

Rosewood, Marburg, Lowood, Hiddenvale

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
6TH DECEMBER 2020
ST LUKE'S ROSEWOOD 9AM

Readings for Today:

Isaiah 40.1-11
Psalm 85.1-2,8-13 (APBA 311)
2 Peter 3.8-15a
Mark 1.1-8

Sentence:

Prepare the way of the Lord, make
his paths straight. For the glory of
the Lord shall be revealed, and all
people shall see it together.

Luke 3.4; Isaiah 40.5a



Prayer of the day:

Merciful God,
You sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the
way for our salvation:
give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet
with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with
you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Christmas Services in the Parish

Christmas Eve

5pm Children's Nativity at St Luke's Rosewood
7pm Carols and Eucharist at All Saints' Marburg

Christmas Day

9am St Luke's Rosewood
9am St James' Lowood



A message from Rev'd Louise:

In keeping with our Advent theme, our readings this week speak of comfort, and expectation. Peter tells us that God is patient, not wanting anyone to perish but at the same time warns that the Lord will return at a time unknown. This perhaps was what the wisemen discovered as the Lord burst into their lives which were changed for ever. This is also our hope and expectation as Christ meets us not just as a baby in a manger but every day.

Come Join Us This Week in the Parish:

Monday Bible Study 10.30am. St Luke's Outreach Centre
Zoom Meeting ID: 811 3701 6947
Meeting Password: **538741**

Tuesday Morning Prayer 9am. St Luke's Outreach Centre

Wednesday Eucharist 9.30am. All Saints' Marburg

Wednesday Morning Prayer 9.30am. St Luke's Rosewood

Thursday Bible Study 7pm St Luke's Outreach Centre

Daily Readings for the coming week:

Mon: Isaiah 35.1-10; Psalm 85.8-13; Luke 5.17-26

Tue: Isaiah 40.1-11; Psalm 96.7-13; Matthew 18.12-14

Wed: Isaiah 40.25-31; Psalm 103.1-5; Matthew 11.28-30

Thu: Isaiah 41.13-20; Psalm 145.8-13; Matthew 11.11-15

Fri: Isaiah 48.17-19; Psalm 1; Matthew 11.16-19

Sat: Malachi 4; Psalm 80.14-19; Matthew 17.10-13

Sun: Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5.12-28; John 1.6-8, 19-28

Notices:

•**Welcome Bishop Cameron!** Thank you for visiting us in 2020.

•Unfortunately our WestMAC musicians could not join us this week, but we would like to thank the groundsmen from College for trimming our hedges, and the staff for their response to our Christmas donations for our Rosewood community, along with gift cards donated for those in need.

•Please feel welcome to join us for our Advent Bible study at the Outreach Centre at 10.30 am on Monday (also via zoom) or on Thursday night at 7pm. Study booklets are available.

•**Elections.** A reminder that our elections will be held next week after the service at All Saints Marburg, today is the final day that you can submit your nominations. I encourage you not to miss out on this great opportunity to be actively involved in the life of the Parish.

•**Christmas services.** Please take note of our Christmas services advertised and encourage your friends and family to join us! Parish Christmas carols will be held next Sunday at Prayer and Praise 5pm at St Luke's. All Welcome. Grandchildren are also welcome at our nativity play on Christmas Eve at 5pm at St Luke's. Please see front page for our other Christmas services.

Upcoming Sunday Services in the Parish:

Please register for services on: **0402-482-174**

Today

9am St Luke's Rosewood

13th December

9am All Saints' Marburg
5pm Prayer and Praise St Luke's

20th December

9am Morning Prayer Lowood
10.30am St Anne's Hiddenvale Christmas Service

An Acknowledgement of Country

As we gather in the various churches of our parish, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, and their elders past and present. We honour the connection the traditional custodians have with this land.

Prayers

Loving God, we thank you that when we turned away from you, you did not abandon us, but sent baby Jesus to live as one of us, and to bring us back to you.

Help us to be mindful of who we are as your children as we live as people of hope and surety.

We pray for those who may be facing challenges in body mind or spirit, at this time, and pray that they know you are beside them.

May our intentions thoughts, words, and deeds, not be about our ourselves but focussed on who we are as your people. Bless us, guide us and keep us we pray.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Pray for those in need:

We give thanks for prayers answered and ask for continued prayers for:
Norm, Julie and family. Carin and family. Marge. Carmel, Kristy and family, Glenda and family, Mary and Peter Pollard, Kevin and Lyn Lee. Gary Hanel, Kim and family. Anita, Gordon, and Ann P. Robyn, Paul.

Pray for those whose need is ongoing:

Ian, Brenda and David, May, Judy and Adrian, Mark, Graham and family, Wilma, Ron, Irene and Michael.

Parish Directory

Priest in Charge -Reverend Louise Orpe Phone 0402 482 174

Priest Email: louise.orpe@anglicanchurchsq.org.au

Honorary Assistant Priest—Reverend Rex Marré Phone 0411 162 517

Parish Office—Phone 07 5464 2797 Parish Website: rosewoodanglican.org.au

Postal Address: Post Office Box 176, Rosewood QLD 4340

Office Email: rosewood@anglicanchurchsq.org.au

The deadline for the weekly Pew Sheet is Tuesday Evening to Office email.

Churchwardens—	Anne Parker	0423 369 000
	Ann Abraham	0402 411 375
	Courtney Smith	0474 769 660

Prayer chain coordinator- Desley Greensill-0437 374 407

Pastoral Care coordinator Ann Abraham-0402 411 375

Giving: Envelopes are available at each centre. To deposit offerings:

Anglican Parish of Rosewood BSB 704 901 A/c 00008030

Romans 8:28

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.””

First Reading

A reading from the book of Isaiah chapter 40 beginning at the first verse.

Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

³ A voice of one calling:
"In the wilderness prepare
the way for the Lord^[a];
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.^[b]"

⁴ Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.

⁵ And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry out."
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
"All people are like grass,
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the Lord blows on them.
Surely the people are grass.

⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God endures forever."

⁹ You who bring good news to Zion,
go up on a high mountain.

You who bring good news to Jerusalem,^[c]

lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
¹⁰ See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power,
and he rules with a mighty arm.
See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense accompanies him.
¹¹ He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

FOR THE WORD OF THE LORD.

THANKS BE TO GOD.

PSALM 85.1-2, 8-13 (APBA PAGE 311)

THE SECOND READING.

A READING FROM 2 PETER CHAPTER 3 BEGINNING AT THE 8TH VERSE.

⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.^[a]

¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.^[b] That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

For the word of the Lord.

Mark 1:1-8

The Gospel according to Mark chapter 1 beginning at the first verse.

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah,^[a] the Son of God,^[b] ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way"^[c]—

³ "a voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.'"^[d]

⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.⁸ I baptize you with^[e] water, but he will baptize you with^[f] the Holy Spirit."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Homily for People and Parishes

Bishop Cam Venables – Sunday, 6th December 2020 – Advent 2

Readings: **Isaiah 40:1-11**
2Peter 3:8-15a

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
Mark 1:1-8

A wise priest advised me years ago that often the role of a sermon was to comfort the disturbed... and disturb the comfortable! So, with this in mind, I wonder if you have need of comfort, or need of disturbing today? Perhaps you are hoping for a bit of both, and we certainly hear both in this weekend's readings!

In the first reading the God offered comfort and hope to a community in exile through the words of Isaiah. Isaiah reassured them that at some stage God would bring an end to their captivity in Babylon, and that they would return to Jerusalem. It was a bold vision in which *'every valley would be lifted up, every mountain laid low... the glory of the Lord would be revealed, and all people would see it together.'*

Those exact words are set to music in Handel's Messiah and you may recall the opening lines – *'Every valley, shall be exalted...'* But, if we remember them simply as the rich words of a song we might forget that they were a bold anthem that promised profound transformation and change.

In contrast John the Baptist is remembered by the writer of Mark's Gospel as uncompromising and direct. In this Gospel there is no Christmas story: no stable, no manger, no baby; no shepherds, no angels, and no wise men. Instead Marks's Gospel starts with the prophecy in Isaiah that God would send a messenger to prepare the way of the Lord... and that John the Baptist was the fulfilment of this promise. John's message was clear – people needed to put their life in order and make God their top priority, because God was about to do something new. That a captivity was about to come to an end, and that the glory of the Lord was going to be revealed.

Mark's Gospel remembers John saying, *'...one who is more powerful than I is coming after me... I have baptised you with water; but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'*

Wonderful to have this Gospel on a weekend in which we prayed that God's Holy Spirit would bless and empower five new Deacons and five new Priests as they were Ordained at St John's Cathedral on Saturday.

The Jewish community of the first Century were familiar with people who had taken a Nazirite vow and it was thought that partly because of their asceticism they were close to God. Men who taken this vow did not cut their hair or beard, they lived simply, and ate

little... – and in some ways they were set apart from their community so that God could speak through them.

If John had appeared at the Cathedral during the Ordination – zealous, lean, and long-haired – I don't think there would have been the same openness to what he had to say! Instead of thinking that this is someone who walks closely with God, and who has something important to say, we might instead have judged them to be homeless; and perhaps someone who journeyed with some mental health problems.

Recognising this, I wonder who the people are in our time and culture that we expect to speak prophetically? Who are the people that God inspires to challenge injustice, name untruths, and call us to repentance and transformation – as individuals, as a Church, and as a society?

My hope is that some of these are religious and political leaders, but for good reasons trust in any form of institutional leadership is at an all time low. Some investigative journalists have named important injustices – but, the pressure to generate sensational stories to attract viewers and readers has meant that things are sometimes exaggerated, biased, and even fictional.

Of course, God is not limited to speak only through institutional leaders, and I wonder who you trust to speak 'truth' in an increasingly complex world that faces much challenge? Where do we find an authentic call to repentance, and a vision that inspires us to be more than we are? I think there are some songwriters, both inside and outside the Church, who write in this way, and similarly, I think there are artists, playwrights, and film makers who God uses to speak truth prophetically and challenge us to change. And then there are the poets!

I know poetry is not everyone's cup of tea but I often find insight, comfort and challenge in the writing of poets. The writing is not as dense as prose and in the spaces that some poetry create there is often for me a sense of God's Spirit saying something!

I'm going to close now with a poem by the Australian poet, and Uniting Church minister, Bruce Prewer. Even though it was written forty-one years ago I think it continues to name uncomfortable truths, and today's reading from Isaiah was the catalyst. Bruce writes:

*There is a voice that cries in the wilderness,
The prophet word demanding change:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
Fill in the gullies, level the ridges,
Straighten the crooked, move the mountains.
God's glory shall be revealed*

And every eye shall see it.

*Smooth the rough places, move the mountains;
let God's glory be displayed!*

*In the wilderness of our cities,
Furrowed by freeways and shaded by skyscrapers,
Where hollow people jostle without love
Or get lost in the wastes of suburbia,
Where anonymous people hide in flats,
Or broken people queue up at hostels
For a bed and respite from dereliction:
Prepare the way of the Lord.*

*Smooth the rough places, move the mountains;
let God's glory be displayed!*

*In the wilderness of our rural areas
Little farms eke out an existence
While the rich accumulate massive properties
And city people play games on farmlets,
Where once proud towns shrink into shabbiness,
Their sons and daughters drained off to the cities,
And the unemployed drink behind pubs:
Prepare the way of the Lord.*

*Smooth the rough places, move the mountains;
let God's glory be displayed!*

*In the wilderness of our schools and colleges,
The training ground for survival of the fittest,
Where the young learn almost everything
Except how to become children of God,
Expanding in mind but not in soul;
**Where young people earn diplomas, but little wisdom,
Or graduate with honours in all but love:
Prepare the way of the Lord.***

*Smooth the rough places, move the mountains;
let God's glory be displayed!*

*In the wilderness of our politics,
A field of stones and shabby fame,
Where some blatantly offer election bribes
Or have the gall to say they're the greatest,
Where caring members get mauled by power brokers
And are relegated to the back benches
Till cynicism breeds like a horrible virus:
Prepare the way of the Lord.*

*Smooth the rough places, move the mountains;
let God's glory be displayed!*

*In the wilderness of our religions
Where theological fashions come and go,
Buildings and crowds persist as status symbols,
And pomp and circumstance are high on the ratings,
Where evangelism can be considered poor taste.
Prayer and sacrifice as optional extras,
And even Jesus is feared as 'extremist':
Prepare the way of the Lord.*

*Smooth the rough places, move the mountains;
let God's glory be displayed!*

*Voice in the wilderness, what shall we do?
Prophet of the Lord, what is the word?
'Turn, turn, turn to the Lord;
You who have two suits, give to the naked;
If you eat well, share with the hungry;
In business and authority, deal with compassion –
and be ready for the One who comes with fire.'*

*Smooth the rough places, move the mountains;
let God's glory be displayed!*

Let's pray...

Holy God, we give thanks for the gift of our lives, and for the gift of your love. We thank you for those you call to speak uncomfortable truths, and for those you inspire with vision for a better way. Help us to hear well; help us to put you in the centre of our lives; help us play our little part in revealing your glory to the world. Amen.