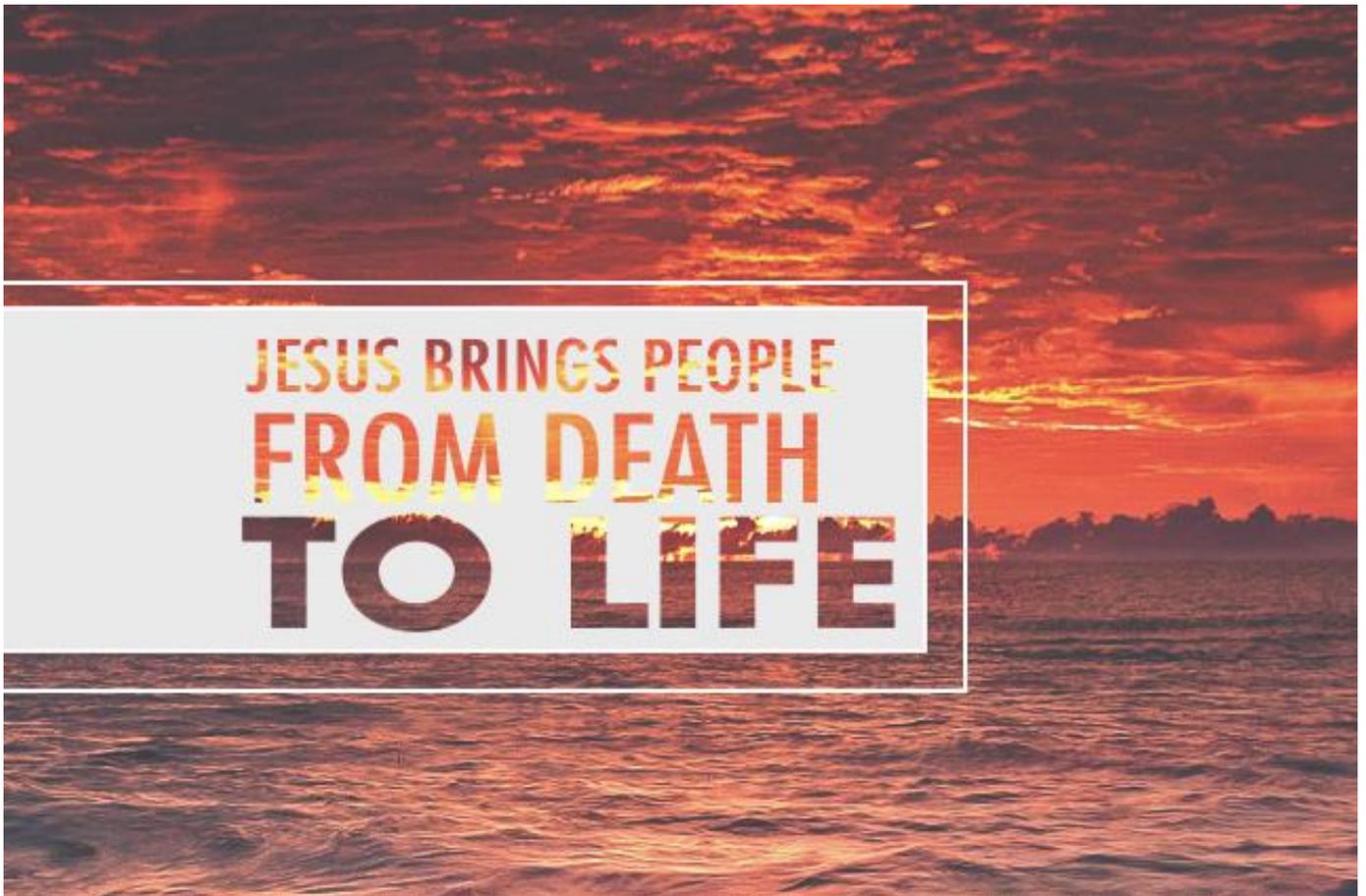


PARISH STUDY RESOURCE

November 2018

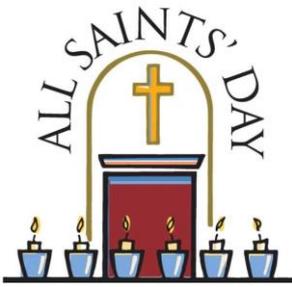


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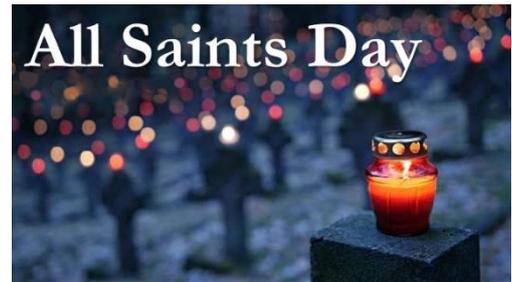
Anglican
Church
St Peter's Bribie Island

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STUDY – 4 NOVEMBER 2018



All Saints Day
Isaiah 25.6-9
Psalm 24
Revelation 21.1-6a
John 11.32-44



Open with a time of prayer, which could include the following ...

God of all that was and is and ever will be. Bless all the saints with the light of your love. Bless those who have gone before us as well as those who are with us. Amen.

Reflection - All Saints' Day

All Saints' Day, also known as All Hallows' Day or Hallowmas is a Christian festival celebrated in honour of all the saints, known and unknown. Christian celebration of All Saints' Day stems from a belief that there is a powerful spiritual bond between those in heaven (the "Church triumphant"), and the living (the "Church militant"). The tradition of All Saints Day revolves around "giving God solemn thanks for the lives and deaths of his saints", including those who are "famous or obscure". Liturgical celebration begins at Vespers on the evening of 31 October, All Hallows' Eve (All Saints' Eve), and ends at the close of 1 November. It is thus the day before All Souls' Day, which commemorates the faithful departed. In many traditions, All Saints' Day is part of the triduum of Allhallowtide, which lasts three days from 31 October to 2 November inclusive.

Question

1. Is there a particular saint (person of faith) who has had an influence on your life? Share who and how.

Reflection - Isaiah 25.6-9

This is the promise! This is the dream! Today's scripture passage features Isaiah's prophecy that God will provide a feast for all people, remove the shroud of death, take away all of our sadness, and bring us to God, "for whom we have waited." If that doesn't warrant an "Alleluia!" I don't know what does. As Christians, we believe that this prophecy is a foretelling of Jesus coming to walk amongst us, teach us, and carrying our sins to the cross for us – eliminating the finality of death with his resurrection. This image of the heavenly banquet assures us on this All Saints Day that the saints who lived and died telling the story of Jesus are now sitting on the right hand of God, rejoicing in his salvation.

Questions

2. How does this passage make you feel?

Reflection - Revelation 21.1-6a

To hear this reading on All Saints' Day is to hear a summons to solidarity with all those who have suffered in their witness to Christ, whether in the farthest reaches of the first-century Roman Empire, a refugee detention centre or in the streets of Sandstone Point. When a part of the body suffers, all suffer—their tribulation is ours, and so is their hope. John's visions lifted him out of everyday life to a heavenly realm where he can view earthly existence from God's perspective. We who read John's visions can likewise be transported. We can be put in the position of suddenly seeing our own day-to-day lives from God's point of view.

Questions

3. What do you imagine heaven being like?
4. Rather than death being an end, it is a transition to the eternal. The passage from Revelation promises that this eternal life will be something new, does this excite you?

Reflection - John 11.32-44

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother [Lazarus] would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” Jesus does not stand outside of the moment as an observer. He participates in the moment and takes within himself the experience of loss that shapes and clothes that moment. In taking upon himself the sorrow and pain of those whom he loves, Jesus reveals the promise available to all (3:16). When Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb, he authenticates his claim to divine Sonship, his claim to embody life itself, and his superiority to the forces of decay and death. Death still affects those who turn to Jesus in faith, as it affected Lazarus and Jesus himself; but John deploys this story to show that even though disciples may still die, death does not end, but interrupts their life.

Questions

5. Why did Jesus cry?
6. Do the tears of Jesus reveal his humanity or his divinity?
7. In verse 44 Jesus instructs that Lazarus be freed from the clothes that bound him. What has the power of Jesus freed you from?

Close with a time of prayer – *consider giving thanks for the people who played a key role in helping you come to faith.*

Closing Prayer

*Go in the peace of Christ,
with the words of God in your mind,
with the love of your neighbour in your heart,
and with the blessing of God on your life. Amen.*

STUDY – 11 NOVEMBER 2018

32nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Ruth 3.1-5; 4.13-17

Psalm 127

Hebrews 9.23-28

Mark 12.38-44



Open with a time of prayer, which could include the following ...

Eternal God, you know the names of every man and woman, every child and every creature that lost their lives in war. You know the names of those who are dying in conflicts around the world today. You know our names and call us to be peacemakers, generous and compassionate. Bless our time together now. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Reflection - Ruth 3:1-5; 4.13-17

Naomi and Ruth have arrived back in Naomi's homeland; but the future for these two poor widows is still uncertain. Ruth's heritage as a Moabite woman works against her, but Naomi's claim of Ruth as her "daughter" acts as a talisman against the public perception. The passage for today is all about claiming our familial identity. Today's passage is a story in two parts: In the first part, Naomi worries that they need help to provide for Ruth's needs in the patriarchal society in Bethlehem. Naomi devises a plan to secure a husband for Ruth. In the second part, which takes place after we learn of all of the ways that Boaz was a kind and generous man, the reader discovers that Ruth married the exact right person for the continuation of the chosen line from Abraham. Ruth and Boaz's son, Obed, became the father of Jesse – whose youngest son David was anointed by Samuel and became the greatest King of Israel. David is important in Christian lineage because the Messiah is prophesized to come from the line of David. Thus, Ruth, the Moabite woman who refused to leave the side of her mother-in-law, is named in Jesus' genealogy at the beginning of the Gospels.

Question

1. Naomi and Ruth clearly have a strong commitment to each other, how do you support those you love and care for?

Reflection - Hebrews 9.23-28

Sin is a reality in everybody's life, but so is forgiveness. When we make confession a vital part of our life, we can be free us from the fear of revenge and punishment. Just as the child who is certain of a parent's love will come forward in trust and security rather than hide in shame, so we move toward God and one another. Forgiveness engenders intimacy between both God and neighbour.

Questions

2. Jesus died on the cross so that we may be free from sin, what are you doing to free yourself from sin?
3. What are you doing to free others from sin?

Reflection - Mark 12.38-44

The Gospel brings us back to noticing what we are being called to do. Clearly it is not to put on a big show or call attention to ourselves. Beware of those whose actions are not compatible with their talk! And perhaps it's not about the size of the contribution, but the depth of the gratitude.

Questions

4. Why does Jesus say that the fancy clothes, the places of honour and the long prayers are a problem?
5. Do you trust God enough to give him all you have?
6. How does the widow set an example for good giving?

Closing Prayer

Thank you, God, for all the wonderful gifts you give to us. Thank you for your generosity to us. Help us to give to you and to others in your name. Amen.

STUDY – 18 NOVEMBER 2018

**WOE TO ME
IF I DO NOT PREACH
THE GOSPEL**

~ Paul
53-55 AD

33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

1 Samuel 1.4-20

1 Samuel 2.1-10 (Song of Hannah)

Hebrews 10.11-14 (15-18) 19-25

Mark 13.1-11

Open with a time of prayer, which could include the following ...

*We come to you, indestructible God,
to pray for our world,
to praise you with one voice,
to hear your words of wisdom,
to entrust our nation to your love,
to encourage one another to grow in faith.
In Jesus we come and pray and rejoice,
to your glory. Amen.*

Reflection - 1 Samuel 1:4-20

Hannah is a lucky woman. She is beautiful and her husband Elkanah loves her more than anything. But Hannah desperately wants to have a baby. She has prayed feverishly, night and day, to the point that she seems to be losing her sanity. Through it all Elkanah steadfastly proclaims his love and stands beside her. But Hannah's mind is made up and she does not care how it looks to others on the outside, she knows the deepest desire of her heart and pleads with God asking for God to send her wholeness. While this verse can be challenging because it seems to suggest that God's answer will always be "yes" to those who pray hard enough; it is also vital to our understanding of healing in the modern form. There are times in life when we want something with all of our heart but there doesn't seem to be anything we can do to get it. Looking around and seeing our friends and neighbours with the blessings we desire can make us feel jealous and sad. The challenge in these times is to keep focused on the good we

have in our lives and to keep our hearts and minds open to the blessings God has provided.

Question

1. Our scriptures tell us to “pray without ceasing” but what can we do when it feels like our prayers are going unanswered?

Reflection - Hebrews 10.11-25

Worshippers do not need to slink into the sanctuary as guilty and unworthy sinners. In baptism, their bodies were washed clean and their hearts were made new (v. 22), and by the sacrifice of Christ they have become blood brothers and sisters of Jesus. They can therefore walk into church confidently, knowing that to the eye of God they appear as pure and sinless as the Christ who claims them as his own (vv. 19–22).

Questions

2. Do you feel confident in the belief that God sees you as pure and sinless? If not, what holds you back?
3. What does salvation mean to you?

Reflection - Mark 13.1-11

The Temple was a beautiful building, laboriously built and the pride of the people. Impressive now, Jesus agrees, but not one stone will be left upon stone. The kingdom he offers is not about fancy buildings. His kingdom will, however, remain after all else has been destroyed.

Questions

4. Do you find it easier to find God in a building or in people?
5. To what extent are church buildings crucial to ministry?
6. To what extent are church buildings a hindrance to ministry?
7. In verse 10 Jesus commended that “the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations.” How do we make this the priority of the church?

Close with a time of prayer - *consider praying for couples who struggle with the despair of infertility.*

Closing Prayer

Shine like a star in heaven.

Guide others in the true path.

Be wise and understanding.

Support one another,

and stand firm, in the midst of turmoil.

In the name and strength of Jesus. Amen.

STUDY – 25 NOVEMBER 2018



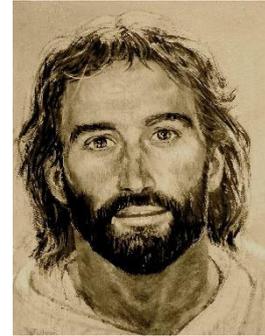
Feast of Christ the King

2 Samuel 23.1-7

Psalms 132.1-12

Revelation 1.4b-8

John 18.33-37



Open with a time of prayer, which could include the following ...

Lord of heaven, Lord of earth,

kings brought gifts to you at your birth.

They understood you were the one –

the life, the truth, God's only Son.

We come now and call you king,

and bring our lives and everything –

for you are truth and love and grace.

When we see you, we see God's face. Amen.

Reflection - The Feast of Christ the King

The 'Feast of Christ the King' was invented by Pius XI in 1925. Only in 1970 was it moved from October to the last Sunday before Advent. It slid into Anglicanism very recently, introducing three muddles. First, the proper feast of Christ the King is Ascension. Any suggestion that Christ only becomes King at the end of a long post-Ascension process is unwarranted. Second, the idea that 'the kingdom of God' denotes either a purely future reality, or the reality which the saints presently enjoy in heaven (as some liturgies now say), is likewise way off the mark, radically distorting the Bible's kingdom-language. Third, Advent itself celebrates Christ's second coming and the consummation of all things, not as the end of a process but as a fresh act of grace. Having 'Christ the King' here effects a subtle but radical change in the Church's year, in its implicit story and theology. So it is important to use this feast to consider what is the state of our relationship with Jesus.

Reflection - 2 Samuel 23.1-7

Final words carry power. Think back over your life and see if you can call to mind the last thing someone important said to you before they were no longer a part of your life. You remember, don't you? Last words are important because they are our last opportunity to shape things or make an impression. It's only human to wish that we could know when we were going to speak our last words, so we could make sure to say something profound. We could make sure someone was there to record and share our words with others. David uses his last words to make sure that we are reminded of the promises of God. If you could choose, what would you want to say with your last words?

Question

1. What may have motivated David to say this?
2. What image comes to mind when you hear these words?

Reflection - Revelation 1.4b-8

God's rule over the powers of sin and death in the world is an "already" through the Christ event. By his death Jesus has liberated believers from sin (v. 5b). The community experiences the risen Christ's love in the present ("loves us" in verse 5). And as the "firstborn of the dead" (verse 5), Jesus has inaugurated a new creation. The "new earth" (21.1) is already on the way. But God's rule is also a "not yet." There is more to come. After asking readers to look up into the heavenly realm, John next asks them to look forward into the future: "Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him" (1.7-8). What is now visible only to the eyes of faith, that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega of human history and the Lord of all, will one day be known by the whole cosmos, saint and foe alike.

Questions

3. What does it mean to be a "faithful witness"?

Reflection - John 18.33-37

My kingdom is not of this world. My kingdom is not won in a battle. Clearly, the kingdom Jesus offers comes a very different way than what was expected. Jesus refuses violence. Instead, he speaks the truth and waits for ordinary people to hear his voice and choose to follow him. We are compelled to go beyond merely understanding. We must seek to know God and live as active witnesses on this journey into God. Jesus' life and mission is a model of this for us. In Jesus, we learn that truth is a stimulant for faithful living and witness, rather than only a matter for contemplation. It is something we do.

Questions

4. Jesus spoke words of reconciliation, love, justice, so if "everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice" what would we expect to hear?
5. So, how do we live under the reign of Christ the King?

Close with a time of prayer - *consider praying for our church community to be a place where Jesus words are known.*

Closing Prayer

Look for truth in all places.

Seek out the wise.

Use your power to serve.

*And bring heaven to earth through your life,
your words and your prayers.*

In Jesus' name. Amen.