

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

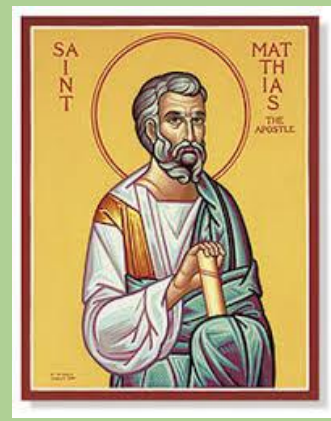
Thursday 17 February 2022

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 – In the Name of Jesus

First Donald Trump, and now Vladimir Putin, what's next? Clearly, we live in the age of the strong man. Of course, not all men exhibit this militant masculinity. In fact, there are many masculinities, which are shaped by culture and context. Nonetheless, the problem with strong man politics is that it is inherently violent. The plight of the Ukraine is testimony to the very real dangers of strong man politics. So, let's keep the Ukraine in our prayers. Let's also pray for the ordinary people of Russia. But who is this strong man?

The strong man finds it hard to consider alternative perspectives. For example, this is apparent on issues around climate change. That is, the strong man knows better than climate scientists (and retired fire commissioners). The strong man's hubris, which is a mix of charm and conceit, means he is the exclusive guardian of truth. He knows the facts. Everything else is fake news, and only he can tell the difference. This constitutes the engine, which drives him forward.

Ironically, the strong man construes opposition to his views as confirmation of the rightness of his cause, which reinforces his sense of moral pre-eminence. Subsequently, the refrain "someone has to make the hard call" weaves its way through his combative rhetoric. But it comes at our expense.

So, the strong man is the exception. He sees himself as the exception. And he is hard to remove. Crucially, strong man masculinity influences other men adversely, disposing them toward violence. Strong man masculinity galvanizes them, as it prompts, permits, and exonerates violence.

The relationship between violence and masculinity is complex. As sociologist Raewynn Connell claims, "Most violence is not a matter of individual pathology". There are structural connections and institutional layers. However, the widespread vilification, imprisonment,

disappearance of journalists in Russia, and elsewhere, demonstrates the extent to which the strong man will go.

The Church is not immune to strong man politics. Indeed, we had to learn the hard way from our abuses of power. Initially, we struggled to see the problems, partly because we venerated our strong men. After all, how could we challenge the princes of the church, as they have been called by God? Inadvertently, then, the Church fostered a culture of deference, where obedience was rewarded at the expense of others (e.g., children, women, LGBTIQ).

In the name of Jesus, and his friends from Galilee, it is imperative for the Church to enter the public square, with others as equals, in order to critique and denounce the hubris and violence of strong man politics. After all, our planet depends on it.

Steven Ogden
Locum Priest

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 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.

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.

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 holy season of Lent is now just a week away. **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 number of other opportunities during the week to deepen our experience of this special season.

On **Wednesday**, there will be a meditative, contemplative service of Morning Prayer on Wednesdays at 7.30 am. It will be offered in the Church, and it is also possible to join in at home, with the worship resources supplied to you. If you are interested, please speak to Leonie Zadow or Alison McAllister.

On **Thursday**, Fr Steven will offer a Lenten study, in person at 10 am, and by Zoom at 7 pm. See the item elsewhere in this newsletter. The regular Thursday Mass will also be said at 12.10 pm, following the Angelus at 12 noon.

On **Friday**, the Stations of the Cross will be celebrated at 6.15 pm. The Stations of the Cross is a devotion that commemorates Jesus' last day on earth. The stations are commonly used as a mini pilgrimage, moving from station to station. At each station, we recall and meditate on a specific event from Christ's last day. Specific prayers are recited, then we move to the next station until all 14 are complete.

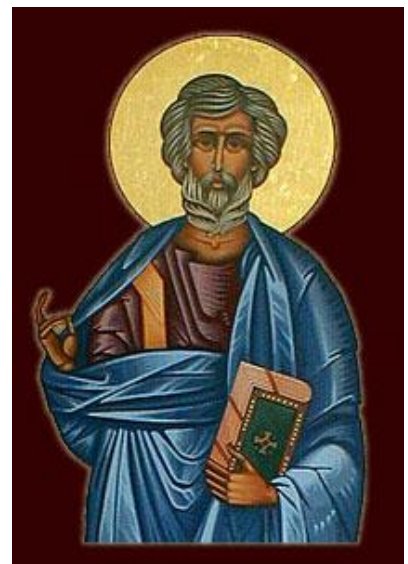
6. In the Church's Calendar

This week the Church celebrates the Apostle Matthias, and the priest and poet George Herbert.

St Matthias is mentioned just once by name in the New Testament.

According to Acts 1:15-26, during the days after the Ascension Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers—about 120 of Jesus' followers.

Now that Judas had betrayed his ministry, it was necessary, Peter said, to fulfill the scriptural recommendation that another should take his office. "Therefore, it is necessary that one of the men who accompanied us the whole time the Lord Jesus came and went among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day on which he was taken up from us, become with us a witness to his resurrection" (Acts 1:21-22).

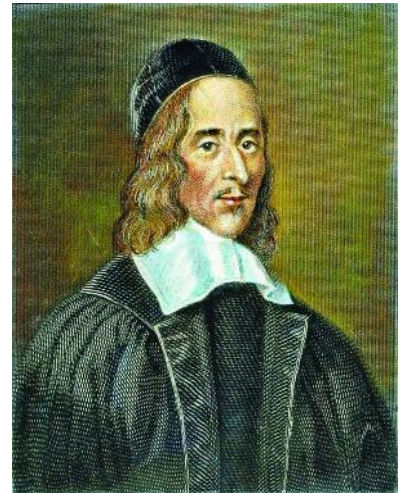


They nominated two men: Joseph Barsabbas and Matthias. They prayed and drew lots. The choice fell upon Matthias, who was added to the Eleven.

What was the holiness of Matthias? Obviously, he was suited for apostleship by the experience of being with Jesus from his baptism to his ascension. He must also have been suited personally, or he would not have been nominated for so great a responsibility. Must we not remind ourselves that the fundamental holiness of Matthias was his receiving gladly the relationship with the Father offered him by Jesus and completed by the Holy Spirit? If the apostles are the foundations of our faith by their witness, they must also be reminders, if only implicitly, that holiness is entirely a matter of God's giving, and it is offered to all, in the everyday circumstances of life. We receive, and even for this God supplies the power of freedom.

George Herbert (1593-1633) was born to a noble Welsh family. He was a brilliant student at school and university, and in 1620 became the "public orator" at Cambridge. One of the main duties of the office was to express the sentiments of the university, and it was considered a launching point to high office.

Herbert's career continued to climb, as did his prestige—Sir Francis Bacon dedicated his *Translation of Certain Psalmes* to him, and he was elected to Parliament—but then came a series of tragedies: King James died, as did many of Herbert's sponsors; Bacon died; his mother died (Donne delivered the funeral sermon); the plague broke out.



In 1629 he gave up his secular ambitions and prepared to take holy orders. He was ordained and moved to the rural countryside at Bremerton near Salisbury. He rebuilt the church with his own money, visited the poor, consoled the sick and dying, reconciled neighbours. He became known as "Holy Mr. Herbert." He served for only three years, however, dying of tuberculosis in 1633.

On his deathbed, Herbert sent a "little book of poems" to his friend Nicholas Ferrar, founder of a religious community nearby. "If he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul," he wrote in his instructions, "let it be made public; if not, let him burn it, for I and it are the least of God's mercies." The book, published later that year with the title *The Temple*, contains some of the most memorable poetry in the English language. Several poems contained in the book are now used as hymns, such as "The God of Love my Shepherd Is," "Teach Me, My God and King," and "Let All the World in Every Corner Sing."

7. From a sermon of St John Chrysostom on St Matthias

"In those days, Peter, stood up in the midst of the disciples and said" As the fiery spirit to whom the flock was entrusted by Christ and as the leader in the band of the apostles, Peter always took the initiative in speaking: "My brothers, we must choose from among our number." He left the decision to the whole body, at once augmenting the honour of those elected and avoiding any suspicion of partiality. For such great occasions can easily lead to trouble.

Did not Peter then have the right to make the choice himself? Certainly he had the right, but he did not want to give the appearance of showing special favour to anyone. Besides he was

not yet endowed with the Spirit. "And they nominated two," we read, "Joseph, who was called Barsabbas and surnamed Justus, and Matthias." He himself did not nominate them; all present did. But it was he who brought the issue forward, pointing out that it was not his own idea but had been suggested to him by a scriptural prophecy. So he was speaking not as a teacher but as an interpreter.

"So," he goes on, "we must choose from those men who lived in our company." Notice how insistent he is that they should be eyewitnesses. Even though the Spirit would come to ratify the choice, Peter regards this prior qualification as most important.

"Those who lived in our company," he continued, "all through the time when the Lord Jesus came and went among us." He refers to those who had dwelt with Jesus, not just those who had been his disciples. For of course from the very beginning many had followed him. Notice how it is written that Peter himself was "one of the two who had listened to John, and followed Jesus."

"All through the time when the Lord Jesus came and went among us, beginning with the baptism of John" – rightly so, because no one knew what had happened before that time, although they were to know of it later through the Spirit.

"Up to the day," Peter added, "on which he was taken up from us – one of these must be made a witness along with us of his resurrection." He did not say "a witness of the rest of his actions" but only "a witness of the resurrection." That witness would be more believable who could declare that he who ate and drank and was crucified also rose from the dead. He needed to be a witness not of the times before or after that event, and not of the signs and wonders, but only of the resurrection itself. For the rest happened by general admission, openly; but the resurrection took place secretly, and was known to these men only.

And they all prayed together, saying: "You, Lord, know the hearts of men; make your choice known to us." "You", not "we". Appropriately they said that he knew the hearts of men, because the choice was to be made by him, not by others.

They spoke with such confidence, because someone had to be appointed. They did not say "choose" but "make known to us" the chosen one; "the one you choose," they said, fully aware that everything was pre-ordained by God. "They then drew lots." For they did not think themselves worthy to make the choice of their own accord, and therefore they wanted some sign for their instruction.

8. George Herbert's Poetry – Visual Variety

Visually, George Herbert's poems are varied in such a way as to enhance their meaning, with intricate rhyme schemes, stanzas combining different line lengths and other ingenious formal devices. The most obvious examples are pattern poems like *The Altar*, in which the shorter and longer lines are arranged on the page in the shape of an altar. The visual appeal is reinforced by the conceit of its construction from a broken, stony heart, representing the personal offering of himself as a sacrifice upon it. Built into this is an allusion to Psalm 51:17: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart."

In the case of "Easter Wings" (illustrated below), the words were printed sideways on two facing pages so that the lines there suggest outspread wings. The words of the poem are paralleled between stanzas and mimic the opening and closing of the wings. In Herbert's poems formal ingenuity is not an end in itself but is employed only as an auxiliary to its meaning.

Lord, who createdt man in wealth and flore,
 Though foolishly he lost the fame,
 Decaying more and more,
 Till he became
 Most poore :
 With thee
 O let me rife
 As larks, harmoniously,
 And sing this day thy victories:
 Then shall the fall further the flight in me.
 My tender age in sorrow did beginne
 And fill with sicknes and shame
 Thou didst fo punish sinne,
 That I became
 Most thine.
 With thee
 Let me combine,
 And feel this day thy victorie:
 For, if I imp my wing on thine,
 Affliction shall advance the flight in mee.

9. 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 Mount Kenya West (Kenya). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of The Murray; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Parish of Modbury.

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, especially Christopher Edwards. ✱ *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 Polycarp, and holy women and men of every time and place.

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

