



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.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT 29 NOVEMBER 2020

Pastoral message from the Rector

In our Eucharistic prayer we make an acclamation that “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.” This expectation that Christ will come again is what we have come to call the Second Coming. Advent is the time when we are especially reminded that Christ will come again, as we are led into the Christmas story each year which tells us of Jesus’ first coming, his birth at Bethlehem.

The birth of Jesus was a very simple, humble event but it is still being talked about two thousand years later. Jesus entered the world in a very quiet, almost invisible way. Mary and Joseph were alone in a stable with only animals for company when Jesus was born. We don’t know if the innkeeper’s wife, or anyone else, attended to Mary, but I hope there was someone there to offer support to this vulnerable couple.

The adult Jesus tells his followers that his second coming will be very different to his birth. It will be preceded by suffering, darkness, stars falling from heaven and the “Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.” It all sounds very dramatic and perhaps a bit like a Hollywood movie.

So, what should we expect about Jesus’ return? For me, the details don’t matter as much as the promise that he will come again. How and when are not so important for me but I find knowing that he will come to be very thought provoking. Jesus will not look at our worldly or material success, but he will look at our spiritual hearts and our capacity to love. He will applaud us for trying and scold us for not doing our bit to help others. He will ask us why we have not cared for the poor and weak and why we have put ourselves first. He will challenge us to be servants, to serve others rather than be served.

As no one knows when this might occur, we need to be ready at all times, just in case it happens when we are least expecting it. How ready are you to meet Jesus face to face? I think this is a question deserving deep thought and consideration, don’t you!

Advent blessings

Matthew

Birthdays: Geoff Fowler and Trevor Emery.

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.

St Mary's have been praying for Lucy van Eck for over two years as she had to have one round of chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant at the age of 14 months to remedy a mutant gene which caused her as a newborn to develop Crohn's disease. For her this was potentially fatal. Lucy is now three years old.

Adrian, Liz, Henry and Lucy (Fran and Gary Legge's daughter and family) have just returned from a well needed family holiday. Whilst on holidays they had some great news from Lucy's doctor. Lucy's blood work has continued to improve which means she can stop having the weekly injections (which help give her antibodies) for a couple months and see what happens.

Thank you to everyone for their continued thoughts and prayers during this time.

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.

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!

Also available is the BCEC Who's Who of Ballina Shire Ultimate Puzzle Book. The book is available at both of our centres at a cost of \$15 and would make a great Christmas present.

Coffee & Chat will meet again Thursday 3 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.

Do you have photos of some of the things that have been different about this year? We are hoping to have a vision of the strange year that was for this year's Annual Report, so if you have anything that reflects Parish life since January can you please send it to Cathie at office@anglicanballina.com.au, or if you bring it in she can scan it and return it to you?

Wearing of Face Masks Bishop Murray has advised of an update from NSW Health, who now only recommend masks where social distancing is not possible (e.g. public transport). The Minister and his medical advisor have both agreed that if congregational members are physically spaced at 1.5m, with no singing of course, then the risk of infection is so minimal, that the wearing of masks need no longer apply. Of course, some may wish to continue to wear masks to exercise caution and to show love to others. We should not discourage them, The Archbishop of Sydney continues to liaise on our behalf with Ministers and senior Health Department Advisers.

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; 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

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](#)

PACT Today is the first Sunday of Advent and we are so very aware of what is happening in your world. We pray for healing, love and hope for your world. We thank you for the many blessings we receive each day here in the Northern Rivers area, in this COVID-19 time. It is easy to become complacent about how we live each day. Remind us to care for each other as we care for ourselves and as you care for us.

Help us be prayerful, diligent and courageous in sharing the hope Jesus brings when we follow him. Help us walk in the light of that hope, sharing hope with strangers, those who serve us in the community as we shop. Help us to recognise the many opportunities to be hope, to be love, to be Jesus this COVID-19 Advent. **Amen.**



Thought for the Week from Mothers Union Australia

Season of Advent

O Wisdom

dwelling in the womb of God,
generating and nurturing the earth,
through the nights of darkness,
come and cherish in us
the seed of wisdom.

Jim Cotter 'Cries of Advent' No 2. From *Prayer in the Morning*, Cairns Publications 1989.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness- on them light has shined. Isaiah 9:2

Nurturing has had a great impact on those receiving support from members in Scotland. Released prisoners no longer need to use paper to dry themselves. Members collected cloth towels to meet this pressing need and the recipients felt cherished indeed.

EAC Prayer Points

Week Eight and there is still so much happening.

This week we give thanks that although our year 6 students could not go on an overnight camp they have still had some fun days of camp activities around the region.

We pray for:

- the Kindergarten Christmas Pageant and 'Graduation' day;
- Year 10 Retreat Day;
- Year 6 Transition and Presentation service;
- 'Step Up' day in Primary; and
- Year 7 Experience Day.

YOU KNOW, I WAS HOPING THAT A NEW CHURCH YEAR WOULD BRING A CHANGE OF TONE, BUT THIS READING IS AS APOCALYPTIC AS LAST WEEK'S WAS!



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

IT'S ADVENT, WE ARE PREPARING FOR THE RETURN OF CHRIST.



WHEN HE COMES... WILL WE BE ABLE TO HUG PEOPLE AGAIN?



MARK 13:24-37



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Thanks to Lora Bailey

12-02-2002

COMING SOON TO A PLANET NEAR YOU

CONTACT US

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“COUCH CHURCH”: WORSHIPPING GOD AT HOME

29 NOVEMBER 2020

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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

Call to Worship

O people of God,
let us draw near to God.
O people who sometimes do not listen,
let us listen to God's name
and be renewed by the 'Name Above All Names',
the name of our maker,
who made us, and who shapes us
to be vessels of light in waiting times.
Come, let us worship.
Let us worship the 'Name Above All Names'.
Amen.

Hymn: The Advent of Our God

The advent of our God
with eager prayers we greet,
and singing hasten on his road
his coming reign to meet.

The everlasting Son
was born to make us free;
and he a servant's form put on
to gain our liberty.

Let Zion now arise
to greet her infant king,
and gladly take with thankful heart
the peace he comes to bring.

As judge, on clouds of light,
he soon will come again,
his scattered people to unite,
with them in heaven to reign.

Praise to the incarnate Son
who comes to set us free,
with Father, Spirit, ever one
to all eternity.

Charles Coffin (1676 – 1749)
TiS 271

Gathering Prayer:

Gathered here today,
we light a candle of hope,
knowing that in dark times
there is always a light that can be lit.
Let us, people in dusk and dawn,
light the light of vigilance,
knowing that God is always calling us
to justice, mercy and humility –

at this time of year,
and all times of the year.

Amen.

Sentence:

‘Heaven and earth will pass away,’ says the Lord, ‘but my words will not pass away.’

Mark 13.31

Prayer of the Day:

Eternal God,
through long generations you prepared a way for the coming of your Son,
and by your Spirit you still bring light to illumine our paths:
renew us in faith and hope that we may welcome Christ to rule our thoughts
and claim your love; to whom be glory for ever.

Amen.

A reading from Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil - to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Confession:

*Change my heart, O God, make it ever true;
change my heart, O God, may I be like You.*

We have turned our face from you, O God,
whose face is always turned towards us.
We have forsaken what we know is just.

*Change my heart, O God, make it ever true;
change my heart, O God, may I be like You.*

We have ignored what we understand is true.
We have refused to believe what should be believed.
We have deceived ourselves in word and deed.

*Change my heart, O God, make it ever true;
change my heart, O God, may I be like You.*

For this, we humbly repent,
and we turn our face towards you –who waits for us, and makes us ever new. Make us ever new
now, O restoring God.

*Change my heart, O God, make it ever true;
change my heart, O God, may I be like You.
You are the potter, I am the clay;
mould me and make me, this is what I pray.*

*Change my heart, O God, make it ever true;
change my heart, O God, may I be like You.*

Amen.

Response: Eddie Espinosa
Mission Praise 69

Absolution

Psalm 80:1-3, 7, 14-15, 17-18

*Response: Lord, make us turn to you,
let us see your face and we shall be saved.*

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne,
O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help.

*Response: Lord, make us turn to you,
let us see your face and we shall be saved.*

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted.

*Response: Lord, make us turn to you,
let us see your face and we shall be saved.*

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your name.

*Response: Lord, make us turn to you,
let us see your face and we shall be saved.*

A.P. Watt, London
TiS 42

Hymn: Your Coming, Lord

Your coming, Lord, to earth in Bethlehem,
revealed your gracious will that all might live,
by your example and your sacrifice,
in that salvation you alone can give.

That free gift of God's grace bestowed on us
remains a fountainhead of joy and peace;
and yet by evil tempted and enslaved
we need to know you near, and find release.

Come to your people as of old you came
on mountain-side, at table, by the sea,
through doors closed on our fears and bleak dismay:
and in the heart of darkness light shall be.

Though often thus you come to save and bless,
at last, we know, in glory you will come,
in cloud and fire, with angels' trumpets' sound,
to judge, and triumph, and to claim your own.

Wesley Milgate(1916 -
TiS 285

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia.

Lord, show us your mercy and love,
and grant us your salvation.

Alleluia, alleluia.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Mark.

“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake — for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Mark 13:24-37 (NRSV)

Sermon

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:

We wait for the Shepherd of Israel to come to our troubled world of violence, oppression, drought and disease. As we wait, teach us to live in harmony, share the resources of the earth, and care for your wonderful creation.

Come, and in your mercy, **save your people.**

As your wide Church prepares to give thanks for your Son's birth, help us discern how to share your gift of Christ with those who have not yet welcomed Jesus as Lord.

Come, and in your mercy, **save your people.**

We pray for our community, especially year 12 students as they wait for their results of the HSC. We pray for those seeking their university placements, and for students who will seek employment. Teach us your ways of gentleness, unselfishness, forgiveness and care, that we may live and work together in love for one another.

Come, and in your mercy, **save your people.**

We give thanks for the work of scientists in developing vaccines to combat the COVID-19 virus. We pray for all in sorrow, grief, pain or despair. Teach us to trust in your unfailing kindness, that we may bear our troubles with courage and uphold others in their times of adversity. We remember those of this parish and our loved ones who need your healing touch, , 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.

Come, and in your mercy, **save your people.**

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: Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free,
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Charles Wesley (1707 – 88)
TiS 272

Sending Out Prayer:

We have been called to this time
to be renewed in the name of the one who is love.
Even in the darkest night,
even when there is only one small candle lit,
your power and love restore us.
Let your light shine on us as we go from here,
so that we may be warmed and strengthened
to light your light all around.

Amen.

Blessing

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