

## KEEPING CONNECTED TO OUR ST MATTHEW'S FAMILY

### Holy Week caring catch up



*From the Church of England,*

*A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

*Stay at home, continue to pray, to love, to care for the vulnerable*

Dear friends of St Matthew's this is a time of great activity and we are transferring our efforts from the church building that is closed, locked (and loved) to the care of each other and our community.

The Easter themes have never been more important. Good Friday is our home page with its themes of isolation, and fear, the dangers of being "out of touch" but the pain and darkness will not have the last word. Our gift to the community (St Matthew's Albury having been burnt out not just locked out) is to support the hope that gives our region and its people of every age, a positive future.

All around the World and in our own community, other pieces of the Holy week jigsaw are being put in place, the humility of God's love among us and the joy of hope and community found in Palm Sunday, the example of service and love in action seen in Maundy Thursday alongside the shared anxieties and temptation to self-interest as seen in the run on supermarket shelves, and the Easter theme of deliverance and the joy that unites us in answer to life greatest challenges and bring us to the themes of belonging security and peace.

I wonder where you can see these themes "up close" this year? The shared joy of hearing good news for one of our loved ones, the loving old fashioned care and concern that breaks out from the busy locked tomb of modern life, the sacrifice of nurses, doctors, cleaners and carers and the way that power can be used to help and to heal rather than to subjugate and hurt -to raise up rather than subdue.



Our palm crosses are folded but this year but, in the freezer, we will hold them in our hearts rather than with our hands because community safety is our most important spiritual tradition.

On Sunday St Matthew's will be dressed in red for action, with palm branches signaling a community joined in, faith hope and love.

*You might like to dress in a splash of red as we have a St Matthew's moment having a cuppa and thinking of our world and loved ones.*

Mark 11:1-11

When they were approaching Jerusalem, , near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"

A decade after the Spanish epidemic Walter de la Mere wrote a famous poem about loneliness, isolation and empathy using the theme of "The Donkey"

Nicholas Nye "The Donkey"

Thistle and darnell and dock grew there,  
And a bush, in the corner, of may,  
On the orchard wall I used to sprawl  
In the blazing heat of the day;

Half asleep and half awake,  
While the birds went twittering by,  
And nobody there my lone to share  
But Nicholas Nye.

Nicholas Nye was lean and gray,  
Lame of leg and old,  
More than a score of donkey's years  
He had been since he was foaled;  
He munched the thistles, purple and spiked,  
Would sometimes stoop and sigh,  
And turn his head, as if he'd said,  
'Poor Nicholas Nye! '

Seem to be smiling at me, he would,  
From his bush in the corner, of may,-  
Bony and ownerless, widowed and worn,  
Knobble-kneed, lonely and gray;  
And over the grass would seem to pass  
'Neath the deep dark blue of the sky,  
Something much better than words between me  
And Nicholas Nye.



*We are all shocked at the sudden passing of Brian Unthank, a dear friend to so many in Albury and beyond. Our thoughts are with his family. We are thankful for his great contribution to the life of the Region. He will be remembered with love.*

## **STARS IN THE DARKNESS**



\*Update Hayley Wright: Hailey's transplant has taken. Thank you all for your prayers, love & blessings. Kind regards, Hailey, Leah, Steve, Wil, Rylee, Erin & Michael. X

\*Unexpected kindness: Out of the blue! Laurel Butler called to drop off a box of fruit and vegetables to be given to people in need. Added kindness as they had been given by someone who had just lost their job, but not their humanity and kindness to more needy.



\*Next to Godliness, washing feet is part of the Maundy Thursday story and washing has become part of the international story, so when Rod Halsted and Chiropractor Fraser Elliot found themselves out of customers they offered their services to clear the decks of all the potentially dangerous rubbish from months of homeless shelter occupants and gave St Matthew's a blast of detergent and steam at full power making our environment even safer and all the better because of their generous gift of time and equipment. A good bit of washing in the spirit of the season!

\*Angela Braybrooks has come out of successful surgery at Albury Base Hospital following a broken hip and being cared for by our friendly Hospital Chaplain and Children's Church Leader Rev. Catherine Dawson.



**MEDITATION** across the world and in Albury we are using new ways to stay in touch. There are growing numbers using ZOOM to connect with a meditation group at 5:30 each Thursday. At a time of great stress and isolation this could be just the tonic we need! Connect with Michelle and Paul on:  
Zoom: <http://www.explorationinmeditationandprayer.com/>

**Pastoral Care Team:** We have started the 'Phone Tree' idea to keep in touch. If you would like one of our team to phone you, or if you know of anyone who would appreciate being contacted, please contact Annette 0413938541.

Through these difficult and changing times it is important we think of each other, and those who are sick and isolated, and pray for all.

**TUNES ON TUESDAY** continues at the usual time, but every week online, please check our website for details.

**Please help us** reach all our parish members: If any of your friends have recently got an email address, could you please send an email to St Matthew's Office, with their name and email address, so we can add it to our emailing list. We can no longer deliver printed copies.

**Parish Finances – All on board! Share the load!** We all know that these days are very challenging for individuals' families and organisations. There is Government help for some, and we want to ensure we can see our way through this without huge crisis. There is something we can all do, if we all do a little, it will sort the problem, we can stop talking about it and it will be one less thing to worry about.

There is an urgent need for St Matthew's Parishioners to commence making direct deposits to the Church accounts if we are to keep St Matthew's afloat for when we come out the other side of the pandemic. So far there has been a great response, with this week 10 individuals making the arrangements with their bank. This brings the total number of parishioners to 22 contributing via direct debit. Without further contributions the Parish will not be able to pay Father Peter's wages and other fixed costs for April and beyond. Your assistance is urgently needed.

Bank details are:

Account name: St Matthews Church Albury

BSB: 032736

Account no: 392189

Reference: 'Giving' and your name

Regular Updates - Please keep going back to the website, includes Livestream links and Facebook, so we can continue to share the many opportunities to explore Holy Week, Easter and beyond