**Anglicare Sunday Sermon Speaking Notes –**

**Lectionary Readings**

*These notes are divided into headings which will match with most of the PowerPoint slides.*

 *The set Lectionary Readings for this Sunday may not entirely match the theme of Anglicare Sunday so we have produced two versions. We have produced below some notes for those lectionary readings, but we are also suggesting two alternative readings for the epistle and gospel, and provided notes for those as well.*

*You do not have to hold Anglicare Sunday on 21 October – you are free to choose another date. So the suggested alternative readings and notes could be used on that date, if you wished.*

*The set Lectionary Readings on 21 October: (22nd Sunday after Pentecost)*

*Job 38.1-7 (34-41)*

*Psalm 104.1-10, 26*

*Hebrews 5.1-10*

*Mark 10. (32-34) 35-45*

*(or Supplementary: Mark 12.18-27, Job 40.1-14, Hebrews 6.19-7.3)*

*The suggested alternative epistle and gospel for Anglicare Sunday:*

***James 2.14-26***

 ***Matt. 25.31-46***

**INTRO**

* My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I’m [how you are connected to Anglicare].
* I’m really passionate about the work of Anglicare because … [i.e. I love the ways in which Anglicare reaches out to people in need in our community.]

**THANK YOU**

* Today is Anglicare Sunday and I want to thank you for the opportunity to share today.
* We know the individuals and churches across the community contribute so much in prayers, volunteering and finances to support people through the work of Anglicare.

**ABOUT ANGLICARE**

* Anglicare is the mission arm of the Anglican church with the aim is to help the most disadvantaged children and families to hope, heal and thrive so they can lead lives free from poverty.
* This is no small mission and certainly one that calls for the support of individuals, churches and the community.
* Anglicare is fortunate to receive government funding, however this funding is not enough to cover the full scope of our services.

**ABOUT OUR SERVICES**

* Our services range from emergency relief to foster care, housing, disability services, early learning education centres, Retirement Living and youth & family services.
* In the last 12 months alone, over 7000 people have been assisted through our emergency relief services right across the region. These are people who have actually visited our centres to receive food or help with bills. It does not include children who also benefit from our services.
* A number of our services also overlap for such as housing and emergency assistance, and foster care and disability services.

**WHERE WE WORK**

* Anglicare’s main offices include Canberra, Wagga, Orange, Liverpool and Moruya.
* With over 50 locations across the region, we have a presence in communities from Dubbo to Albury to Eden and Nowra.

**ABOUT ANTI-POVERTY WEEK**

* As with previous years, Anglicare Sunday is being run around national Anti-Poverty Week.
* This Sunday marks the end of the week, which is a time for communities around Australia to focus on issues of local poverty and look at ways they can make a difference.
* One of the themes for this year’s Anti-Poverty Week is “Pathways out of Poverty”. This is certainly what Anglicare offers to clients.
* Our desire to not just offer emergency relief but also offer “wrap-around” services to offer additional support to families in order to break the cycle of inter-generational poverty.

**CHURCH MANDATE TO CARE FOR THOSE IN NEED**

* As part of the church we know we have a biblical mandate to care for those in need.
* This is part of the reason I am so delighted that we have a day like Anglicare Sunday to truly focus on this issue.
* Often we think of poverty as being an issue affecting other communities and other countries. It’s quite a shock to be confronted with the tragic reality of the real poverty right here in our communities.

**POVERTY IN AUSTRALIA**

* The Australian Council of Social Services estimates the nearly 3 million people in Australia live below the poverty line.
* 900,000 people in NSW alone, live in poverty.
* These are heartbreaking and challenging statistics, but throughout Anglicare’s history advocating and assisting those in need has been the focus. And it’s a focus we will continue, showing Christ’s love in action.

**THE MESSAGE – NON-LECTIONARY VERSION**

**SUGGESTED READINGS – Matthew 25:31-46 and James 2:14-26**

* Mark chapter 12 verses 30-31 says: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’
* The second part is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.
* Firstly, we need a deep and truthful understanding of God’s love for us. Only then can God’s love truly overflow out of our lives to bless the lives of others.

**STAINED GLASS WINDOW**

* In the gospel reading, Jesus strikingly personalizes each recipient of such compassion and generous action as himself. “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.
* There are many reasons that people choose to do good in the world, but for us as Christians we are motivated first and foremost by our love for Christ. The natural outflow of this is that we could also love others.
* These values are intrinsic to the work of Anglicare and the Anglican Church. These stained glass window scenes from All Saints church in South Hobart tell this story so beautifully.

**THE GOOD SAMARITAN**

* As we know from the story of the Good Samaritan, the neighbour is defined for the lawyer, in Luke chapter 10, as anyone who is helpless and in serious strife, regardless of whether we actually know them, or have ever met them before. The Samaritan passer-by took pity on a person in their plight and acted to remedy the situation.
* The ‘Good Samaritan’s’ actions in the parable may well have been lifesaving for the man injured and lying on the side of the road.
* The actions of the righteous could have meant the world to the recipients of their thoughtful care.
* Over 7000 people received help through Anglicare’s emergency relief services this year.
* Each person has a unique and complex story and it is only through Anglicare team members getting to know them and their situation and caring for them as a person with a name who is worthwhile, that we see real change take place.

**THE MESSAGE – LECTIONARY VERSION**

* Suffering Job prayed for God to answer his pleas (Job 31.35) and suddenly in chapter 38 God finally breaks His seemingly deafening.
* What the Lord has to say, though, in response to Job’s doubts and questions, is not perhaps what Job was expecting. God addresses Job directly and in these opening verses asks questions of Job about where he, that is Job, was when God created the world?
* The additional verses in Chapter 38, which you may or may not have used, reinforce this difference in knowledge and understanding and overall responsibility between God and Job. God’s entire reply and the ensuing conversation with Job goes on for another four chapters.
* It is a remarkable reply because Job does not receive a specific answer about the suffering and loss that he has endured. Instead, he receives such a vision of God that he no longer needs to ask any further questions. It is as if he is reassured that, despite his trials, God has always known him and loved him and cared for him as an individual human being, whilst also the Creator of the entire universe.

**Story of Job (31:35) and the response to suffering**

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* God addresses Job directly and in these opening verses asks questions of Job about where he, that is Job, was when God created the world?
* The additional verses in Chapter 38, which you may or may not have used, reinforce this difference in knowledge and understanding and overall responsibility between God and Job. God’s entire reply is remarkable because Job does not receive a specific answer about the suffering and loss that he has endured. Instead, he receives such a vision of God that he no longer needs to ask any further questions. It is as if he is reassured that, despite his trials, God has always known him and loved him and cared for him as an individual human being, whilst also the Creator of the entire universe.

**Majesty of God**

* You will hear echoes in Psalm 104 from the hymn: ‘O Worship the King, all Glorious above’. The hymn encapsulates the Psalmist’s assessment of the majesty of God in the phrase ‘pavilioned in splendour and girded with praise’. It has been described as ‘a psalm of praise amongst the giants’ and appears to be modelled on the structure of Genesis 1 in taking creation as the source of praise for the Creator.
* There are some striking resemblances to 14th century BC Egyptian Akhenaten’s ‘Hymn to the Sun’ but noticeably differs, as does Genesis, by worshipping not the Sun but its Maker.
As the hymn puts it:

*Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail*

*In thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail*

*Thy mercies, how tender, how firm to the end*

*Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer and Friend*

**The role of the Priest**

* William Lane’s Commentary on this Hebrew’s chapter suggests there is a particular chiastic structure to these 10 verses as follows:
	+ A The old office of High Priest (v.1)
	+ B The solidarity of the High Priest with the people (vv.2-3)
	+ C The humility of the High Priest (v.4)
	+ C The humility of Christ (vv.5-6)
	+ B The solidarity of Christ with the people (vv.7-8)
	+ A The new office of High Priest (vv.9-10)
* This combination of the High Priest’s office with human weakness is striking and reinforces the extraordinary qualification of Jesus Christ to be both High Priest and indeed sacrifice for the sins of the world. It also underscores, in William Lane’s words “what God intended priesthood to be”.

**Jesus example of humility**

* “For *even* the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
* The disciples, however, just did not get it. Despite Jesus’ example of humility, they were still keen on preferment, particularly as they sensed that positions of rank could be up for grabs, when Jesus advanced on Jerusalem.
* Nor did they understand the extent of the sacrifice Jesus was about to make, despite Jesus teaching them that he would “be treated with contempt and put to death.”
* The metaphors of the cup and of baptism are powerful ones that remind that new eternal life is born out of a dying to self, rather than out of self-aggrandisement. The reaction of the other disciples was no better, suggesting that they too were willing to jockey for position.
* Jesus draws a painful and revolutionary contrast between the Gentile overlords the people suffered under, and how in the kingdom of heaven, including on earth, to be great means to be a servant of all. “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
* It is a lesson that can also be found in accounts of the Last Supper, in Luke 22.24-30, and John 13.1-17.
* So who are the people we are called to serve? It is most certainly those in need – like those who access Anglicare’s services every day.

**These following notes to be used in both versions**

**The Work of Anglicare – Helping People in Crisis**

* Hundreds of families access Anglicare’s support every month across the region. The beauty of our programs is that they are run in and for the local communities.
* While Anglicare runs many services, ones which often see families present with the most needs include the Homelessness and Housing service, the No-Interest Loans Scheme operating across most of the region, and emergency relief services in Canberra, Wagga Wagga, Moruya, Orange and Parkes.

**The Work of Anglicare – Breaking the Cycle of Poverty**

* The ‘thrive’ aspect of our services. How we support individuals and families beyond times of crisis.
* Our staff and volunteers are able to offer referral services to clients and as well as operating other local services such as playgroups, the Youth Education Program, financial counselling, gambling help and others.

**Generosity in Action - Client Stories (You may want to choose to focus on the story that represents your region.)**

* Anglicare is working to help individuals and families in our local community.

Yass – Maddison’s Story

* People like Maddison who was a 20 year old single mum after a relationship breakdown who was also looking after her 15 year old sister.
* After facing homelessness, today Maddison is studying at TAFE, her sister has returned to high school and Maddison’s son is attending playgroups.

Goulburn – Wayne’s Story

* Following a relationship breakdown, Wayne left Sydney for what he hoped would be cheaper housing for him and his young son in Goulburn.
* Facing homelessness, Wayne turned to the Anglicare team and they found emergency and transitional housing for him. It’s the first time his son has had a back yard to play in.

Canberra – Zane’s Story

* An unstable home environment meant that Zane started couch-surfing when he was only 15. He was facing homelessness and struggling with the stress, found mainstream schooling difficult.
* He received help through Anglicare’s youth education program which also included emergency food hampers on occasion.

Canberra – Tammy’s Story

* Tammy is so full of life and excitement for the future that would never know she was homeless at just 12 years old.
* As a young teenager she accessed services at Anglicare’s youth centre known as the Junction. She was able to get food when she needed it, free health services, a place to shower and wash her clothes. But most importantly, the team at the Junction gave her hope and made her feel valued. She completed her studies through Anglicare’s Youth Education Program and has exciting plans for her future.
* Tammy said her youth workers were like a family to her.

Orange – Rachael’s Story

* Rachael entered foster care when she was a baby. After moving from foster home to foster home, Rachael began to be cared for through Anglicare.
* She wasn’t sure what would happen when she turned 18 as affordable housing was difficult to find. The team helped her to find a house and today she is studying and working. She still also regularly meets with the Anglicare team.

Wagga Wagga – Ashlie’s Story

* After Ashlie’s partner left, she and her children were facing homelessness.
* Thanks to the Anglicare service at Ashmont, Ashlie received emergency relief and the team also advocated for her to move in to government housing. Today her life has turned around.

South Coast – Jeffrey’s Story

* With deteriorating eye sight, Jeffrey was unable to work. In his 60s, Jeffrey chose to save money by living for a few years in a tent.
* But when his eye sight deteriorated too much, he turned to Anglicare to help. The South Coast team were able to find him a suitable and affordable unit.

**ANGLICARE AND YOUR CHURCH**

* We’d like to show this short video which includes testimonies from different people connected to the work of Anglicare.

[Show Anglicare Sunday video]

**HOW YOU CAN HELP**

* If you would like to be involved further with the work of Anglicare we would really encourage you to consider it. (The feedback form that you should have on your seat will list the ways which makes getting involved really easy. Simply fill this in and hand it to me or the Anglicare representative in your church.)
* Donate – become a care partner, donate to an appeal, drought relief appeal?
	+ (For the drought relief appeal, Anglicare is partnering with other local organisations on the ground to provided financial counselling assistance and support to individual families in need, particularly in the Bathurst and Parkes regions.)
* Pray – prayer partners newsletter
* Volunteer – Retail, Mentoring
Leave a Gift in Your Will
* Get Your Church Involved – Pantry Appeal, Christmas Appeal

**THANK YOU**

* Thank you again for you time today.
* We hope that you have been informed and inspired.

**HOW TO STAY CONNECTED**

* We want to help you stay connected with the work of Anglicare so we can update and encourage you. There are many ways to stay connected. These include:
	+ eNewsletters – Church Connections, Community Connections
	+ Social Media – follow us on Facebook
	+ Join our THRIVE quarterly newsletter mailing list
	+ Become a Prayer Partner (emailed bi-monthly)