, Lord, who bless us all,  
abide with us today;  
your mercy, peace, and watchful care  
surround us on our way.

Your presence in our life remain  
that all the world may know  
how Christ may walk the world again,  
in us himself to show.

Brian Anthony Moore (1931 - 97)  
TiS 623

## **Sending Out Prayer:**

Lord, we have been nurtured by your Spirit of Life,  
as we return to our everyday lives, we have the assurance that your Word lasts for ever, and  
your promises are true.

Let the lowly be lifted up.

Let the hungry be fed.

Let the mighty listen:

Merciful God, you hear all.

We go, rejoicing always, in the blessed joy of your kindness.

**Amen.**

## *Blessing*

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