

St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church
Moore Street, Adelaide

An open, welcoming and inclusive community
in the heart of the City of Adelaide



Keeping Community Spiritual Resources & Reflections

Thursday 7 December 2023

Dear friends,

This newsletter was developed as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold and our ability to gather for worship was so severely challenged. Thanks be to God, we are now able to gather together to celebrate the Word and Sacraments, and to come to church for private prayer. And the demand for and appeal of these newsletters has continued.

Sunday Mass is offered weekly at 10 am, and the church will also be open on Thursday between 11.30 am and 1 pm, with the Angelus at noon and Mass at 12.10 pm.

These newsletters are intended to provide some resources for prayer and reflection: enjoy!



1. Advent is here

Liturgically, the season of Advent is the beginning of a season of preparation, reflection, and anticipation. To this end, we are offering an extensive program. All this will be sustained and enhanced in our worship and our music.

Advent reflections on the practice of hope

A series of sermons addresses the big issues we face, beginning with our complex and changing world. I will be introducing new material from a range of fields to assist our exploration. The series will conclude on Advent 4 looking at "Cultivating the practice of hope". The focus here, and the climax of the series, is that the challenges we face are imponderable, **but we choose to live in hope.**

Hope is something we take on bravely. The key elements in the practice of hope are **story and symbol, community and calling.** We are inspired by the Jesus story, we share in the symbols of bread and wine, we belong to a caring and feisty faith community, and we have a calling, that is, a personal and a shared vocation.

Advent studies articulating the practice of hope

On Thursday at 10am or 6pm on November 30, December 7, 14, and 21, we will look at four remarkable and influential biblical texts Job 38:1, Galatians 3:28, Daniel 11:32, and John 1:5.

Advent midweek reflections, great way to start you day

Wednesdays 8am in the Nave on November 29, December 6, 13, 20

All this sounds like a smorgasbord. And I hope you can find something here that will assist your Advent preparation. Above all, however, I hope you can participate in all these things. It can be good for the soul, and a tonic for our faith community.

Bring a friend. Make it memorable.

Steven

2. Daily Prayer

Most Christian denominations have forms for prayer in the morning and the evening, and at other times of the day. Morning and Evening Prayer in *A Prayer Book for Australia*, are available in either a fixed form (pp 3-33) or a form for each day of the week (pp 383-424).

Online Resources

There is an online version of Daily Prayer from *A Prayer Book for Australia* for each day available at Australian Daily Prayer <https://dailyprayer.ampers.x10.mx/>. There is also a free app for mobile devices from the App Store or Google Play.

The Church of England provides an online version of its orders for Daily Prayer at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>. This is also available as a free app. The Divine Office of the Catholic Church is available online at www.ibreviary.com and is also available as a free app (App Store or Google Play).

Times of Prayer

Many people find it helpful to make a particular time daily for prayer and reflection. One option might be to join your prayer with those of the wider world at some special times during the day, especially the [Angelus](#) at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

3. Reflections and Meditations

In addition to Fr Steven's regular reflection in this newsletter, which is uploaded to the web page for wider accessibility, Fr Philip Carter's meditations and spiritual reflections are presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org/>.

To access these meditations, simply go to the blog and select the "Spirit matters" tab on the top. If you would like to receive an email update when there is a new posting on the blog, whether for a Sunday or weekday service, or for meditations and other supports for prayer, please subscribe to the blog using the box on the right-hand side of the page.

Service booklets as PDF files are still available for Sunday and weekday services on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

4. Neil Smith RIP

We advised earlier in the week about the death of our dear friend Neil Smith. We can now confirm that his Requiem Mass will be sung at St Mary Magdalene's at 10.30 am on Tuesday 12 December. Please continue in your prayers for Neil, that he may rest in peace and rise in glory, and for Pauline and their family.

5. This Week in the Calendar

In the coming week we remember two great saints of the early church, St Ambrose of Milan, bishop and teacher (d. 397), and St Lucy, martyr and virgin (d. 304).

St Ambrose was born around 340 to a Roman Christian family. Legend has it that when Ambrose was just an infant, a swarm of bees landed on his face, and rather than injuring the child, left behind a drop of honey. To his father, this was a sign that Ambrose would become someone great with a wonderful sense for speaking.

One of his biographers observed that at the Last Judgment, people would still be divided between those who admired Ambrose and those who heartily disliked him. He emerges as the man of action who cut a furrow through the lives of his contemporaries. Even royal personages were numbered among those who were to suffer crushing divine punishments for standing in Ambrose's way.



Yet his sermons, his writings, and his personal life reveal him as an otherworldly man involved in the great issues of his day. Humanity for Ambrose was, above all, spirit. In order to think rightly of God and the human soul, the closest thing to God, no material reality at all was to be dwelt upon.

Ambrose exemplifies for us the truly catholic character of Christianity. He is steeped in the learning, law, and culture of the ancients and of his contemporaries. Yet, in the midst of active involvement in this world, this thought runs through Ambrose's life and preaching: The hidden meaning of the Scriptures calls our spirit to rise to another world.

Some traditions exist about the life and times of **St Lucy**, but in fact all that is definitely known is that a disappointed suitor accused Lucy of being a Christian, and she was executed in Syracuse, Sicily, in the year 304.

One can easily imagine what a young Christian woman had to contend with in pagan Sicily around the year 300. To that community, Jesus was an obscure itinerant preacher in a far-off captive nation that had been destroyed more than 200 years before, yet Lucy believed with her whole soul that this man had risen from the dead. Heaven had put a stamp on all he said and did. To give witness to her faith she had made a vow of virginity – a bizarre and almost sinister decision in a community where the exclusion of marriage from one's life plan was unthinkable.



Lucy knew of the heroism of earlier virgin martyrs. She remained faithful to their example and to the example of the carpenter, whom she knew to be the Son of God.

Lucy means "light", with the same root as "lucid" which means, "clear, radiant, understandable." The story of Saint Lucy is one filled with many trials and tribulations. Even in times of darkness when she was being tortured she still remained steadfast in her faith. To us Saint Lucy reminds us that we always need to stay focus on the light of Christ and not let us waiver from our faith.

6. St Ambrose writes to a new bishop ...

By the grace of your words win over your people

You have entered upon the office of bishop. Sitting at the helm of the Church, you pilot the ship against the waves. Take firm hold of the rudder of faith so that the severe storms of this world cannot disturb you. The sea is mighty and vast, but do not be afraid, for as Scripture says: *he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the waters.*

The Church of the Lord is built upon the rock of the apostles among so many dangers in the world; it therefore remains unmoved. The Church's foundation is unshakeable and firm against the assaults of the raging sea. Waves lash at the Church but do not shatter it. Although the elements of this world constantly beat upon the Church with crashing sounds, the Church possesses the safest harbour of salvation for all in distress. Although the Church is tossed about on the sea, it rides easily on rivers, especially those rivers that Scripture speaks of: *The rivers have lifted up their voice.* These are the rivers flowing from the heart of the man who is given drink by Christ and who receives from the Spirit of God. When these rivers overflow with the grace of the Spirit, they lift up their voice.

There is also a stream which flows down on God's saints like a torrent. There is also a rushing river giving joy to the heart that is at peace and makes for peace. Whoever has received from the fullness of this river, like John the Evangelist, like Peter and Paul, lifts up his voice. Just as the apostles lifted up their voices and preached the Gospel throughout the world, so those who drink these waters begin to preach the good news of the Lord Jesus.

Drink, then, from Christ, so that your voice may also be heard. Store up in your mind the water that is Christ, the water that praises the Lord. Store up water from many sources, the water that rains down from the clouds of prophecy.

Whoever gathers water from the mountains and leads it to himself or draws it from springs, is himself a source of dew like the clouds. Fill your soul, then, with this water, so that your land may not be dry, but watered by your own springs.

He who reads much and understands much, receives his fill. He who is full, refreshes others. So Scripture says: *If the clouds are full, they will pour rain upon the earth.*

Therefore, let your words be rivers, clean and limpid, so that in your exhortations you may charm the ears of your people. And by the grace of your words win them over to follow your leadership. Let your sermons be full of understanding. Solomon says: *The weapons of the understanding are the lips of the wise;* and in another place he says: *Let your lips be bound with wisdom.* That is, let the meaning of your words shine forth, let understanding blaze out. See that your addresses and expositions do not need to invoke the authority of others, but let your words be their own defence. Let no word escape your lips in vain or be uttered without depth of meaning.

7. On the Feast of St Lucy - from a Sermon by St Ambrose

You light up your grace of body with your splendour of soul

You are one of God's people, of God's family ... you light up your grace of body with your splendour of soul. More than others you can be compared to the Church. When you are in your room, then, at night, think always on Christ, and wait for his coming at every moment.

This is the person Christ has loved in loving you, the person he has chosen in choosing you. He enters by the open door; he has promised to come in, and he cannot deceive. Embrace him,

the one you have sought; turn to him, and be enlightened; hold him fast, ask him not to go in haste, beg him not to leave you. The Word of God moves swiftly; he is not won by the lukewarm, nor held fast by the negligent. Let your soul be attentive to his word; follow carefully the path God tells you to take, for he is swift in his passing.

What does his bride say? *I sought him, and did not find him; I called him, and he did not hear me.* Do not imagine that you are displeasing to him although you have called him, asked him, opened the door to him, and that this is the reason why he has gone so quickly; no, for he allows us to be constantly tested. When the crowds pressed him to stay, what does he say in the Gospel? *I must preach the word of God to other cities, because for that I have been sent.* But even if it seems to you that he has left you, go out and seek him once more.

Who but holy Church is to teach you how to hold Christ fast? Indeed, she has already taught you, if you only understood her words in Scripture: *How short a time it was when I left them before I found him whom my soul has loved. I held him fast, and I will not let him go.* How do we hold him fast? Not by restraining chains or knotted ropes but by bonds of love, by spiritual reins, by the longing of the soul.

If you also, like the bride, wish to hold him fast, seek him and be fearless of suffering. It is often easier to find him in the midst of bodily torments, in the very hands of persecutors.

His bride says: *How short a time it was after I left them.* In a little space, after a brief moment, when you have escaped from the hands of your persecutors without yielding to the powers of this world, Christ will come to you, and he will not allow you to be tested for long.

Whoever seeks Christ in this way, and finds him, can say: *I held him fast, and I will not let him go before I bring him into my mother's house, into the room of her who conceived me.* What is this "house," this "room," but the deep and secret places of your heart?

Maintain this house, sweep out its secret recesses until it becomes immaculate and rises as a spiritual temple for a holy priesthood, firmly secured by Christ, the cornerstone, so that the Holy Spirit may dwell in it.

Whoever seeks Christ in this way, whoever prays to Christ in this way, is not abandoned by him; on the contrary, Christ comes again and again to visit such a person, for he is with us until the end of the world.

8. Intentions for Your Daily Prayers

We pray throughout the week for the world and the church. These intentions may be helpful in your private or family prayers.

Pray for the world. For the leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenges that beset the international community. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome. For all who work for peace and justice. For reconciliation with the first custodians of this land.

Pray for the church. For all those who are striving to be church in the modern world, that we may be alert to the signs of the times and their interpretation in the light of the Gospel. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Barisal (Bangladesh). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Brisbane; and in our own Diocese of Adelaide, for Anglicare SA Support Chaplains.

Pray for our local community. For the Collective as it manages the delivery of the Saturday Night Mary Mags Dinner. For the Magdalene Centre, its customers, staff and volunteers, as they minister in God's name among those in crisis and in need of support and assistance.

Pray for those in need. Pray for all those who are troubled in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Jasmin, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Nance, Edward, Hugh, and Bart O'Donovan (priest).

Pray for those who have died. Those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; those who have died recently, especially Neil Smith, and those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time. ✠ *Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.*

For the saints. For the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Joseph, St Mary Magdalene, St Ambrose, St Lucy, and holy women and men of every time and place.



THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF
ST MARY MAGDALENE
MOORE STREET, ADELAIDE | FOUNDED 1886

CHRISTMAS 2023

Sunday 24 December
11 pm Procession, Blessing of the Crib
and Midnight Mass

Monday 25 December
10 am Procession and Solemn Mass

Thursday 28 December
The Holy Innocents
12 noon Angelus, 12.10 pm Mass

Sunday 31 December
The Feast of the Holy Family
10 am Procession and Solemn Mass

Thursday 4 January 2024
Thursday before Epiphany
12 noon Angelus, 12.10 pm Mass

Sunday 7 January
The Epiphany of the Lord
10 am Solemn Mass

*LET US ALL REJOICE IN THE LORD, FOR OUR SAVIOUR HAS BEEN BORN IN THE WORLD.
TODAY TRUE PEACE HAS COME DOWN TO US FROM HEAVEN.*

This newsletter will normally be distributed weekly on Tuesday. Any appropriate items should be emailed to the Parish Office, StMMAdelaide.Parish@outlook.com, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

Directory

Parish Priest	Revd Dr Steven Ogden ☎ 0408 817 147, ✉ stevengogden@gmail.com
Hon Assisting Priests	Revd Sr Juliana SI, Fr Philip Carter, Fr Graeme Kaines
Churchwardens	Peter Burdon ☎ 0414 471 894, Alison McAllister ☎ 0433 551 267
Parish Council	The Priest and Wardens <i>ex officio</i> ; Catherine Freriks, Alison McAllister, Hamish McLachlan, Peter Turner.
Nomination Committee	John Dow, Catherine Freriks, Annemarie Van Putten
Synod Representatives	Ashley Durham, Catherine Freriks