

# 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 10 February 2022

Dear friends,

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions means it possible to again open the church for private prayer and public worship.

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 support the spiritual life of the community as we continue to cope with and respond to the pandemic.



### 1. From Fr Steven – Good News

AThis Sunday's gospel is Luke 6:17-26, which is the sermon on the plain. This is Luke's version of a sermon, which was also used by Matthew as the sermon on the mount. In the present case, Luke is addressing a particular faith community, which was a privileged community, toward the end of the first century. Of course, the term *privilege* is often used as a pejorative. No one likes to use the term privilege in that sense. In a broader sense, however, we are in a privileged position when we look at global problems around abuse, violence, and poverty. As Christians, the sermon on the plain expresses core values. It affirms several important things:

- Jesus proclaimed the coming reign of God, which is here now, offering liberation
- Jesus seeks out the troubled, that is, the poor, the hungry, the grieving
- "Blessed" for Luke means a profound experience of unadulterated joy
- The woes are prophetic, disarming a privileged audience

It is jarring to think about the poor, the hungry, and the grieving, knowing joy. On the one hand, what joy is there in poverty, hunger, and sorrow? On the other hand, it is telling us 'This is what the gospel is about'. The gospel is about liberating the poor, the hungry, and grieving. It is both aspirational and prophetic, offering a social and political critique, promising freedom.

In the Jewish tradition, the hope of liberation was primary. The iconic figure of Moses, for example, embodies this hope. Of course, Moses is seen as the law giver. And there are many laws associated with his name, which are often hard to interpret. The law is important, nonetheless, it is secondary to God's liberating work in Moses. It bears repeating then that the story of Moses is a story of liberation. Critically, we are reminded of the promise of liberation as we use unleavened bread.

Unleavened bread is an archetypal symbol of liberation because the Hebrew slaves, following their release, had no time to leaven bread (Exodus 12:39; 13:9). The lack of leaven is reminder

of the full significance of the event. No wonder, New Testament writers saw Jesus as the new Moses. No wonder, Paul saw freedom, and setting free, as integral parts of the Christian story (Galatians 5:1).

Steven Ogden  
Locum Priest

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## 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 the Anglican church's *A Prayer Book for Australia*, are available in either a fixed form (pages 3 – 33) or a different form for each day of the week (pages 383 – 424).

### Online Resources

There is a complete 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](http://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. While the church cannot be open every day, you may like to join the wider community in praying the Angelus at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

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## 3. Reflections and Meditations

Reflections for our two weekly newsletters will continue for the time being, and our Thursday "Spiritual Resources" newsletter will continue to be uploaded to the web page. Fr Philip Carter's meditations and spiritual reflections have resumed with a series on the teachings of Julian of Norwich, and 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.

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#### 4. 2022 Lenten Study - *In love, in hope, in freedom – In Person and On Line*

I will be offering a Lenten Study which will be pursuing the theme of liberation. It consists of a 5-week study, on the Thursdays in March. It will be offered in the morning and the evening, but with different formats: both are COVID-safe.

- **Thursday morning: 10am at Bocelli's Caffe in Hutt Street** (cr Wakefield Street): free parking in Angas Street. In terms of COVID, there are outside tables at Bocelli, under cover.
- **Thursday evening: 7pm on zoom.** Please email me, so I can send you an invitation.

The morning and evening sessions will go for about an hour and a quarter. If you miss the morning session at Bocelli's, you can join the evening session on zoom, and vice versa.

So, here is an outline of the Lenten Study. I am happy to take suggestions or make some modifications at this stage.

*Christianity is good news. It is a story of liberation: spiritual, political, and ecological. In this Lenten Study, we use the Gospel of Luke as a platform for finding freedom. The bible, however, is not an end in itself. The key is the discussion, where together we explore and embrace the good news.*

##### **MARCH 3 - SET FREE** (Text Luke 4:16-21)

What is slavery? What do we mean by liberation? In our day, many people labour under a range of constraints, physical and otherwise. If the gospel means anything, it is about being set free. Enabling us to become, to grow, to engage the world with courage and compassion. In this session, we examine something of the forms of captivity that hold us back and see that the Gospel of Luke is premised on the God who sets free. **Question: How does this hope of liberation address your life?**

##### **MARCH - 10 FINDING COURAGE** (Text Luke 1:46-55)

The Christian community of Luke lived in the shadow of Rome. As a community, they had to be careful. Rome, like all empires, has a powerful sense of entitlement. This meant the Lucan community was in survival mode. It is no surprise that they saw in Mary, the mother of Jesus, a figure offering hope, spiritually and politically. **Question: How has Mary been portrayed in our tradition? And how does this measure up with Luke?**

##### **MARCH - 17 DISARMING SHAME** (Text Luke 8:40-56)

Jesus is concerned about the burden of shame. Now, there is a difference between the concepts of shame and guilt. Guilt has its place. Guilt reflects our own values, reminding us of our true selves and our deeper aspirations. Shame is somebody else's problem, which we have internalized to our detriment. In the first century, the purity system - with its concern about clean and unclean - made women, the poor, and the sick feel ashamed. So, the healing of the haemorrhaging woman is the quintessential liberation story. **Question: What is the social and symbolic significance of blood?**

##### **MARCH 24 - BASED ON LOVE** (Text Luke 23:1-49)

The cross is the central symbol of our faith. So, then, what is the point of the death of Jesus. Traditionally, theories of atonement explain the meaning of the cross (e.g., Jesus as substitute). In some instances, atonement theories have portrayed God as demanding or wrathful, requiring satisfaction. In recent years, I have found an emphasis on love helpful; it represents a shift from what God does in the cross to what God does in the life of Jesus, which culminates in the cross. This is a celebration of the Incarnation. **Question: What is the significance of the slave woman?**

## MARCH 31 - EVERYDAY MYSTICISM (Text Luke 24:1-12; I Corinthians 15)

The mysteries of the faith are creation, incarnation, and resurrection. Together, they represent a radical affirmation that God is in the world. Specifically, the resurrection changes us, and the way we see the world. It also makes sense of the idea of a sacramental view of life. So, then, God is not a remote despot. Instead, we live, move, and breathe in God. We are a resurrection people. This does not mean we are exempt from suffering, and the vicissitudes of everyday existence. Instead, existence is permeated by the possibility of joy. **Question: How important is Mary Magdalene?**

### 5. Ash Wednesday – 2 March

The announcement of the Lenten Study reminds us that Lent is approaching. **The first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, is on 2 March.** There will be two celebrations of the special liturgy of the day, the Blessing and Imposition of Ashes, during Masses at 12.10 pm (said) and 6.15 pm (sung).

There will be a full list of extra opportunities for prayer and devotion during Lent produced in the coming weeks.

### 6. In the Church's Calendar

This week the Church celebrates the 9th century saints Cyril (d. 869) and Methodius, bishop (d. 885). Both were missionaries to the Slavic peoples.

Because their father was an officer in a part of Greece inhabited by many Slavs, these two Greek brothers, Cyril (d.869) and Methodius (d.885) ultimately became missionaries, teachers, and patrons of the Slavic peoples.

After a brilliant course of studies, Cyril refused the governorship of a district such as his brother had accepted among the Slavic-speaking population. Cyril withdrew to a monastery where his brother Methodius had become a monk after some years in a governmental post.

A decisive change in their lives occurred when the Duke of Moravia asked the Eastern Emperor Michael for political independence from German rule and ecclesiastical autonomy (having their own clergy and liturgy). Cyril and Methodius undertook the missionary task.



Cyril's first work was to invent an alphabet, still used in some Eastern liturgies. His followers probably formed the Cyrillic alphabet. Together they translated the Gospels, the psalter, Paul's letters and the liturgical books into Slavonic, and composed a Slavonic liturgy.

Their free use of the vernacular in preaching led to opposition from the German clergy. The bishop refused to consecrate Slavic bishops and priests, and Cyril was forced to appeal to Rome. On the visit to Rome, he and Methodius had the joy of seeing their new liturgy approved by Pope Adrian II. Cyril, long an invalid, died in Rome 50 days after taking the monastic habit.

Methodius continued mission work for 16 more years. He was papal legate for all the Slavic peoples, consecrated a bishop and then given an ancient see (now in the Czech Republic). When much of their former territory was removed from their jurisdiction, the Bavarian bishops retaliated with a violent storm of accusation against Methodius. As a result, Emperor Louis the German exiled Methodius for three years. Pope John VIII secured his release.

Because the Frankish clergy, still smarting, continued their accusations, Methodius had to go to Rome to defend himself against charges of heresy and uphold his use of the Slavonic liturgy. He was again vindicated.

Legend has it that in a feverish period of activity, Methodius translated the whole Bible into Slavonic in eight months. He died on Tuesday of Holy Week, surrounded by his disciples, in his cathedral church.

Opposition continued after his death, and the work of the brothers in Moravia was brought to an end and their disciples scattered. But the expulsions had the beneficial effect of spreading the spiritual, liturgical, and cultural work of the brothers to Bulgaria, Bohemia and southern Poland.

## 7. From an old Slavonic Life of Constantine (Cyril)

*Build up your Church and gather all into unity*

Constantine, already burdened by many hardships, became ill. At one point during his extended illness, he experienced a vision of God and began to sing this verse: "My spirit rejoiced and my heart exulted because they told me we shall go into the house of the Lord."

Afterward he remained dressed in the vestments that were to be venerated later, and rejoiced for an entire day saying: "From now on, I am not the servant of the emperor or any man on earth, but of almighty God alone. Before, I was dead, now I am alive and I shall live for ever. Amen."

The following day, he assumed the monastic habit and took the religious name Cyril. He lived the life of a monk for fifty days.

When the time came for him to set out from this world to the peace of his heavenly homeland, he prayed to God with his hands outstretched and his eyes filled with tears: "O Lord, my God, you have created the choirs of angels and spiritual powers; you have stretched forth the heavens and established the earth, creating all that exists from nothing. You hear those who obey your will and keep your commands in holy fear. Hear my prayer and protect your faithful people, for you have established me as their unsuitable and unworthy servant.

"Keep them free from harm and the worldly cunning of those who blaspheme you. Build up your Church and gather all into unity. Make your people known for the unity and profession of their faith. Inspire the hearts of your people with your word and your teaching. You called us to preach the Gospel of your Christ and to encourage them to lives and works pleasing to you.

"I now return to you, your people, your gift to me. Direct them with your powerful right hand, and protect them under the shadow of your wings. May all praise and glorify your name, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen."

Once he had exchanged the gift of peace with everyone, he said: "Blessed be God, who did not hand us over to our invisible enemy, but freed us from his snare and delivered us from perdition." He then fell asleep in the Lord at the age of forty-two.

The Patriarch commanded all those in Rome, both the Greeks and Romans, to gather for his funeral. They were to celebrate his funeral as if he had been a pope. This they did.

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## 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.*

*For the world.* The leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome.

*For the church.* In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Karimnagar (South India). In our national church, pray for the Bishop to the Armed Forces: Grant Dibden; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Parish of Golden Grove.

*For our local community.* For the Collective and its ministry in the local community. For the Magdalene Centre, as it deals with the need to change the way it delivers services in order to safeguard the health of customers, staff and volunteers.

*For those in need.* For all those who are sick in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Clarice, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest) and Mark.

*For those who have died.* Those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; those who have died as a result of COVID-19 and in other tragic circumstances; those who have died recently, especially Valerie Taylor and John Harley, 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 Cyril, St Methodius, and holy women and men of every time and place.

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

