

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 15 June 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. But 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. Fr Steven writes ... The Conversation

As social beings, we need to belong. And to belong, we need welcoming spaces to be ourselves, ask the big questions, and glean new wisdom for living compassionately and courageously. This is the impetus behind *The Conversation*.

So, following the success of our recent Thursday morning discussion group, we have come up with a new version called *The Conversation*. It begins on **Thursday 6 July at 10 am and runs for 5 weeks finishing Thursday 3 August**. The venue will again be the Mission Hall.

At the first session, we will discuss and choose topics of interest. Successive sessions will be led by a volunteer, who will present a ten-minute overview on the topic as a discussion starter. So far, suggestions for discussion include:

- What is salvation? What does it mean?
- Rethinking hope. Rethinking community.
- All life is suffering. What more can we say?
- There is no such thing as the perfect family.

So, welcome to *The Conversation*.

Fr Steven

2. COVID-19 – Where are we now?

Parish Council at its meeting on 17 May discussed the reintroduction of the few customs that have been in abeyance during the pandemic. We have decided that effective immediately, we will reintroduce the common cup at the time of Communion, and the physical Greeting of Peace. What does this mean?

- The Common Cup is one of the hallmarks of Anglicanism. At the Last Supper, Jesus took one cup and gave it to all of his disciples to drink. There is a powerful challenge in this one. We are reminded of the agonizing decision that faced Jesus when he was praying before the crucifixion: ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not what I want but what you want’. (Matthew 26:39) ... We are also reminded by the one cup that we cannot drink it alone. We drink from a common cup as a strong symbol of unity and our willingness to accept each other. We share our love and lives as we share the cup. The implications for this for fellowship and support in the local church, for relationships between rich and poor in communities and nations, and for justice in our land, and first world and other countries are enormous. The cup of love and unity is unavoidably a cup of sacrifice.

On Sundays, we will continue to receive Holy Communion one at a time in a single line, with the priest at the centre, and an assistant with the chalice to one side. If you wish to receive in both kinds, simply move to that side and receive. There is no obligation to receive in both kinds, and indeed the church has always taught that Christ is sacramentally and equally present under each species (of bread and wine), and therefore if a person receives in one kind only, Christ is fully present and nothing is lacking.

- The Greeting of Peace. “Passing the peace” is a tradition rooted in Scripture that embodies our identity as peacemakers (Matt. 5:9; 2 Cor. 5:20) and trains our hearts, hands, and tongues in the ways of peace. From the beginning Christians have exercised this practice. “Peace be with you” is a greeting Jesus himself used with his disciples. Our custom, since the pandemic, has been to refrain from a physical greeting of those outside our immediate families. We feel it is now acceptable to resume the use of a physical gesture.

But remember, the Greeting of Peace is not an interval! There is plenty of time for social chat over hospitality after Mass.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. This Week in the Calendar

This week we celebrate the English spiritual writer Evelyn Underhill.

Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941)

In 1911 an unknown author published a 500 page book on the little known topic of mysticism. Accessible in its writing, it was nonetheless a work of scholarship, based as it was on some one thousand sources. The book, *Mysticism*, was a huge success, and twelve editions appeared.

Because its erudition, the suspicion was that the author, one Evelyn Underhill, must have been a man! Who else would have the academic training or ecclesiastical knowledge to produce such a work? In fact the author was a self-trained writer, wife of a London barrister, one who would go on to write or edit a total of thirty-nine books (including spiritual works and novels) and some 350 articles and reviews.



In an era when women were unknown in theological circles, she would go on to lecture at the University of Oxford, speak at Canterbury Cathedral, and gain fame as a highly respected as a retreat leader and spiritual advisor.

Few people studied prayer in theory and practice—Christian and non-Christian—to the extent the Evelyn Underhill did. At the end of her life, after having considered many options, she concluded that prayer was about availing oneself to the purposes of God, not invoking the activity of God for either spiritual assurance or earthly benefit, but for conformity to the life and ministry of the one through whom we pray: Jesus Christ, the crucified. This understanding is not popular today, and while Underhill's early writings are still readily available, her later writings are difficult to find. In the world today, what sort of people of prayer would God ask us to be? Ones who strive for spiritual development alone, or ones who offer their lives as living intercessions, empowered by the Spirit, sent by Christ, to do God's will? Might the latter define all of our lives of prayer.

6. From the conclusion to *Mysticism* (1911), by Evelyn Underhill

Every person ... who awakens to consciousness of a Reality which transcends the normal world of sense—however small, weak imperfect that consciousness may be—is put upon a road which follows at low levels the path which the mystic treads at high levels. The success with which they follow this way to freedom and full life will depend on the intensity of their love and will, their capacity for self-discipline, their steadfastness and courage. It will depend on the generosity and completeness of their outgoing passion for absolute beauty, absolute goodness, or absolute truth. But if they move at all, they will move through a series of states which are, in their own small way, analogous to those experienced by the greatest contemplative on the journey towards that union with God which is the term of the spirit's ascent towards its home ...

... To be a mystic is simply to participate here and now in that real and eternal life; in the fullest, deepest sense which is possible. It is to share, as a free and conscious agent—not a servant, but a child—in the joyous travail of the Universe: its mighty onward sweep through pain and glory towards its home in God. This gift, this power of free co-operation in the world-process, is our greatest honour. The ordered sequence of states, the organic development, whereby his consciousness is detached from illusion and rises to the mystic freedom which conditions instead of being conditioned by, its normal world, is the way we must tread if that sharing is to be realized. Only by this deliberate fostering of our deeper self, this transmutation of the elements of our character, can we reach those levels of consciousness upon which we hear, and respond to, the measure “whereto the worlds keep time” on their great pilgrimage towards the Father's heart. The mystic act of union, that joyous loss of the transfigured self in God, which is the crown of our conscious ascent towards the Absolute, is the contribution of the individual to this, the destiny of the Cosmos.

7. From the conclusion to *Worship* (1936), by Evelyn Underhill

Christian worship is a supernatural action; and more than a supernatural action, a supernatural life. It is the response of the human creature to the besetting charity of God: a response in which we move out towards Reality, shed self-occupation, and find the true basis of our life. Nor is this merely one form of that general recognition of the Holy which is the basis of natural religion. Christian worship is a distinct response to a distinct revelation; God's self-disclosure to his creature at a particular point in time and space, under particular human accidents, entering the time-series to illuminate and save—a disclosure which spreads, to interpret and transform the whole of human experience.

With those who are historically minded, we may think chiefly of this revelation in its human aspect, in close connection with the earthly life, death, and continuing presence of Our Lord; and make of this the focal point of worship. Or with those who seek always for the Absolute and Eternal, we can “pass through the Humanity to the Divinity” to dwell upon the outpouring of the Divine Wisdom through this narrow door, and the gathering up of creation in God. Both these responses lie within the span of the Christian *cultus*. But whether our outlook be towards the personal or the transcendent, it is here, in this movement of the abiding God towards creation, that the incentive is given to our deepest worship, and the appeal is made to our sacrificial love: and all the kinds and degrees of Christian devotion, in prayer and in action, are ways in which we reply to this utterance of the Word.

The devotional and liturgical path is at once Evangelical and Eucharistic. Here the renewed emphasis on the person of Christ and the centrality of the Eucharist, found in various ways and degrees in all parts of the Christian Church at the present day—the tendency to more frequent communion, the deeper and wider significance which is attached to the Church's sacramental

life—all point to a fresh recognition of the close dependence of man on the Divine self-giving, and of the Eucharistic rhythm as the supernatural theme of human life. The active path is that of a devoted co-operation with the creative purpose within the temporal world, a striving for perfection: and this, subdued in its own manner to the supernatural theme and pursued in direct dependence on the supernatural power, is also in its own measure sacramental. Here, the selfless spirit of worship pours itself out in that sacrificial effort which seeks to transform the material order, and especially the human scene—cleansing, healing, saving, reconciling, and making of it a fit vehicle of the divine indwelling Life-giving, in fact, concrete and social expression to the Eucharistic ideal.

Nor without such concrete and costly expression, carried to its utmost limits, can Christian adoration be complete. For since God in his *Logos* is revealed to us in expressive and creative acts within the visible world—through history, and through human personality—so our response in worship also needs expressive and creative acts; weaving every aspect of our human personality, physical, mental, and spiritual, into its adoring recognition of the beauty and perfection of God. For worship is not merely an expression of the technically religious life. It is the religious life, and so, conterminous with life itself: Creation's response to its Origin and Lord.

The Christian hope of the future is that this, the true meaning and message of the Incarnation, will come to be more deeply understood: and the demand on our worshipping love and total self-offering, will receive a more complete response—a response stretching upward in awe-struck contemplation to share that adoring vision of the Principle which is “the inheritance of the saints in light”, and downwards and outwards in loving action, to embrace and so transform the whole world. When this happens, Christian sacramental worship will at last disclose its full meaning, and enter into its full heritage. For it will be recognized as the ritual sign of our deepest relation with Reality, and so of the mysterious splendour of our situation and our call: the successive life of God's people freely offered in oblation, and the abiding life of God in Christ received, not for our own sakes, but in order to achieve that transfiguration of the whole created universe, that shining forth of the splendour of the Holy, in which the aim of worship shall be fulfilled.

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 Mahajanga (Indian Ocean). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Melbourne; and within our Diocese, for the Parish of Kidman Park and Mile End.

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), Robert Whalley (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Mark, Olivia, Nance, Neil, Elaine, Neil and Hugh.

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 Bev Mitchell, 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, and holy women and men of every time and place.

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

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Parish Council	The Priest and Wardens <i>ex officio</i> ; Catherine Freriks, Alison McAllister, Hamish McLachlan, Peter Turner.
Nomination Committee	Awaiting Appointment
Synod Representatives	Ashley Durham, Catherine Freriks