

Alstonville Anglicans

Sharing the Good Life

11th November 2018

Remembrance Day

We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land, on which we worship, work and meet, the Bundjalung people. We recognize the significant role the past and future Elders play in the life of the region. We are mindful that within and without the beautiful sandstone church, the Land always was and always will be Aboriginal Land.



In 1924, on the 10th Anniversary of the outbreak of the war, Archdeacon White reflected on the events of those four years, 1914 to 1918. Padre White said: "War is a senseless way for civilian humanity to settle its differences. It releases the lower passions from restraint, spreads unhappiness everywhere and tends to exalt the power of hate into a manly virtue. . . . Ten years ago great things were done in order that a tyrannous menace might be destroyed, but these are the days when great things might be done to build up a righteous and just Commonwealth. Our men died for others. Now what is needed is the spirit that will inspire men and women to live, think and work for others."

I hope to honour his words. The way that I want to honour his words is to understand the unconscious and subconscious stories that rule our world. I use Walter Wink to help me name these as the myth of redemptive violence - it structures the domination system. The alternative is the Third way of Jesus that is beyond fight or flight.

The myth of redemptive violence

The story that the rulers of domination societies told each other, and their subordinates is what we today might call the Myth of Redemptive Violence.

**Please note a hearing loop is installed on the right hand side of St Barts.
Please turn off your mobile phone during worship. Toilets are located in the front of the Hall.
First Aid Kits are located in the Church & the Hall.**



It enshrines the belief that violence saves, that war brings peace, that might makes right. It is one of the oldest continuously repeated stories in the world. Here Walter Wink describes just how pervasive this myth still is in the mores of Western culture.

The belief that violence "saves" is so successful because it doesn't seem to be mythic in the least. Violence simply appears to be the nature of things. It's what works. It seems inevitable, the last and, often, the first resort in conflicts. If a god is what you turn to when all else fails, violence certainly functions as a god. What people overlook, then, is the religious character of violence. It demands from its devotees an absolute obedience- unto- death.

This Myth of Redemptive Violence is the real myth of the modern world. It, and not Judaism or Christianity or Islam, is the dominant religion in our society today...

Few cartoons have run longer or been more influential than Popeye and Bluto. In a typical segment, Bluto abducts a screaming and kicking Olive Oyl, Popeye's girlfriend. When Popeye attempts to rescue her, the massive Bluto beats his diminutive opponent to a pulp, while Olive Oyl helplessly wrings her hands. At the last moment, as our hero oozes to the floor, and Bluto is trying, in effect, to rape Olive Oyl, a can of spinach pops from Popeye's pocket and spills into his mouth. Transformed by this gracious infusion of power, he easily demolishes the villain and rescues his beloved. The format never varies. Neither party ever gains any insight or learns from these encounters. They never sit down and discuss their differences. Repeated defeats do not teach Bluto to honour Olive Oyl's humanity, and repeated pummellings do not teach Popeye to swallow his spinach before the fight.





We have already seen how the myth of redemptive violence is played out in the structure of children's cartoon shows (and is found as well in comics, video and computer games, and movies). But we also encounter it in the media, in sports, in nationalism, in militarism, in foreign policy, in televangelism, in the religious right, and in self-styled militia groups. What appears so innocuous

in cartoons is, in fact, the mythic underpinnings of our violent society.

The psychodynamics of the TV cartoon or comic book are marvellously simple: children identify with the good guy so that they can think of themselves as good. This enables them to project out onto the bad guy their own repressed anger, violence, rebelliousness, or lust, and then vicariously to enjoy their own evil by watching the bad guy initially prevail.

The myth of redemptive violence is the simplest, laziest, most exciting, uncomplicated, irrational, and primitive depiction of evil the world has even known. Furthermore, its orientation toward evil is one into which virtually all modern children (boys especially) are socialised in the process of maturation.

Once children have been indoctrinated into the expectations of a dominator society, they may never outgrow the need to locate all evil outside themselves. Even as adults they tend to scapegoat others for all that is wrong in the world. They continue to depend on group identification and the upholding of social norms for a sense of well-being.

What is the alternative?

The third way of Jesus

What is Jesus answer to redemptive violence - the myth of the domination system?





Jesus rejected hierarchies, called for economic equity, rejected violence, broke customs that treated women as inferiors, broke purity regulations that separated people from each other, challenged the patriarchal vision of the family, and rejected the belief that God requires blood sacrifices. Jesus went beyond revolution.

His struggle was against the basic presuppositions and structures of oppression -- against the Domination System itself. Violent revolution fails because it is not revolutionary enough. It changes the rulers but not the rules, the end but not the means. Most of the old repressive values and delusional assumptions remain intact. What Jesus envisioned was a world transformed, where both people and the Powers of domination are in harmony with the Ultimate God of Love.

One does not become free of the Powers - from Violence - by defeating them in a frontal attack. Rather, one dies to their control: "Those who try to make their life secure will lose it, but those who lose their life will keep it." (Luke 17:33) Here also the cross is the model: we are liberated, not by striking back at what enslaves us -- for even striking back reveals that we are still controlled by violence -- but by a willingness to die rather than submit to its command. [Walter Wink *The Powers*, [page 93]

A caution, however: if we are to make nonviolence effective, we will have to be as willing to suffer and be killed as soldiers in battle. Nonviolence is not a way of avoiding personal sacrifice. Indeed, it requires that we take that sacrifice on ourselves rather than inflicting it on others. [page 118] Before engaging in nonviolent action, however, there is spiritual work that needs to be done. We want to be able to oppose evil without evil making us over into its likeness. [page 122]



The way of nonviolence, the way Jesus chose, is the only way that is able to overcome evil without creating new forms of evil and making us evil in turn. [page 127]

When we make survival the highest goal and death the greatest evil, we hand ourselves over to the gods of the Domination System. We trust violence because we are afraid. And we will not relinquish our fears until we are able to imagine a better alternative. ... The vast majority of Christians reject nonviolence, not only because of confusion about its biblical foundations, but because there are too many situations where they cannot conceive of it working. ... Millions of years of conditioning in the fight or flight response have done nothing to prepare us for this "third way" of responding to evil. [pages 145-146].

Concluding comments

Our western culture is presently in the first stages of a spiritual renaissance. And to the extent that this renaissance is Christian at all, it will be the human figure of Jesus that galvanizes hearts to belief and action, and not the Christ of the creeds or the Pauline doctrine of justification by grace through faith. And in the teaching of Jesus, the sayings on nonviolence and love of enemies will hold a central place. Not because they are truer than any others, but because they are crucial to the struggle to overcome domination without creating new forms of domination. Our most critical work today, 100 years after the first armistice is this "How can we love our enemies?"



LinC Alstonville

The Combined Churches of Alstonville invite you to a celebration and lunch: Tuesday 4th December 12.00 for 12.30pm at the Wollongbar Tavern. Further enquiries 66286960.

Families@4pm

Families@4 is a new Sunday service aimed at young families and those exploring faith for the first time. Everybody welcome.

Today's Gospel Reading: Mark 12:38-44

³⁸ As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, ³⁹ and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! ⁴⁰ They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation." ⁴¹ He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. ⁴³ Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. ⁴⁴ For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

Sunday@6pm—11th November

Asking questions, seeking answers. Join us Sunday@6 pm. Come for a cuppa and fellowship at 5.30pm. Everyone welcome!



Save the Date

"The Coming of the Light" Saturday 8th December
6-8pm at St Bartholomew's Church.
A special occasion to celebrate Advent.

Mowing Roster

Men and women are invited to be part of the lawn mowing teams for the next year December 2018-November 2019. Typically each team of 2 or 3 people has 3 turns a year at mowing and doing the edges. Please give your name to Barry Campey 66283089 by third week in November as the new roster starts early December. Thank you.

Bible Readings

11th Nov Ruth 3:1-5; 4:3-17 **Mark 12:38-44**
18th Nov **Mark 13:1-8**



Remembrance Day Service

A very warm welcome to those who come to commemorate 100 years since Armistice Day with us. Please join us for morning tea in the hall afterwards.

Messy Church

The next Messy Church celebration is Sunday 25th November 4.00pm



Contemplative Church—Thursdays@6pm

A meditative service that energises
and refreshes you for life.
This week Healing

Thank you!

"Our grateful thanks for all the good wishes, phone calls and visits from folks over the past two months. Special thanks to the 'Master Chefs' of St Bart's. Ken and Denise Ashdown"

An Introduction to the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola

The Spiritual Exercises are a compilation of prayers and meditations developed by Ignatius to help people to become spiritually free. Input will offer a brief introduction into who Ignatius is, an overview of the exercises along with the opportunity to explore how the journey might work for you in your daily life. Led by Robin Fitzgerald

St Bartholomew's Church, Tuesday, 13th November 12pm–2pm.

Baptism

Please pray for our Baptism Families:

The Green Family, Ella and Harrison were baptised Sunday 4th November,

Catherine Ryan who will be baptised Sunday 18th November,

The Beavis Family, Anna will be baptised 1st December

The Lusk Family, Amelia and Joshua will be baptised Sunday 9th December,

The Prentice Family, George will be baptised Sunday 9th December

ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALSTONVILLE

Ministers	all the baptised!	
Rector	The Reverend Dr Desiree Snyman	0402 764 969
	rector@alstonvilleanglicanchurch.org.au	
Associate	The Reverend John Kidson	0411 394 213
	The Reverend Geoff Vidal	0447 645 456
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Telephone:	6628 0231	
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website:	www.alstonvilleanglicanchurch.org.au	

The Anglican Op Shop 1 The Avenue, Alstonville **Tel:** 6628 8777

We give thanks to God for those who contribute to sharing the good life through this church electronically. **ESB: 705 077 / Acc: 40130**

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

Monday	12th Nov	10.00am	Life Group (in recess)
		1.00pm	Sew Help ful
Tuesday	13th Nov	1.30pm	Life Group at Carol Stone's home
		12.00pm	Spiritual Exercises, St Bart's
		6.00pm	Life Group with Rev Desiree
Wednesday	14th Nov	9.00am	Meditation Group, St Bart's
		11.00am	"Coming of the Light" meeting
		2.00pm	MMR Meeting
Thursday	15th Nov	9.30am	Play Place
		6.00pm	Contemplative Church, St Bart's
Friday	16th Nov	10:00am	Holy Communion, St Bart's
		2.00pm	Choir, St Bart's
Sunday	18th Nov	8.00am	Holy Communion, St Barts
		4.00pm	Families@4
		5.30pm	Cuppa then Sunday@6, St Barts

Rosters—Sunday 18th November

Thank you to all volunteers assisting with Worship (3rd Sunday team).

Person in Charge: Carol Vidal **Worship Leader:** Iris Cowie

Music: Choir **Cleaning:** Robin Delaney **Sound:** Mark Stuckey

Flowers: Gerri White, Sheila Hobbs, Narelle Smee