

WE
Believe
IN PRAYER
PRAISE
NEWS &
THE BIBLE

WELCOME TO ST ANDREW'S ROSEVILLE
28TH SEPTEMBER 2014

ST
ANDREW'S
Believe's
IN NEWS

*All that's going on
around St Andrew's*

FROM THE SENIOR MINISTER



REV JOHN DICKSON

☛ Senior Minister

Dear St Andrew's,

I want to talk briefly about Islam and the awful events of recent weeks.

Speaking about the Faith of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims is difficult, complicated by at least two factors. First, as with Christianity, there is a huge spectrum of belief and practice in the Islamic world. The five pillars of Islam are shared by all adherents (confession of faith, daily prayer, gifts to the Mosque, fasting during Ramadan, and a pilgrimage to Mecca) but,

beyond this core, the Sunni, Shia, and Sufi see things quite differently.

The second problem has to do with *us*. Westerners tend to impose their own imaginings onto Islam. Following September 11 years ago, and again more recently, people seem to break into two camps: those that rush to condemn Muslims *per se* as violent and poisonous, and those that defend Islam as a perfectly loving, democratic religion.

Both groups are a little 'imperialistic', imposing their own perspectives onto a tradition without letting that tradition be itself. The first group projects its fears and tribalism onto Islam. The second projects its liberal democratic views of 'what a religion ought to be'. The instincts of the latter group are probably nicer, but both are ultimately unwilling to listen to and understand this ancient faith.

I can't give a balanced account of Islam in a brief News note. I do want to say two things. First, it is undeniable that, in certain contexts, the Quran sanctions the use of force to defend and promote the honour of Islam. And Muhammad himself was a highly successful military commander, inspiring the incredible conquests of the first caliph Abu Bakr. The peace created by early Islam was not unlike the ancient *pax romana*, the 'peace of Rome', where conquest was thought to be bring stability and

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unity to the world. The so-called 'Islamic State' terrorists in Syria and Iraq today are trying to recreate this ancient caliphate. They have a genuine religious tradition to draw upon.

That said, it is equally clear that most Muslims in the world today are opposed to the actions of IS. While it seems to be reported only in passing, many important Islamic scholars and imams around the world, including in Australia, have roundly condemned the Islamic State, declaring it 'haram', a powerful religious term meaning *forbidden by Allah* ('halal' means *approved*). While most of these religious leaders would accept the permissibility of military *jihad* under certain conditions, they do not accept the beheading of journalists in Syria, or random attacks on the streets of Australian cities.

I have no doubt that almost all the Muslims we're likely to meet in Sydney wish us no harm. They want what we want—health, safety, education, and a future for their kids. Those that are religiously observant—remember, many Muslims are nominal—are of course keen to see Islam spread throughout Australia. They naturally think *sharia* law is wiser than secular democracy (and this is an argument we may increasingly need to have). But they do not want to hurt us to achieve their ends. It is no cliché to say that the vast majority of Australian

Muslims are law-abiding and peace-loving, just as it is also true that *some* of them find inspiration for violence in their sacred traditions. It is complicated!

Finally, whatever conclusions we come to about the technicalities of Islamic belief and practice, God's true Word teaches us two highly relevant things for the current crisis. First, civil authorities have sanction from the Creator to use force to protect the innocent and bring justice. In Romans, Paul writes, "For the one in authority [speaking of Roman authority] is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer" (Romans 13:4). I support the actions of our government, the military, and our State and Federal police. Let's join together in praying for them at this time of heightened tension and risk.

In the same epistle, however—indeed, in the preceding chapter—the apostle insists that the Christian community itself has no share in the exercise of sanctioned force. Rather, believers have one course of action when confronted by opposition. They are to follow the Lord Jesus in enduring suffering, refusing to retaliate, and committing to love enemies. Paul writes:

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Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath (Romans 12:12-19).

Paul is no doubt reflecting here on the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" (Luke 6:27-28). These things lie at the centre of the Christian life, for they are at the heart of the gospel of the One who endured a Roman cross for sinners.

In the end, I have a simple thing to say, and I feel a strong sense of God's pleasure in saying it. Common sense and Christian faith urge us to shun both a *naïve recasting* of Islam as the mirror-image of liberal democracy, and a *hateful projection* of our own tribalism onto Australian Muslims. Instead, let's go out of our way in the coming weeks and months to pray for the Muslims around us and to convey love and friendship toward them.

I commit to pray for every Muslim I see, and when I meet Muslims personally I will try to express friendship in Christ's name. I gave it a go this week at Adelaide airport. I greeted a Muslim family, conveyed my fear that recent media coverage might make them feel under the microscope, and expressed my sincere welcome and friendship. They were taken aback, but the woman held her hand to her heart and said, "Thank you. That means so much to me!" The look on her face almost made me cry. I tried it moments later with my taxi driver and he laughed, "Oh no! I am a Hindu!" Still, you get the point!

We follow the Lord who bears the wounds of love and reconciliation.

God bless,
John

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Keep your Church, Lord God,
with your continual mercy,
and because our frailty
without you will certainly fall,
keep us always under your
protection, and lead us to
everything that makes
for our salvation; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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COMMUNITY WATCH

FOR THE DIARY

☛ **Property Vision Bush Dance Fundraiser**

Sat 18th Oct from 5pm in the Church Hall
Family friendly. There will be BBQ style food
and drinks to purchase on the night.

Tickets: Adults \$10, Students/children \$5,
Family \$20.

To book tickets please send an email to
events@standrews.net.au

☛ **Life of Jesus**

Commencing Wed 22nd Oct – 8pm

Aaron and Angie Black's home

A 5 week course that digs deeper into what is
known about Jesus' life and why it matters.

Contact the Church Office or email
lifeofjesus@standrews.net.au

☛ **St Andrew's 2014 Foundation Day**

Sun 2nd November

2 services - 10am and 5pm

Here at Church (NOT at Roseville College)

OTHER

☛ **StreetWork - Volunteer Accountant**

StreetWork has a real need for a qualified
accountant who could provide around 4 or 5
hours a week to take some of the load away
from their Treasurer and to instruct/oversee
the bookkeepers' work and produce
management and financial accounts.

More information at www.streetwork.org.au/volunteer-opportunities

☛ **Roseville College Scholarship**

Applications are open for the inaugural
Roseville College Senior School Foundation
Scholarship for Years 10 - 12. The scholarship
begins in 2015 and is awarded based on need,
with an emphasis on academic merit and a
demonstrated commitment and all-round
application to school life.

Apply by downloading the application kit at
www.rosevillecollege.com

PLEASE PRAY

☛ **10am Prayer**

Please pray for Rachel Heriot and her family
after the death of her grandfather. Thank God
for his life of faith in Christ and his example of
devotion. Pray that God will grant comfort and
peace to all those grieving.

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COMMUNITY WATCH

Praise God that Wanda Sams is feeling some easing of pain and improvement in her mobility. Pray for God's continued healing and for Wanda's ongoing trust in him.

Pray for Brad and Dee Williams as their fourth child is due very soon. Pray also for Erika Ellis who is in the later stages of pregnancy and is dealing with some health issues. Pray for God's help and protection for these mothers and their babies.

🕒 5pm Prayer

Please continue to pray for Adrian Ahern and his family as his father Ronnie approaches the end of his life. Pray for God's mercy and kindness in timing, that he will bring Ronnie peace in Christ and comfort to the family.

🕒 St Andrew's Ministries

Please pray for the ESL Group; for Jane Clifford and her enthusiastic team of helpers. Praise God for the opportunity of reaching out to people from different cultures, forming friendships and showing Jesus' love as they meet together each week.

Pray for the Play Group meeting each week during term time. Pray for Cath as she oversees the program and for those who help run it. Thank God for this opportunity of outreach into the community and pray that those who come will learn more about Jesus through other ministries of the church.

MISSION & AID

BISHOP MASIMANGO KATANDA

🕒 Anglican Diocese of Kindu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Pray for Bishop Masimango Katanda in his many responsibilities including travel both within the Congo and overseas. This year he has been a representative on behalf of the war reconciliation in the Great Lakes Region and also attended the Church Action Committee in Geneva, Switzerland. He recently attended the 200th anniversary celebration of CMS in Northern Ireland with Bishop Ise Somo and Bishop Bahati from Bukavu.

Pray for the work of evangelism in the Kaongo area where many Muslims are living. Pray that the schools and health centres that are being built will demonstrate the love of Jesus.

Pray for the Berea Bible School where students have just completed their final exams. There were 4 in second year and 5 in first year.

The Bishop gives thanks for the prayers and financial help from Roseville. It has helped print Christian teaching materials for use by pastors and the village church leaders, and also provided health care to the pastors and their families.

*Words you'll need for
today's contemporary services*

CONTEMPORARY SERVICE PRAYERS

CONFESSION

Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have strayed from your ways
like lost sheep,
We have left undone
what we ought to have done,
and we have done
what we ought not to have done.
We have followed our own ways
and the desires of our own hearts.
We have broken your holy laws.
Yet, good Lord, have mercy on us;
restore those who turn to you,
according to your promises declared
to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.
And grant, merciful Father,
for his sake,
that we may live a godly
and obedient life,
to the glory of your holy name.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory, are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

KEY CONTACTS

☛ Senior Leadership Team

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☛ Pastoral

Suz Gorham – Assoc. Women's Minister (*Part Time*)
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Mike Hastie – Assist. Minister (7pm Congregation & Youth)
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Meredith Hatcher – Assoc. Women's Minister (*Part Time*)
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☛ Children's Ministry

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☛ Community Service Project

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☛ Administration / Church Office

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FINANCIAL SUPPORT DETAILS

☛ Supporting the General Ministry

To support the general work of St Andrew's, electronic banking details for regular direct credit are:

Anglican Parish St Andrew's
BSB 704 998
A/C 100 005 413

This is our preferred method to receive your regular support.

If you prefer to make cash/cheque contributions, there is a gifts and donations box attached to the church's rear pew.

☛ Supporting the Property Redevelopment

To support the St Andrew's Property Redevelopment, **tax-deductible** contributions can be made to the following account:

St Andrew's Anglican Church Roseville Donation Fund
BSB 704 998
A/C 100 010 195

Please include your surname and the initials "PV" (for Property Vision) in the reference field.

Donations by cheque should be made to St Andrew's Roseville Donation Fund.

Please mark the envelope with your surname and "PV".

A receipt for tax purposes will be forwarded to you upon receiving your electronic or cheque donation.

If you would like to support the Property Redevelopment but **do not** require a tax deduction, please contact

Santino Dimarco for specific instructions:
santino.dimarco@standrews.net.au

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