

**St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church**  
Moore Street, Adelaide



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

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**Keeping Community  
Spiritual Resources & Reflections**

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**Thursday 18 May 2023**

Dear friends,

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions will make it possible to 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 Regina Caeli noon and Mass at 12.10 pm.

The decision to return to worship in community, whether for private prayer, or the public celebration of the Word and Sacraments, is not a straightforward matter.

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



**1. Fr Steven writes ... Spirituality as Cosmic and Personal**

From Monday to Wednesday this week, I attended the annual Clergy Conference. These meetings are sometimes good, sometimes not so good, and I am pleased to report that the meeting this year was of a high calibre, and there was a sense of fellowship between clergy of many different backgrounds and viewpoints that has not always been present.

There were excellent presentations on serious issues including domestic and family violence, as well as an outstanding keynote address from a Brisbane-based clinical psychologist.

Last Sunday, I preached about the spirit, and spirituality, as a dynamic and divine connection, which has personal and cosmic dimensions.

In this context, the Feast of the Ascension, which we celebrate today, is ultimately a mystery of divine connection. All this helps to form the context for developing a fresh understanding of prayer.

Next Sunday, I will be preaching on 'The courage to pray', where I will present a modern view of prayer in two stages. First, I will use the prayer of Jesus in John (17:1-26) as a starting point, and then, I will provide five tips for prayer:

- Rhythm
- Wonder
- Questions
- Truth-telling
- And resistance

Fr Steven

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## 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 be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. (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.

So with immediate effect, the cup will be available to those who wish to partake of it. On Sundays, we will continue to receive communion one at a time in a single line, and an assistant holding the chalice will stand to one side of the priest. If you wish to receive in both kinds, simply move to that side. 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 only one species, 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.

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## 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](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, especially the [Angelus](#) (or in Easter Time, [Regina Caeli](#)) 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.

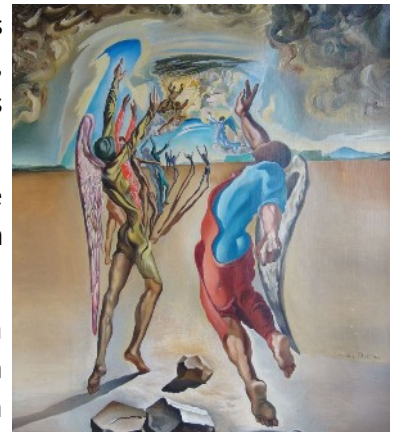
## 5. This Week in the Calendar

This coming week we celebrate the Ascension of the Lord, and the medieval bishop St Dunstan.

According to the Acts of the Apostles, Jesus appeared to his disciples during the forty days after Easter: On the fortieth day, "he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight" (Acts 1:9).

The story of Jesus' Ascension serves as a bridge between the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, which were both written by the same author.

Christians live in Jesus' promise that he will come again like a "thief in the night" when we least expect it. Ascension is also a preview of our own destiny in which we will someday be taken up to heaven to meet God face to face.



A former Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, has said of this feast: "The Ascension ... while it is made known to [the disciples] in a symbolic act of parting, was understood well enough to be not a departure to a local heaven but the entrance upon a new mode of sovereignty and of a presence near to believers anywhere and everywhere."

St Dunstan was born into an important family near Glastonbury in Somerset. As a young man, he lived for a time in the household of King Athelstan but incurred the displeasure of some of the officials by his love of singing and reading! He lived for a short time with the bishop of Winchester, who persuaded him to become a monk. As a hermit near Glastonbury, Dunstan disciplined himself through prayer and penance.

A period of civil unrest due to royal succession battles gave way to peace after 959 and a restructuring of religious life. Pope John XII made Dunstan his legate and, along with St Ethelwold and St Oswald, he restored monasteries and dismissed rogue priests.



Widespread reforms continued under the reign of King Edgar with Dunstan as his primary advisor for 16 years. Dunstan continued to influence succeeding kings.

As Dunstan grew older, he retired from politics to a post at Canterbury teaching at the Cathedral School. A revered musician, he composed hymns, illuminated manuscripts, and was skilled at metal-making.

Among the few surviving items attributed to Dunstan is a prayer, interpolated into the Kyrie ("Lord, have mercy") that occurs during Mass:

*O Lord, O King, resplendent in the citadel of heaven, all hail continually; and of Thy clemency upon Thy people still do thou have mercy.*

*Lord, Whom the hosts of cherubim in songs and hymns with praise continually proclaim, do Thou upon us eternally have mercy.*

*The armies aloft, O Lord, do sing high praise to Thee, even they to Whom the seraphim reply, 'do Thou have mercy'.*

*O Christ, enthroned as King above, Whom the nine orders of angels in their beauty praise without ceasing, deign Thou upon us, Thy servants, ever to have mercy.*

*O Christ, Whom Thy one only Church throughout the world doth hymn, O Thou to Whom the sun, and moon, and stars, the land and sea, do service ever, do Thou have mercy.*

*O Christ, Whose holy ones, the heirs of the eternal country, one and all with utter joy proclaim Thee in a most worthy strain, do Thou have mercy upon us.*

*O Lord, O gentle Son of Mary free, O King of kings, Blessed Redeemer, upon those who have been ransomed from the power of death, by Thine own blood, ever have mercy.*

*O noblest unbegotten, yet Begotten Son, having no beginning of age, yet without effort (in the weakness of God) excelling all things, upon this Thy congregation in Thy pity, Lord have mercy.*

*O Sun of Righteousness, in all unclouded glory, supreme Dispenser of Justice, in that great Day when Thou shalt strictly judge all nations, we earnestly beseech Thee, upon this Thy people, who here stand before Thy presence, in Thy pity, Lord, then have mercy upon us.*

## **6. On the Feast of the Ascension – From a Sermon by St Augustine**

*No one has ever ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven*

Today our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; let our hearts ascend with him. Listen to the words of the Apostle: *If you have risen with Christ, set your hearts on the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God; seek the things that are above, not the things that are on earth.* For just as he remained with us even after his ascension, so we too are already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies.

Christ is now exalted above the heavens, but he still suffers on earth all the pain that we, the members of his body, have to bear. He showed this when he cried out from above: *Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?* and when he said: *I was hungry and you gave me food.*

Why do we on earth not strive to find rest with him in heaven even now, through the faith, hope and love that unites us to him? While in heaven he is also with us; and we while on earth

are with him. He is here with us by his divinity, his power and his love. We cannot be in heaven, as he is on earth, by divinity, but in him, we can be there by love.

He did not leave heaven when he came down to us; nor did he withdraw from us when he went up again into heaven. The fact that he was in heaven even while he was on earth is borne out by his own statement: *No one has ever ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven.*

These words are explained by our oneness with Christ, for he is our head and we are his body. No one ascended into heaven except Christ because we also are Christ: he is the Son of Man by his union with us, and we by our union with him are the sons of God. So the Apostle says: *Just as the human body, which has many members, is a unity, because all the different members make one body, so is it also with Christ.* He too has many members, but one body.

Out of compassion for us he descended from heaven, and although he ascended alone, we also ascend, because we are in him by grace. Thus, no one but Christ descended and no one but Christ ascended; not because there is no distinction between the head and the body, but because the body as a unity cannot be separated from the head.

## 7. On the Feast of St Dunstan

According to legend, the great Archbishop Dunstan had a number of encounters with the devil. The most famous story, which entered popular folklore, tells how he pulled the devil by the nose with his blacksmith's tongs.

The story goes that while he was living as a hermit in a cell at Glastonbury, he occupied himself with his various crafts, including metalwork. One day, as evening was coming on, an old man appeared at his window and asked him to make a chalice for him. Setting aside what he was working on, Dunstan agreed to the request and set to work. But as he was working his visitor began to change shape: one moment he was an old man, then a young boy, then a seductive woman.

Dunstan realised that his guest was the devil; but, pretending not to notice, he went on with his task. He took up the tongs from among his tools and laid them in the fire, waiting until they were red-hot. Then, pulling them out of the fire, he turned round and seized the devil by the nose with the tongs. The devil struggled and screamed, but Dunstan held on until at last he felt he had triumphed. Then he threw the devil out of his cell and it fled, running down the street and crying "Woe is me! What has that bald devil done to me? Look at me, a poor wretch, look how he has tortured me!"

Many people heard and saw this, and the following day they came to Dunstan and asked him what had happened. He said to them, "These are the tricks of devils, who try to trap us with their snares whenever they can. But if we remain firm in the service of Christ, we can easily defeat them with his help, and they will flee from us in confusion." And from that time he dwelt safely in his little cell.

On another occasion, when Dunstan was praying alone, the devil appeared to him in the likeness of a wolf with a gaping mouth, snarling and baring his teeth. Dunstan would not be distracted from concentration on his prayers, so the devil suddenly changed himself into a little fox, trying to get Dunstan's attention by jumping about, contorting himself and trying to get Dunstan to laugh at him. But, smiling a little, Dunstan only said, "You are revealing how you usually behave: by your tricks you flatter the unwary so that you can devour them. Now get out of here, wretch, since Christ, who crushed the lion and the dragon with his heel, will overcome you by his grace through me, whether you're a wolf or a fox."



What's striking about these stories is that they combine a playful approach with an absolutely sincere belief in Dunstan as an energetic, vigorous warrior against evil. If you really believe that this great man was supported by the power of God, it doesn't undermine that faith to make the story funny; medieval writers could freely play with such topics because of the very security of their trust in the triumph of good over evil. All that is wicked and cruel and threatening can be made trivial by the sight of such mighty goodness - exposed as nothing but a little scurrying devil, compared to the joyous strength and power of the truly good.

## 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 Tabora (Tanzania). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of North-West Australia; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Parish of Campbelltown.

*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.* Pray for all those who are troubled in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), Robert Whalley (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Mark, Olivia, Nance, Neil, Elaine, Edward, Neil and Bev.

*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, 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 Dunstan, 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](mailto:StMMAdelaide.Parish@outlook.com), by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

The Parish relies on the financial support of the community for the majority of its budget. You can assist the Parish by giving electronically, using the following details:

Bank: Bankwest • BSB: 305 122 • Account no: 0324654 • Reference: Your name

### Directory

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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	Awaiting Appointment
Synod Representatives	Ashley Durham, Catherine Freriks