



Vocations Sunday

Date

Church name

“For each one of us, there is only one thing necessary: to fulfil our own destiny, according to God's will, to be what God wants us to be.”

— Thomas Merton, No Man Is an Island

A Message from the Bishop

All Christians are called to ministry. This might involve some form of ordained or licensed ministry in the church, or responding to a wider vocation in a trade or profession. Whatever form it takes, the local Christian community should energise people's desire to use their gifts to serve God in the world. This means that all of us have a responsibility to encourage one another to be attentive to God's call and to affirm each other's gifts. As we participate in Vocations Sunday, let's not only explore our own calling, but also think of how we can encourage others to explore their gifts, call and response. Apart from this liturgy, a variety of other resources are available that can help people explore the various options for service in the Diocese of Grafton, which I encourage you to read or to pass onto someone whom you think God might be calling to licensed or authorised ministry in the church.

+Murray

To help with reflection the senior clergy have provided scripture verses that have been important to them on their discernment journey.

Archdeacon Tiffany Sparks - Micah 6.6-8

Archdeacon Zoe Everingham - 2 Timothy 1.6-7

Archdeacon Kay Hart – Isaiah 6.8

For further reflections and videos on Vocation that you might want to ponder yourself, use in the liturgy, Facebook or share with your parish in another way:

Vocation 101: What is Vocation?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihnzFH2L818>

Vocation 201: How do I discover my Vocation?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=li1klCU31wA>

Could you God, be calling me? Bishop Cameron Venables

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBUkWSmAFrc>

Anglicans Making a Difference – Vocational Deacons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNy1WzCfQxA>

Lay Ministry Vocation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOT4BDqRNmg>

Helpful Quotes for Reflection:

“Our strongest gifts are usually those we are barely aware of possessing. They are a part of our God-given nature, with us from the moment we drew first breath, and we are no more conscious of having them than we are of breathing.”

— Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*

“Cordelia: I hope I've got a vocation.

Charles: I don't know what that means.

Cordelia: It means you can be a nun. If you haven't a vocation it's no good however much you want to be; and if you have a vocation, you can't get away from it, however much you hate it.”

— Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited*

“Vocation is different from talent. One can have vocation and not have talent; one can be called and not know how to go.”

— Benjamin Moser, *Why This World: A Biography of Clarice Lispector*

“Our work is a vocation to which we have been called from the beginning of time. When we work we are partaking in and joining with God's ongoing creation of the world.”

— Peggy Noonan, *John Paul the Great: Remembering a Spiritual Father*

“If He is calling you to belong exclusively to Him, it is for your joy and for His glory. In His will is your peace.”

— Mother Clare Matthias, *Discerning Religious Life*

A hymn may be sung

The president may say:

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Blessed be God's Kingdom now and for ever.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be always with you. **And also with you.**

The president greets the people:

On this Vocations Sunday we give thanks to God that you call us all to varieties of forms of service in God's Church and in the world. And so we pray for openness to the Holy Spirit, that each of us may discern the call of God upon our lives.

Let us pray,

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

A minister says:

'I set no store by life:

I only want to finish the race and complete the task
that the Lord has assigned to me,
of bearing witness to the gospel of God's grace.'

Let us confess our failure to live up to our calling.

Lord Jesus, you said to your disciples:

'You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.'

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, we know that the harvest is plentiful
but the labourers are few.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you appointed us to go and bear fruit that will last.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

A minister says:

Oh God, you have searched us out and known us,
and all that we are is open to you.

We confess that we have sinned:

we have used our power to dominate

and our weakness to manipulate;

we have evaded responsibility

and failed to confront evil;

we have denied dignity

to ourselves and to each other,

and fallen into despair.

We turn to you, O God;

we renounce evil;

we claim your love;

we choose to be made whole.

The presiding priest says

God forgives you.

Forgive others;

Forgive yourself.

Glory to God in the highest,

and peace to God's people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,

almighty God and Father,

we worship you, we give you thanks,

we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the sin of the world:

have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father:

receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Collect

Let us pray for the ministry of the whole people of God.

Almighty God,
by whose Spirit the whole body of your Church
is called into a royal priesthood,
hear our prayer for all members of your Church
that in their vocation and ministry
they may truly serve you,
devoutly love you
and faithfully follow in the way of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God our Shepherd,
in every generation you call
ministers of your word and sacraments.
Equip them to preach the gospel,
to care for your people
and to show forth the fruit of the Spirit in their lives;
in the name of Jesus our Saviour. Amen.

One or two readings from below or use some of the suggested ones from the leadership team.

First Reading – 1 John 4.7-16

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 27.1-11

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear? :
the Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?
When the wicked, even my enemies and my foes,
come upon me to devour me :
they shall stumble and fall.
If an army encamp against me, my heart shall not be afraid :
and if war should rise against me, yet will I trust.
One thing I have asked from the Lord, which I will require :
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
To see the fair beauty of the Lord :
and to seek his will in his temple.
For he will hide me under his shelter in the day of trouble :
and conceal me in the shadow of his tent,
and set me high upon a rock.
And now he will lift up my head :
above my enemies round about me.
And I will offer sacrifices in his sanctuary with exultation :
I will sing, I will sing praises to the Lord.
O Lord, hear my voice when I cry :
have mercy upon me and answer me.
My heart has said of you, 'Seek his face' :
your face, Lord, I will seek.
Do not hide your face from me :
or thrust your servant aside in displeasure;

Second Reading – Ephesians 4.1-6

Therefore, I Paul, prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

A hymn or song may be sung

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, chapter fifteen, beginning at the first verse.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon

The president says:

Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and was made truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Lord God of all,
over all and in all and through all:
we give thanks that we are called to your service;
may all your people be attentive and obedient to your calling.
Lord, hear your people
and answer our prayers.

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be apostles, sent out to do your work.
We pray for all who respond to this calling to serve in your name:
for those immersed in the world, seeking to bear witness to the gospel in word and action,
for those whose service takes them to places where they face opposition and difficulty,
may they be continually filled with your Spirit, and empowered to follow your calling.
Lord, hear your people
and answer our prayers.

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be prophets.
We pray for all whom you have called to speak out and proclaim the values of your kingdom:
for those who challenge injustice and apathy and untruth,
for those who campaign for the well-being of your people and your world,
may they be continually filled with your vision, and have courage in their prophetic calling.
Lord, hear your people
and answer our prayers.

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be evangelists.
We pray for all whom you have called to share the message of your love:
for those who communicate the good news of Christ to others from a variety of backgrounds,

for those whose enthusiasm and love conveys your truth,
may they be filled with your love as they share the good news with others.
Lord, hear your people
and answer our prayers.

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be pastors.
We pray for all whom you have called to care for others through prayer and through service:
for those who take care of any who are young or old, who are sick or struggling,
for those whose work supports medical, social and community services,
may their lives be channels of your love and grace.
Lord, hear your people
and answer our prayers.

Lord of all, we give thanks that you call some to be teachers.
We pray for all whom you have called to encourage adults and children to learn and grow:
for those who teach informally as parents, mentors and facilitators,
for workers in schools, colleges and universities, and for those who teach in our churches,
may they speak your truth, and help others to grow in wisdom.
Lord, hear your people
and answer our prayers.

God of peace,
let us your people know,
that at the heart of turbulence
there is an inner calm that comes
from faith in you.
Keep us from being content with things as they are,
that from this central peace
there may come a creative compassion,
a thirst for justice,
and a willingness to give of ourselves
in the spirit of Christ.
Amen.

The priest says

Grace to you and peace
from God our Creator,
the love at our beginning

and without end,
in our midst and with us.

**God is with us,
here we find new life.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

A hymn or song/s may be sung

The gifts of the people may be gathered and presented.

This prayer may be said:

Heavenly Father,
as we set before you these gifts of bread and wine,
bless also the gift of our hearts and minds
as we offer our lives in your service;
for Jesus Christ's sake.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right,
it is our duty and our joy
at all times and in all places
to give you thanks and praise,
heavenly Father, source of all that is,
for you have called our world into existence,
and filled it with abundant life.
You called a chosen people as your own,
and led them in the way of holiness.
You called your beloved Son,
in whom you were well pleased,

to give his life for us on the cross,
and rise again in glory.
And now we give you thanks
that you call men and women
to equip your holy people for the work of ministry,
for the building up of the body of Christ.
Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and *saying*:
Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.
So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection

until he comes in glory.

Dying, you destroyed our death.

Rising, you restored our life.

Christ Jesus, come in glory.

Lord of all life,

help us to work together for that day

when your kingdom comes

and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,

gather us in your loving arms

and bring us with all the saints

to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,

for ever and ever.

Amen.

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

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.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours

now and for ever.

Amen.

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

**Jesus Christ is holy,
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

*During the distribution hymns and anthems may be sung.
Silence is kept.*

Giver of life and love,
we thank you that in this heavenly banquet
you invigorate and renew us.
Living in the unity of the Spirit
may we boldly use your gifts
to continue your work in the world.
Amen.

**Through Christ, and with all your saints,
we offer ourselves
and our lives to your service.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit,
to stand with you in your world.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, the servant,
our friend and brother. Amen.**

*A hymn may be sung.
The president says:*

May the boldness of the Spirit transform you,
may the gentleness of the Spirit lead you,
may the gifts of the Spirit equip you
to serve and worship God;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

A minister says
Go in the peace of Christ.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Resources:

A New Zealand Prayer Book

<https://anglicanprayerbook.nz/456.html>

The Church of England – Common Worship

The Anglican Church of Australia – A Prayer Book for Australia