Some churches to reopen as restrictions ease

by Stephen Cauchi

A number of Anglican churches – including St Paul’s Cathedral – are expected to reopen for worship in Victoria following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, although stringent requirements for physical distancing and cleaning mean that many will remain closed.

The Diocese of Melbourne has also received its first payments under the Federal Government’s JobKeeper scheme and is preparing a financial assistance plan for parishes.

From 1 June, in line with State Government regulations, the size limit on gatherings for worship will move from 10 to 20 people. From 22 June, that is expected to move to 50 people.

Bishop Paul Barker, whose episcopate of Jumbunna covers Melbourne’s southern and eastern suburbs, told TMA that some churches had already reopened in May.

“...Our approach as ‘Wellbeing services’ is an integrated one involving a multi-disciplinary team and we work as a team to best serve the families, colleagues and workplace units,” Dr Mellor said. “A significant ‘take home’ for me has been the positive experience of working with my fellow chaplains, respectful caring.

Continued on page 10

No ‘quick fix’ for Church after abuse crisis: new Chancellor

by Mark Brolly

The new Chancellor of the Diocese of Melbourne, Professor Clyde Croft AM SC, says the establishment and operation of redress schemes will be a priority as well as continuing the work of his predecessor, Mr Michael Shand QC, in professional standards.

A Supreme Court judge for 10 years until 2019, Professor Croft – now a professor at Monash University’s Law Faculty – warned that there was no “quick fix” for the Church to regain public trust and confidence after the revelations of child sexual abuse.

“The contribution and work of Michael Shand QC, as Chancellor, to the development of professional and episcopal standards legislation and protocols cannot be

Continued on page 12

Tragedy brings out the best in police, says chaplain

by Mark Brolly

The response of Victoria Police after the tragic deaths of four of their own on the Eastern Freeway on 22 April “was the Vic Pol family at its best”, according to an Anglican police chaplain.

Senior Police Chaplain, the Revd Dr Drew Mellor, acknowledged the deep sense of loss and pain that the families of the fallen officers were experiencing.

He said he felt humbled by the opportunity to serve alongside the two other Senior Police Chaplains, fellow Anglican the Revd Dave Thompson and Team Leader the Revd Jim Jung, who oversee more than 80 local (volunteer) police chaplains across Victoria.

“...Our approach as ‘Wellbeing services’ is an integrated one involving a multi-disciplinary team and we work as a team to best serve the families, colleagues and workplace units,” Dr Mellor said. “A significant ‘take home’ for me has been the positive experience of working with my fellow chaplains, respectful caring.

Continued on page 10

Flinders Street Station lit in tribute to the fallen police officers. Photo: AAP/Michael Dodge.

PLUS: Anglican clergy to contribute to family violence study (p9); school chaplains adapt (p6)
In separation, forging a deeper connectedness

It has been encouraging to hear reports of parishioners expressing how they feel connected to each other in new and deeper ways in these extraordinary circumstances that we have been living under. For some this has involved embracing the challenge of technology in a new way; for others who are digital natives it has been like welcoming the Church into their world. I can only attribute the accounts of this connectedness to the work of the Holy Spirit. It has been an affirmation of the truth of our faith expressed in 1 Corinthians 12.27, that we are “the body of Christ and individually members of it”. Even at a time when we have been unable to join together for the corporate enactment of our faith, God’s grace has been evident.

I have joined with clergy in Archdeaconry groups and have heard of the tremendous efforts that are being made to keep parishioners connected. Many have spoken about this time being one of reliance on the foundations of their theological training and formation as they have ministered in these days. The essential character of pastoral care and spiritual formation has been possible, even though differently expressed. Remarkably, in contrast to what might have been expected, there has been fresh connection with people who have been on the margins of church life previously or had no previous connection at all. I have heard of people coming to faith through online evangelism who are now waiting for the restrictions to ease so that they can be baptised.

During this extraordinary period, I have participated in a session of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) over four nights in May. Originally intended to be a residential meeting at a monastery in Northern Italy, we soon realised that could not occur and that an electronic meeting was our only opportunity for carrying this work forward. You may recall I reflected on the previous meeting of this dialogue that met in Jerusalem at St George’s Cathedral last year and particularly the pain of being present at each other’s Eucharists where the reality of separation was all too evident. Interestingly, in a digital space where the opportunities for shared worship were limited, this pain was not manifested. Instead we had a strengthened experience of our unity in Christ. This was a fresh blessing on the way along this challenging project, another example of the Holy Spirit’s presence amongst the people Jesus has gathered as his disciples.

The Holy Spirit is the “other comforter” who is present in the life of the Christian community. The Spirit is the enlivening force in the Body of Christ, the Church. We will always be left marvelling that our own despair or inadequacy is never the last word. Probably it shouldn’t be unexpected but usually we will be “surprised by joy”, as C.S. Lewis described it in the phrase from Wordsworth’s poem to describe his own conversion to Christianity.

Let’s be thankful for all of the things which heighten our awareness of who we are in Christ and how we are connected within the Body of Christ.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus,

The Melbourne Anglican
ISSN 1324-5724

Interim Manager (TMA and Online) – Emma Halgren
editor@melbourneanglican.org.au
TMA Journalist – Mark Broolly
mbroolly@melbourneanglican.org.au
TMA Journalist – Stephen Cauchi
scauchi@melbourneanglican.org.au

Digital Journalist – Chris Shearer
cshearer@melbourneanglican.org.au

Advertising
ads@melbourneanglican.org.au

Subscription Enquiries
TMA@melbourneanglican.org.au

Design & Layout – Ivan Smith
ads@melbourneanglican.org.au

Communications Assistant – Jessica Meegama

Published by:
Anglican Media Melbourne
209 Flinders Lane Melbourne VIC 3000
ph 9653 4269
www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au

Clergy Moves

Vacant Appointments as of 1 June 2020:
Activation of appointment processes will be on a case by case basis;
St Michael & All Angels Beaumaris, St Bamabas, Balwyn, St Stephen, Belmont, St Edward’s, Blackburn South, St Faith, Burwood (from July 2020), St Mary’s, Caulfield with St Clement’s, Elsternwick, Dandenong South, St James, Glen Iris, Holy Trinity, Hampton Park, Hume Anglican Parish, Holy Trinity Lara with Christ Church, Little River, St Nicholas, Warrandyte, Upper Yarra (from August 2020), All Saints Newtown and Geelong Parish of Yarraville

Appointments:
ARNOLD-MOORE, The Revd Colleen Michelle, appointed Incumbent (from Priest-in-Charge) Holy Trinity and Emmanuel, Oakleigh, effective 15 May 2020
HOLLIS, The Revd Dr Jubilee Hollis, appointed Incumbent (from Priest-in-Charge) Christ Church, St Kilda, effective 7 August 2019
JOUSTRA, The Revd Jan Jteer, appointed Area Dean, Deanery of Melbourne, effective 26 May 2020
KELLER, The Revd Matthew Lee, appointed Assistant Priest as Director of Next Generation Ministries, Authorised Anglican Congregation City on a Hill, effective 15 May 2020
KERR, The Revd David Gregory, appointed Assistant Curate, St John Camberwell, effective 15 May 2020
MAURACHER, The Revd Claudia, appointed Renewal of Priest-in-Charge, St Paul, Frankston, effective 7 June 2020
NEWMARCH, The Revd Caroline Ruth, appointed Priest-in-Charge, St Philip, Mount Waverley, effective 1 July 2020
WILSON, The Revd Richard John Grant, appointed Assistant Priest, St George, East Ivanhoe, effective 15 May 2020
Permission to Officiate:
HARRIPOWER, The Right Revd John Douglas, appointed Permission to Officiate as Priest, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 12 July 2020
GREAVES, The Revd Clifford Cedric, appointed Permission to Officiate as Priest, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 23 June 2020
MATTHEW BOON SHEAN OOI, appointed Permission to Officiate as Priest, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 30 April 2020
MOORE, The Revd David John, appointed Permission to Officiate as Priest, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 6 July 2020
PAYNE, The Revd Emily, appointed Permission to Officiate as Priest, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 13 July 2020
RUAN, The Revd David Jian, appointed Permission to Officiate as Priest, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 23 April 2020
Retirements:
MOORE, The Revd David John, Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, Kensington, effective 5 July 2020
RUAN, The Revd David Jian, Assistant Priest, Holy Trinity, Doncaster, effective 23 April 2020
Obituaries:
ANDERSEN, The Revd Dr Francis (Frank) Ian, 13 May 2020
BETTERIDGE, The Revd Canon Maurice Stanley, 25 May 2020
CHAMBERS, The Revd Jonathan, 15 May 2020
RYAN, The Revd Jock, 11 May 2020

See Tributes at www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au
Clergy Moves is compiled by the Registry Office and all correspondence should go to registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au

“We will always be left marvelling that our own despair or inadequacy is never the last word.”
Global companies must clean up their act: TEAR

by Stephen Cauchi

CHRISTIAN RELIEF AND development agency TEAR Australia has released new research showing the staggering amount of plastic waste generated by multinationals in developing countries.

The report, released by TEAR and its global Tearfund partners in late April, found that Coca-Cola, Nestlé, PepsiCo and Unilever burnt or dumped half a million tonnes of plastic in Brazil, China, India, Mexico, Nigeria and the Philippines.

“These companies are selling plastic in the full knowledge that it will be burnt or dumped in developing countries, contributing to climate change and harm to the health of the world’s poorest,” said Jo Knight, Advocacy Director at TEAR.

“These companies have a moral responsibility for the disposal of the products they continue to pump into developing countries without proper waste management systems.”

Coca-Cola was the worst of the four with 200,000 tonnes of plastic pollution – or around eight billion bottles – burnt or dumped in these countries each year.

PepsiCo was second worst with a plastic pollution footprint of 137,000 tonnes per year.

The report, The Burning Question, was part of the Rubbish Campaign that TEAR and Tearfund have been running since last August.

The findings show that the companies must urgently switch to sustainable refillable and reusable packaging alternatives instead of single-use plastic packaging and sachets, said TEAR.

TEAR also found that the emissions produced from the open burning of the companies’ plastic packaging on street corners, open dumps and in backyards in developing countries is a major contributor to greenhouse gases.

Ms Knight told TMA the impact on climate change from burning plastic “hasn’t been calculated before. That’s new evidence”.

She said questions from TEAR were being put to executives at Coca-Cola and PepsiCo at their global annual general meetings. The meetings were being held online due to coronavirus.

“We’re particularly trying to pressure them in this AGM season,” said Ms Knight, who worships at Merri Creek Anglican.

The Rubbish Campaign has been challenging each company with a plan to reduce plastic pollution in developing countries. This includes reducing the amount of single-use plastic products by half by 2025. It also aims to increase the recycling of single-use plastics, ensuring that by 2022 one is collected for every one sold.

TEAR has ranked how well the companies are doing in committing to this plan. This league table reveals that Coca-Cola and PepsiCo had barely improved, with Unilever far ahead.

Last year TEAR released the No Time To Waste report, which found between 400,000 and one million people are dying each year in developing countries from illness and disease caused by mismanaged plastic and other waste.

Globally, more than 50,000 actions have been taken by campaign supporters, including more than 3500 in Australia, mainly online. This included “people calling on the companies to make the full [pollution reduction] commitments”, Ms Knight said.

TEAR was also calling on churches to reduce their plastic use and many had done so.

Find the report, and ways to take action, here.
Church bookshop gets creative during crisis

by Carol O’Connor

Officially, St Peter’s Bookroom has gone into what the Government likes to call “hibernation”. But actually, we've never been busier.

In mid-March St Peter’s Bookroom, the bookshop ministry located at St Peter’s Eastern Hill in Melbourne, suddenly found it had to close its doors to the street and cancel selling at all planned public events for the foreseeable future.

Many articles about managing a business during a pandemic are outlining that the most serious disruptors to businesses don’t necessarily come from competitors, but from places you were not expecting. No-one was expecting coronavirus.

We continue to take orders for books and supplies, via email (bookroom@stpeters.org.au) and phone (9663 7487). If people can’t come to the Bookroom, we go to them. As the slogan “Save Lives, Stay Home” has taken effect, so we have been travelling around delivering books personally to customers in the metropolitan area. Small videos featuring new books, candles and religious items have been made with the high technology of the iPhone and uploaded to the Bookroom’s Facebook page.

With the most direct line of contact with customers suddenly cut, we decided to be innovative and redesign our website for this period. Recognising people’s need to reach out to God and de-stress we have created a new page called Soul Food. Prayers and collects Living in the Time of the Virus from local Uniting Church poet and writer Julie Perrin are now featured. And meditative poems designed to engage listeners creatively and spiritually are regularly recorded in Listening to the Words.

It is a very creative and energetic time for the Bookroom and for all small religious businesses around Melbourne.

Carol O’Connor is Manager of the St Peter’s Bookroom.

See story on page 8 about St Paul’s Cathedral’s online gift shop.

‘Crude utilitarianism’ a ‘horrifying’ approach to pandemic care

by Stephen Cauchi

Putting older people last for the ideal of “greatest good for the greatest number” was a “horrible” philosophy to apply to COVID-19 scenarios, a Trinity College conference was told.

Dr Dan Fleming, Group Manager Ethics and Formation for St Vincent’s Health Australia, made the comments while addressing the Christianity, care and COVID-19: Reflections on theological ethics in the midst of a pandemic conference on 8 May.

Dr Fleming told the online conference that the COVID-19 pandemic had raised many ethical questions, including which patients should have access to ventilators if there was a shortage and which health workers should have access to Personal Protective Equipment.

In Italy, Spain and other places with a ventilator shortage, older COVID-19 patients have been denied ventilators on the grounds that younger patients have more years left to live.

Utilitarianism philosophy – the greatest good for the greatest number – held that older patients should be last in line for ventilators as they have “less so-called quality-adjusted life-years remaining”, Dr Fleming said.

“Metrics which allocate financial value to individual lives are unashamedly being used to suggest who resources should be allocated to, and at what cost to individual lives – as if this is somehow a neutral way to make decisions concerning the common good.”

“Coronavirus: old or young – every life has a different value and we accept that”.

“Metrics which allocate financial value to individual lives are unashamedly being used ...”

According to this reasoning, older people “will place a burden on resources that should be kept available to others. And so, the reasoning goes, they should not be allocated hospital resources at all.”

“Crude utilitarianism is horrifying in an emergency ... abhorrent.”

Dr Fleming said that in recent weeks some Australian media commentators and health officials had made comments or written opinion pieces sympathetic to utilitarianism.

“We’ve seen crude suggestions which follow this framework over the past few weeks, including one direction from a regional health district in Australia that those in aged care should simply not attend hospitals.

“This directive was quickly withdrawn.”

Similarly, a recent opinion piece by Australian commentator Janet Albrechtsen was titled “Coronavirus: old or young – every life has a different value and we accept that”.

“The title points to the ethical framework at play here, even though the article itself was somewhat more subtle,” Dr Fleming said.

In contrast to the utilitarian view, he said, was the biblical view, which held that “each and every person is created in the likeness and image of God and bestowed with an insatiable dignity”.

A biblical view requires that we “look at the world through the eyes of its victims”.

Dr Fleming said that St Vincent’s Health had discussed allocation of ventilators should such a scarcity problem eventuate.

“The moment of triage – who gets the ventilator and who misses out – is not separate from the decisions that our organisation has made over the last … two centuries,” he said.

“The first question that was raised when we began to grapple with how to allocate scarce resources, such as ventilators, was not how do we do this but rather what can we do for the homeless.”

Dr David Carter, a senior lecturer in the faculty of law at the University of Technology Sydney, told the conference that public health departments across Australia had made many poor decisions in recent years.

“This includes evidence of the indefinite detention of multiple individuals by public health authorities, including those detained until their death, and public health orders made without time limits, and public health orders never rescinded.”

“The common theme I return to is one of injustice and the social and political marginalisation of those who are subject to those forms of coercive control.”

AROUND MELBOURNE

Church bookshop gets creative during crisis

by Carol O’Connor

Books from St Peter’s Bookroom are home-delivered to customers Ross Smith and Gillian Forward.
Some effects of COVID-19 on diocese ‘already greater’ than 1919 flu epidemic: research

by Mark Brolly

The social and economic effect of coronavirus on the Diocese of Melbourne is probably already greater than the 1919 influenza epidemic but on present indications the health impact is likely to be considerably less, according to a paper prepared by leading Anglican layman and researcher Mr Colin Reilly.

Mr Reilly’s paper, The 1919 flu pandemic and the Diocese of Melbourne, found that there were at least eight clergy deaths attributed to influenza in the Anglican Church nationally in 1919 – a death rate of about 0.6 per cent in a population of about 1400 Anglican clergy compared with 0.3 per cent for the whole population – but that in Melbourne, the clerical death rate was 0.9 per cent.

“Some indicators of church life suggest the flu epidemic may have had a deleterious effect,” Mr Reilly wrote. “The number of baptisms and confirmations fell slightly, but quickly recovered as in the rest of the world. “For this our situation as a relatively remote island nation was the chief reason. Australia appears to be similarly advantaged with respect to COVID-19 in 2020. In both cases government intervention has been early, invasive of personal freedoms and apparently received with little complaint, but in 1919 for shorter periods and with less interference with the general economy.

“In neither case were effective medical antidotes available, quarantine and social distancing being the chief remedies to prevent the spread of infection. It is too early to tell at the time of writing (16 April 2020) the outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic for Australia, let alone the Diocese of Melbourne, but in social and economic terms it is probably already greater for the church than the 1919 pandemic. It is possible, though, that on present indications the health impact will be considerably less.”

Mr Reilly outlined some of the specific events and responses that occurred in the diocese in 1919.

“Parish finances also suffered slightly, but quickly recovered... Nor did the epidemic seem to affect some other indicators of ecclesiastical health. The number of deacons ordained... was the highest since 1914 as recovery from the First World War began.”

The paper says the influenza pandemic of 1918-19, popularly known as the Spanish flu epidemic, resulted in up to 16,000 deaths in an Australian population of 5.4 million – a mortality rate of close to three deaths per thousand. If the death rate was uniform across the population, probably 6000 to 7000 Anglicans died.

Mr Reilly wrote that the effects of the 1919 influenza epidemic in Australia, while severe, were nowhere near as damaging as in the rest of the world.

“If the death rate was uniform across the population, probably 6000 to 7000 Anglicans died.”

The new parish of St Agnes’ Black Rock was stricken by the death of its 32-year-old vicar, the Revd Wilford James, on 5 May from pneumonic influenza.

Another young Melbourne priest, the Revd George Benjamin Rogers, had on 13 June “succumbed to the influenza, and left a widow and four children wholly unprovided for”. “His work was admirable, he was a member of our Clergy Provident Fund, but being young his widow receives no permanent benefits”, so Archbishop Henry Lowther Clarke petitioned the Walter & Eliza Hall Trust on her behalf. The parish of Melton raised £300 to purchase a house for her, and the Archbishop made a further request for support from the Queen’s Fund.

In his Presidential Address to the October 1919 Synod (his last before retiring in 1920), Archbishop Clarke spoke of how the Church must find “a new spirit of religion in ourselves” to address a post-war world and focused on a number of organisational issues without mentioning the flu epidemic.

Mr Reilly acknowledged his debt to Hazel Nsair and Leonie Duncan of the Melbourne Diocesan Archives, who pointed him to most of the contemporary records cited in the paper, which may be read here.

Anglicare Victoria’s entire approach to the Coronavirus is based on: giving people the care and specialist support they need, that will help them change, or even save, their lives.

We are adapting programs to meet the needs of Victoria’s most vulnerable people.

- We’re delivering food and essentials weekly to families who are isolated
- We supply clean clothes directly to people who need them
- We are still assisting people with no homes, find a safe place to live
- Our level of service is the same, just the way we are delivering it is different. Instead of face to face we are providing support via the phone or online

This is why I am asking for your support today.
E DUCATION AT ALL LEVELS has been very different during the COVID-19 lockdown, and that has certainly been the case for school chaplains. And like all school teachers, chaplains face significant changes as schools gradually re-open to all students.

But while online teaching has been as challenging for them as for all teachers, Anglican school chaplains have also found creative ways to offer faith-based learning and worship to both students and staff at their schools. From providing weekly mini-sermons online and innovative RE classes to prayers for use at times of stress, the 60 or so chaplains in Anglican schools in Melbourne and the regional dioceses have more than risen to the challenge.

For the Revd Kirsty Ross, who took up her post at Melbourne Girls Grammar just last July, fulfilling her long-held dream of being a school chaplain, the lockdown has meant working in some very different ways over these past months.

Mrs Ross has found the online experience a good way of getting to know her students. “The school has handled it very well,” she said.

And she has been given an increased role in spiritual leadership during lockdown, giving a mini-sermon online to the whole school each week. “It has to be pithy,” she explained, “really a ‘thought for the week’”.

For her RE classes, she decided to replace her planned program and instead look at how Christians have dealt with death in this time, “she said. “People had put their heart and soul into the planning, so there was a bit of grief in letting go of these things.”

Instead, the centenary has been observed in different ways, she continued, exploring how the school values and decisions over the past 100 years have provided nurture for the girls and staff in the current situation. “We have felt the support of the principals and school community that have gone before us. The school has had such strong, committed female principals over those years.”

Both staff and students have appreciated the worship resources Mrs Creed has offered online, including a range of prayers for use at various times.

Returning to face-to-face school will require more changes, as there will not be chapel services or assemblies for the next little while. “I am looking forward to returning,” she said, “and seeing how we can take with us what we have learnt during the lockdown”.

For the Revd Helen Creed, a school chaplain for the past 21 years, the lockdown has brought a particular challenge. Her school – Camberwell Girls Grammar School – was planning a range of events for this, its centenary year.

“We had been planning for this for the past five years,” she said. “People had put their heart and soul into the planning, so there was a bit of grief in letting go of these things.”

“Chaplains can be very isolated,” she explained, “and the off-site environment has exacerbated that for some.” Online teaching of RE and other subjects has been relatively straightforward for them in contrast with the loss of their usual chapel services, he said.

Pastoral care of principals and staff as well as students will be demanding for chaplains as schools return, he continued, particularly in some schools such as those in the growth corridors where there will be increased financial stress.

Bishop Lindsay Urwin, who has care for ministry in Anglican schools, added that some chaplains would be anxious for themselves in the new economic reality. Will their role be more precarious in the straitened circumstances facing some independent schools?

He believes the lockdown has been very tough for chaplains and school teachers generally. “No one goes into the school environment who does not want close contact with people generally and particularly young people,” he said. “Chaplains need young people – they animate them.”

Chaplains are the ‘glue’ in the school community, he said. They rove all over the school, keeping in contact with everyone, involved in an intense way in all that is happening in the school community. “They loiter with intent!” he said. This aspect of their ministry has been lost during the lockdown. However, most are “pretty robust”, he said.

They will need to be, as will we all as we navigate the “new normal” of our world.

**The importance of connecting**

Melbourne Grammar School chaplain the Revd Hans Christiansen reflects that while school students coped as well as they could with physical distancing and online learning during the coronavirus lockdown, human beings are “made for relationships”.

He writes: “Our whole purpose is to enter into the loving communion with God and our fellow human beings and the creatures of the earth and become part of the divine dance where we learn to receive and give. Love simply has to be shared. It is written into the DNA of creation. That’s why we need each other. That’s why we miss each other when we cannot be together.”

Frankston East church café a ‘social lifeline’

by Stephen Cauchi

Coffee on Kareela, a project of St Luke’s Frankston East, has managed to maintain Christian outreach in a time of lockdown.

The café has been offering a take-away service, with a maximum of three customers at any time.

“Our primary ministry is the connection with people and the food’s just the vehicle for us to do that ministry,” said Liz Wilson, a pastoral assistant at St Luke’s who oversees the café.

“Somebody said [recently] it’s just so great that you’re here, that we can still come in because we can get out of the house and we can actually come and see somebody else …

“So they’ve got five minutes to talk to us while we’re getting their food ready. So it’s like a bit of a social lifeline.

“A good number of them, particularly the people we connect with, live alone so they don’t necessarily have strong support networks so their community is actually really important to them.”

In the weeks prior to stage three restrictions being introduced in Victoria, Ms Wilson said, ‘some of them were very anxious and said, ‘You’re not going to close are you?’ I thought, ’Gosh, they’re frightened’ and they thought it might be the end of us and we’ll never come back.”

Ms Wilson realised that under the restrictions, take-away was still allowed and offered a way forward for the café. But because most of its volunteers were in the vulnerable age category and could not work, hours had to be slashed. The café went from five days a week to three days a week, two hours each day.

“We have had to modify our shop, packing up all the chairs and nearly all the tables, so folks are not encouraged to hang around. We have set up quite an elaborate enter, order, pay, wait, and pick-up process,” Ms Wilson said.

There’s a maximum of two volunteers and three customers in the café at any time.

In addition to selling take-away drinks, snacks and light meals, the café also sells frozen single-serve meals and soups – an especially handy option at the current time.

“For a couple of our folks, this is their take-away food option, and a treat to have a ‘home cooked’ meal. A few of our people are vulnerable and do not eat really well, so this also helps them have some nutritious options.

“We’re able to keep that up and that’s our plan – to maintain that ministry of connection and care for local people.”

The Revd Glen Macrae, Priest-in-Charge at St Luke’s, said: “We see Coffee on Kareela as a key way to serve disempowered people in the City of Frankston, a way to share with them the hope and mercy of Christ.

“We are so thankful for the team who have enabled this invaluable care to continue over recent months.”

Christianity, Indigenous beliefs belong together, says book

by Stephen Cauchi

A book examining the common ground between Australian Indigenous spirituality and Christian theology has been launched by publisher ATF Press.

A Theology of the Land: Terra Australis from Christian–Aboriginal Perspectives, by Christopher Sexton, was launched virtually on the ATF website on 28 May with a recorded message by Terry Lovat, Professor of Theology, Ethics and Education at the University of Newcastle in NSW.

Mr Sexton, who died in 2017 aged in his 50s, wrote the book as a PhD thesis. Professor Lovat, who was one of the thesis supervisors, has turned the manuscript into the book.

In the launch, Professor Lovat noted that Mr Sexton was a lawyer and a devout Catholic who became interested in Indigenous issues.

“He came to see the potential benefit of an Indigenous spirituality being properly integrated into Christian understanding, especially around issues of creation and, most of all, land,” he said.

Mr Sexton’s PhD was a “culmination of that quest to integrate the teachings of the land to be found in the Indigenous and Christian traditions”.

This was “a natural connection but one that had become lost” due to colonisation, materialism and Western obsessions with wealth and power.

Mr Sexton believed that Christians were “out of touch with their own tradition and seeing Indigenous understanding of these things as something foreign rather than something that was natural, especially in an Australian context”.

The book showed Mr Sexton’s “excellent, indeed diligent scholarship” as well as his “heartfelt intention”.

Former High Court Justice Michael Kirby, who knew Mr Sexton well, wrote that Mr Sexton “consulted deeply with our first peoples”. “He found more in common with our distinct spiritualities than might be expected.”

Justice Kirby wrote that the spirituality of Australia’s Aboriginals may on the face of it be “hard to reconcile with a spirituality of Christian theology, with its human centrism apt to a Son of God in Man, made flesh in Jesus”.

But Mr Sexton, drawing “on his deep Catholic beliefs and intense dialogues with Aboriginal elders, finds surprisingly ample common ground. The creation stories of each lay emphasis on humanity’s stewardship for the earth and its mystical riches”.

### Helping hand for relief centres

by Chris Shearer

A GENEROUS offer of assistance has helped Anglicare Emergency Food Relief Centres in Melbourne’s west to reopen, after they were forced to close due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Airline catering company dnata catering donated 360 frozen meals to the centre at the Parish of St Alban the Martyr, St Albans on 4 May, completely restocking its empty freezers, and shipped out a further 360 meals to Anglicare Wangaratta the following day.

The company promised almost another 1000 meals for Anglicare Victoria, leaving the organisation “scrambling for freezer space”, according to the Revd Simon Koefoed of Brimbank Anglican Church, who helped coordinate the partnership.

Mr Koefoed had already been working with the Revd Siosifa Tongia and the Revd Carmel Hunter on a plan to reopen the St Albans food relief centre when they were approached by Brimbank parishioner and dnata catering employee Joice Pereira.

She put Mr Koefoed in touch with Corporate Chef at dnata catering Jagpreet Kohli, and a plan was hatched.

“The closure of these centres has been a blow to the most vulnerable people in these suburbs who struggle at the best of times to put food on the table,” Mr Koefoed said.

“It is encouraging that just a few small ideas and a couple of emails can really make an amazing difference for the most vulnerable in our suburbs.

“It’s also encouraging that dnata catering, who must be having a difficult time in their industry at the moment, have been so willing to help out and partner with us in caring for the community in this practical way.”

### Cathedral gift shop goes online

by Stephen Cauchi

THE ST Paul’s Cathedral gift shop has moved online, helping it to tap into a new market to survive the loss of tourist custom after the Cathedral had to close in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Gift shop manager Susan Baker (pictured right) said she had been worried about how the shop could continue given nearly all of its business came from Cathedral visitors and tourists.

But business turned around in late April after the online shop was launched. Sales in the first week of May were “good … I’ve really been very pleased”, Ms Baker said.

Visits to the Cathedral’s website and Facebook page have soared since the pandemic lockdown as services are now streamed online, she said. Advertising on those sites has given the gift shop a new market.

The shop isn’t selling many Cathedral souvenirs as tourists are no longer visiting, so religious items such as crosses and crucifixes are now the main sellers.

Ms Baker said silver jewellery, such as silver crosses on chains, was popular as it made a good gift.

Angels in various forms, including glass, ceramic and wooden angel ornaments and decorations, silver angel pendants and tea towels featuring angels, were another big seller.

“We sell a lot of angels in all sorts of different forms. These are very, very popular,” she said.

“So I think we’ll be selling a lot of angels and a lot of crosses.”

Visit www.cathedralshopmelbourne.com

### Religious communities meet

The Advisory Council for Anglican Religious Life in Australia (ACARLA) met at the Community of The Holy Name spirituality centre in Cheltenham in mid-February. ACARLA is the source of communication between the House of Bishops and the religious communities of Australia. It also ensures that communities both old and new, and individual men or women who wish to live a solitary consecrated life, are assisted and monitored in living their religious life appropriately and authentically.

ACARLA is led by Bishop Garry Wetherill and lay representatives Marilyn Hope and Joy Freier. Bishop Kate Wilmot of Western Australia has been appointed to the Advisory Council.

God is opening up new visions as men and women continue to offer their lives to His service through religious communities.

If you would like to know more about religious orders in Australia, visit http://anglicanconsecratedlife.org/
Anglican clergy and local church leaders have been invited to participate in research that explores their responses to intimate partner violence.

The study is part of a wider research project, the National Anglican Family Violence Project – www.ncls.org.au/research/nafvp – set up by General Synod and its Family Violence Working Group. It is being conducted by NCLS Research, which conducts the five-yearly National Church Life Survey.

The Revd Tracy Lauersen, formerly of St Hilary’s Kew and now Rector of Warragul in the Gippsland diocese, is Chair of the Anglican Church’s Family Violence Working Group. Mrs Lauersen said the results would be reported to General Synod in May 2021 and would help to guide Church policy and practice.

“For the Church to be part of the broader cultural response to prevent violence and to minister to those who experience it, we need to better understand what happens in our own church communities,” she said. “This includes hearing from our clergy and other leaders about their pastoral experiences and their perceptions around family violence.”

Dr Ruth Powell, Director of NCLS Research and Associate Professor at Charles Sturt University, said randomly selected Anglican parishes across the country would be asked to complete a confidential and anonymous online survey.

“In the coming months, the next phase of the research will be to invite anyone with a connection with the Anglican Church and experiences of family violence to share their experience through a separate online anonymous survey,” Dr Powell said. “This will be followed by some in-depth interviews.”

Virtual reality, digital social relationships and how young people can navigate the opportunities and pitfalls of the online world are all up for discussion on the third episode of Angles on Science, Faith and Culture.

This month, host the Revd Dr Chris Mulherin is joined by Dr Katherine Canobi, a cognitive development scientist and author of the young adult science fiction novel Mindcull, and Archbishop of Melbourne Dr Philip Freier.

Dr Mulherin and the guests use Mindcull as a jumping-off point for a conversation about the new digital landscape, transcendence, and how technology is shaping people’s experiences and identity.

Angles is a collaboration between the Diocese of Melbourne and Christians in Science and Technology (ISCAST). You can listen to it on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, or your podcatcher of choice, or at https://angles.buzzsprout.com/.

Donate before June 30 for 10 X the impact!

Communities Combatting COVID-19
2020 EOFY Appeal

Please donate to help communities prevent and overcome coronavirus
I was the last person to see Alex alive.

When I received the phone call I thought Paul must have been playing a prank—until he began to cry. Not the normal kind of cry. This was a real weeping, a genuine lament. Even as part of my brain realised the truth, that Alex really was gone, I still wouldn’t allow myself to believe it. I clutched at straws.

“He can’t be dead. I saw him at the station Friday night—he must still be alive.”

Alex had committed suicide, stepping in front of a train a couple hours after we had last seen each other. He rode the train back and forth for several hours then chose to end his life. We were still in high school.

I was broken by the event. I didn’t know what to do or how to cope, or how to hold the picture of God I had in my head: a God who loved and cared and always wanted the best for us and knew us so well … but didn’t save my friend. The church offered a lot of advice, but none of it worked. I lost my faith and spent the next few years resenting God, and the church, for their failure to save Alex, and me.

Enter Mark. Mark didn’t seem to know a lot; he would often say: “I don’t know, what do you think?”

Mark asked me what I thought, and didn’t tell me it was wrong to be angry at God.

Instead, he asked another question, and another. He allowed me to open up, to be a person, to feel listened to and truly heard.

Despite his often-used response, I think he knew a lot. I think he knew that what I needed was to explore, to fight to own my faith for myself.

In that short time I learned the power of questions. I came to see that God was moving, even in me.

I’m not even sure Mark realises how much he helped by just asking questions and letting me explore without jumping to the Sunday School rote learning that I had outgrown.

It began my own journey of realising the power of asking good questions.

That experience shaped me and my choices. It shaped the way I lead through to today. It led me into youth ministry.

Over time, the realisation that it wasn’t my job to save anyone filled me with a new hope.

My job was to see what God was doing, and the only way I could do that was to ask questions.

A faith that would sustain and last through the pain and difficulty and heartbreaks of life wasn’t going to be built on a series of answers learnt by heart or a moralistic judge sitting on a throne in the sky, but by the One willing to descend and live in the muck and mud and pain of life.

Jesus seems to always know the answer, and yet in the Gospels we see Him constantly asking questions, even ones to which He knows the answer.

Good questions are a gift that empowers those to whom they are asked.

So, how will we use that gift?

Brian Holden is Youth Ministry Consultant for the Diocese of Melbourne.

Youth ministers in the diocese are invited to join a new Facebook group where they can support each other through sharing of resources, ideas, stories and community. Go to https://www.facebook.com/groups/280086948991836.

If you or someone you know is troubled by this story, you can call Lifeline on 131 114 or beyondblue on 1300 224 636.
East Timor was gripped by fear, anxiety and uncertainty when the coronavirus pandemic found a foothold in the country, according to two Anglican missionaries from St Jude’s Anglican Church.

Chris and Grace Adams told TMA a state of emergency was declared when the first coronavirus case was announced on 21 March, with the usual pandemic restrictions: enforced handwashing, physical distancing, suspension of public transport, community and religious events, school closures, border closures, enforced quarantine for returning travellers and police checkpoints on the road.

When TMA spoke to Chris and Grace Adams in late April there were 24 cases, and grave fears that that would increase, the couple said.

“There is a high level of fear and anxiety in the community,” Mr Adams said at the time.

“Many expats have left Timor-Leste [East Timor] due to limited medical care in the country, flight cancellations affecting medical evacuation options and border closure issues.

“Streets and shops are empty. Even visiting family and friends is restricted. There is a sense of uncertainty.

“The lack of resources is quite confronting in terms of the scarcity of trained nurses and doctors and number of ventilators.”

When TMA spoke with the couple, East Timor had just received help to be able to test for coronavirus within the country – previously samples had to be sent to Darwin.

Fortunately, at the time of going to press with this edition, East Timor had only recorded these 24 cases.

“The Government has responded actively and there are medical workers and public health working hard to prepare the nation for the trouble ahead,” Ms Adams said.

Basic medical facilities, communal living arrangements and the prevalence of tuberculosis and lung/chest diseases make communities in the country particularly vulnerable to the impact of a COVID-19 outbreak.

Church and missionary activity had also been affected, with not even the option of Zoom to soften the blow due to poor internet coverage, but the Adamses were adapting.

“We have … begun to experiment with recording a short Bible talk and posting it on YouTube. While general internet use is limited in Timor-Leste, use of social media is a rising force. Videos can be shared on Facebook or Whatsapp, and viewed in these lower data formats.”

“Cutting JobSeeker in September will plunge thousands of women and their children into poverty,” Ms Chambers said that raising the rate of payments is the best way to lift children and families out of poverty.

“This report shows us that poverty, especially child poverty, has become a national crisis. "It’s time for the Government to raise the rate for good and end the poverty trap, instead of leaving people behind.”

Anglicare Australia has renewed its call for the rate of JobSeeker (formerly Newstart) and related payments to be increased permanently, following the release of the Australian Council of Social Service’s Poverty in Australia report. Anglicare Australia is a partner in the research.

“Countless reports have shown the need to raise the rate of these payments – for good. This one is just the latest,” said Anglicare Australia’s Executive Director Kasy Chambers.

“The Poverty in Australia report adds to years of research on JobSeeker. It has again found that people surviving on these payments are the most likely to live in poverty.

“With hundreds of thousands more people now out of work, this means that record numbers of Australians could end up in poverty if rates are cut.

“The report also shows the devastating impact that a cut would have on women and their children. Under the old rates, families with women as the main income earner are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than male-breadwinner households.

“The Government has raised the rate in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, but only for six months. That’s not good enough. “Cutting JobSeeker in September will plunge thousands of women and their children into poverty,”

Ms Chambers said that raising the rate of payments is the best way to lift children and families out of poverty.

“This report shows us that poverty, especially child poverty, has become a national crisis.

“It’s time for the Government to raise the rate for good and end the poverty trap, instead of leaving people behind.”

Read the full version of this story at http://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/outreach

Pre-COVID payment rates for unemployed would plunge record numbers of Australians into poverty, Anglicare warns
Some churches to reopen as restrictions ease – from page 1

and maybe a few more midweek. More will start after June 1 when the limit is lifted to 20,” he said. “Perhaps, in my area, only four to six churches have already had some sort of service.”

But Bishop Barker said that even if the limit was raised to 50 as expected, many churches would still not reopen.

“Some church buildings are small, so for some they cannot fit in 20 with social distancing anyway. Bigger churches are going to find it hard for a long time with social distancing expected until the end of the year, maybe.”

“Most seem to be taking very seriously the requirements on numbers, space, cleaning, and several say it is too onerous for such small services.”

Small groups were also beginning to resume, he said. “I am not yet aware of Bible study groups meeting in churches or homes on a large scale but I expect that will begin throughout June to a degree.”

The diocese released a Business Services Bulletin in May with an extensive list of the safety and cleaning requirements that must be carried out if worship services are to resume.

The Bulletin also advised congregations to “consider continuing your livestreaming and/or broadcasting where possible.”

“This has been an important point of contact and a valuable spiritual resource for many people, and will continue to assist the housebound, vulnerable and those who do not feel comfortable in returning to public spaces at the current time.”

The Dean of Melbourne, the Very Revd Dr Andreas Loewe, told TMA that St Paul’s Cathedral would reopen to the public on 28 June. The Cathedral will be releasing a plan on how it reopens on Friday 5 June, he said.

May was advice that St Paul’s Cathedral would reopen to the public on 28 June. The Cathedral will be releasing a plan on how it reopens on Friday 5 June, he said.

The chief executive of the Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Corporation, Mr Ken Spackman, said the reopening of the Diocesan Centre at St Paul’s would depend on the State Government’s stance on working from home. “(It’s) likely to be August at the earliest,” he said.

A printed version of TMA is scheduled to resume with the July edition.

In a COVID-19 update message in May, Archbishop Philip Freier confirmed that the diocese had received its first payment under the JobKeeper scheme, “which is good news indeed … the Diocese will provide a full account to parishes which will ultimately fully benefit from this most welcome scheme.”

The Archbishop also stated that the crisis management committee within the Diocese’s finance committee “is finalising a strategic policy for financial support for parishes … and will announce this as soon as possible”.

The Diocesan Registrar, Mr Malcolm Tadgell, told TMA that the Diocesan Synod scheduled for October was unlikely to take place. Under church law, it could be held as late as mid-April 2021, he said. Online Synods are not possible.

General Synod, which had been scheduled for this month, is now planned for 30 May to 4 June 2021 in Maroochydore. The Anglican Primate, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith, “will issue a new mandate at the beginning of December 2020 for a date for General Synod next year”.

No ‘quick fix’ for Church after abuse crisis – from page 1

overestimated,” he said. “The value of his work and the foundation laid is really inestimable and will provide a very firm foundation for the future in the Diocese.

“A presently pressing matter at the moment, and one which I give the highest priority, is the ongoing establishment and operation of redress schemes.

“So very many people have been hurt so terribly, and over their whole lifetimes, by child sexual abuse and are owed the deepest apology, love and nurturing in real and tangible ways … So there is no ‘quick fix’, just hard work along the road in the direction I have outlined.”

More than a decade ago, Professor Croft, who served as Mr Shand’s deputy from 2007 until his appointment as Chancellor in April, led the team of lawyers representing parties before the Church’s highest court, the Appellate Tribunal, successfully establishing that there was no obstacle to women being consecrated bishops in Australia.

“I count it a great privilege to have been involved in and assisted in triggering this process.”

“Professor Croft and his wife Krystyna have a son and two daughters. Their son Robert, who is in his 30s, “is a fairly severely disabled Down syndrome, now adult, who is a successful artist and actor – and has made some films with assistance as well”.

“One of our daughters is a physiotherapist who is now working at the forefront of the COVID-19 crisis at a major London hospital … Our other daughter is working in sustainable fashion and doing her bit to try and move fashion away from all the unsustainable and inexcusable environmental waste and degradation and exploitation we see all the time.”

“Professor Croft loves Victoria, particularly the Mallee and its deserts, but also has a growing affection for the North East through his work as Chancellor of the Diocese of Wangaratta.”

“I am also a member of RailFutures which is a rail industry think tank which provides research and advice to governments … And I love my Jeep Wrangler!”

Read the full version of this article at http://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/news

“Professor Croft said his faith gave his life meaning, “particularly in this troubled world and exceptionally difficult present times”.

“Anglicanism is a concept that is not too easy to pin down, as history and contemporary debates and discourse show. I cannot help thinking that it epitomises the English approach of ‘muddling through’ in all sorts of things … It provides a very broad canvas for beliefs and practices within general bounds. Potentially,
Nungalinya to reopen after COVID-19 pause

by Stephen Cauchi

Nungalinya College in Darwin, a theological college for Indigenous Australians, has been especially hard-hit by COVID-19 as it’s been unable to offer online courses to its students.

COVID-19 could have been devastating to the Northern Territory had it spread, but its successful suppression means the College is set to shortly reopen.

“We're very happy that the Northern Territory Government actually acted pretty wisely and pretty simply and they put in the travel ban essentially quite early,” said Nungalinya's principal, Ben van Gelderen. “They know that if it had got into a community it would almost certainly be a devastating death rate, just the factors of elderly people, vulnerable people.”

Nungalinya students are currently at home in their remote communities. The Territory Government is planning to allow travel to and from these communities from 18 June, said Mr van Gelderen.

“We're looking like that's pretty likely now so June 18 would be the time when the communities can open up. That's almost the end of this term, so we will then look to start classes in term three.”

Students were sent back home from the College around 20 March, but unfortunately the College wasn't in a position to offer online learning, he said.

“Online is problematic for a couple of major reasons. One is that people don’t necessarily have the access to laptops, iPads, etc. Internet service speeds are an issue as well.”

The second problem is the nature of the courses. “A lot of our courses are actually … literacy and numeracy courses which we teach through the scriptures, so it’s a bit of a Catch-22 to see someone doing a foundation literacy course by themselves. It doesn’t make any sense.”

“Some of the things we’re doing at the moment are really quite exciting. We’re putting up our Facebook chapel devotion message each morning…

Continued on page 14
‘Compassionate, humble service’ call to nation

by Mark Brolly

Australians should strive to be a model for the world as a place where “compassionate, humble service is the national practice”, according to a statement by interfaith leaders on the country’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The National Council of Churches in Australia, led by former Melbourne Anglican Assistant Bishop Philip Huggins, joined representatives from the Bahá’í, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh faiths in the statement, which declared that compassion was at the heart of their faiths, their “unifying ethic”. The Vicar-General of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Melbourne, Fr Daniel Ghabrial, was the other Christian signatory.

The faith community representatives said in their 15 May statement, Australia’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic so far, looking ahead now, that at a videoconference a month earlier, the then acting Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs, Mr Alan Tudge, asked then to support the Government’s efforts to manage the pandemic.

“This Statement conveys our continuing readiness to assist,” they said.

“We appreciate Minister Tudge’s acknowledgement of the work being done by Australia’s religious communities at this time to provide spiritual guidance, reach out to those less fortunate, and provide care to those who need it. While observing physical distancing, all traditions seek to provide individual and community connection and the qualities of hope and faith in the face of this global health crisis.

“Both nationally and internationally, we are painfully aware of the suffering caused by this lethal virus.”

The leaders said they could not think of their circumstances without compassion for those so vulnerable in places where there continued to be wave after wave of deaths caused by COVID-19.

“Many of us have links with these places through our faith, family and friends,” they said.

“Both as global citizens and as Australian citizens, we are united in wanting to work to help prevent further suffering. We also know our shared ethic of compassion, shown in practical service, is our best way to counter how fears and anxieties might otherwise be exploited by those seeking to sow division.”

The leaders said that as a result of careful work together, students at Nungalinya

people are watching that and sharing that so that’s encouraging.”

Financially, the College has applied for the JobKeeper allowance and may dip into its savings. The College Board has long had savings in case government funding was halted, said Mr van Gelderen.

Staff took two weeks’ enforced annual leave around March and April, and since then have been occupying themselves with a mix of project work for the College, including works on the grounds and library, teaching work and professional development.

Australian Kriol – an English-based creole language popular among Indigenous Australians – is currently being taught to staff, for example.

and library, teaching work and professional development. Australian Kriol – an English-based creole language popular among Indigenous Australians – is currently being taught to staff, for example.

“The cruel folly of these divisive forces is best countered, we know, by the knowledge that the current COVID-19 pandemic, affects us all, regardless of nationality, skin colour, religion, ideology, gender, sexual orientation or social class. Hatred can only divide and distract us, and thereby make us weaker and less well placed to overcome our common challenges. Co-operation and compassion strengthen us by giving us the sense of common purpose we need to survive, care for one another and flourish. Our leaders must act accordingly.”

They said there would be more demanding days ahead, but pledged to cooperate together and with governments to look after those most vulnerable; to encourage their communities to follow the health guidelines that kept all safer; and to keep offering their spiritual practices, including prayer and meditation, mindful of those anxious and distressed.

“We note, in closing, the stressful effect of cumulative emergencies over these last months: The devastating bush fires which have been followed by COVID-19.

“…With a little more giving and forgiving this can be an attractive part of what some are calling ‘the new normal’! We will try our best to model this ourselves!

“Our bruised and wounded world needs the example of a multifaith place where compassionate, humble service is the national practice.

“We think our Australia can be that place, which gives hope to others.”

Nungalinya to reopen after COVID-19 pause – from page 13

Nungalinya College.

“…People are still busy and working and it’s all good for the college overall. We’re just waiting for when we can get out students back,” said Mr van Gelderen.

Students at Nungalinya come mostly from remote Northern Territory communities. Founded in 1973, it was originally an Anglican/Methodist partnership. The College is now run by the Anglican, Uniting and Roman Catholic churches, with funding as well from the Northern Territory Government.

It’s the only theological college in the Territory and it caters only to Indigenous Australians.

Read the full version of this article at http://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/outreach

www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au
Bishop Curry plea for change of hearts in US

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the US, Bishop Michael Curry, has urged members of the Church not to be paralysed by the past or the present as bitter protests swept across America following the death of African-American man George Floyd when stopped by police in Minneapolis on 25 May.

Bishop Curry said Episcopalians’ long-term commitment to racial justice and reconciliation was embedded in their identity as baptised followers of Jesus.

“We will still be doing it when the news cameras are long gone,” he said on 30 May.

“In the midst of COVID-19 and the pressure cooker of a society in turmoil, a Minnesota man named George Floyd was brutally killed. His basic human dignity was stripped by someone charged to protect our common humanity.

“Perhaps the deeper pain is the fact that this was not an isolated incident. It happened to Breonna Taylor on March 13 in Kentucky. It happened to Ahmaud Arbery on February 23 in Georgia. Racial terror in this form occurred when I was a teenager growing up black in Buffalo, New York. It extends back to the lynching of Emmett Till in 1955 and well before that. It’s not just our present or our history. It is part of the fabric of American life.”

Bishop Curry said he could not condone violence nor silence against injustice. “Violence against any person – conducted by some police officers or by some protesters – is violence against a child of God created in God’s image. No, as followers of Christ, we do not condone violence.

“Neither do we condone our nation’s collective, complicit silence in the face of injustice and violent death. The anger of so many on our streets is born out of the accumulated frustration that so few seem to care when another black, brown or native life is snuffed out.

“But there is another way. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, a broken man lay on the side of the road. The religious leaders who passed were largely indifferent. Only the Samaritan saw the wounded stranger and acted. He provided medical care and housing. He made provision for this stranger’s well-being. He helped and healed a fellow child of God.

“Opening and changing hearts does not happen overnight,” Bishop Curry said. “The Christian race is not a sprint; it is a marathon. Our prayers and our work for justice, healing and truth-telling must be unceasing. Let us recommit ourselves to following in the footsteps of Jesus, the way that leads to healing, justice and love.”

“We are heartbroken and angry about the killing of George Floyd. This horrific act of violence reveals deep racial injustices that continue to be present in our common life,” Minnesota Bishop Brian Prior and Bishop-elect Craig Loya, who is due to be consecrated on 6 June, said in a joint statement on 28 May.

The Union of Black Episcopalians was to host an online prayer vigil for racial justice and the healing of the nation on 31 May.

CBS News reported on 31 May that curfews had been enacted in at least 25 US cities, including Minneapolis, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. It quoted a report from Associated Press that police had arrested nearly 1670 people in 22 cities since 28 May. Authorities said three people in Indianapolis were shot on 30 May, including one fatally, adding to deaths in Detroit and Minneapolis in previous days.

[with ENS]
UK lockdown surge in prayer, virtual worship

A quarter of adults in the UK had watched or listened to a religious service since the coronavirus lockdown began, and one in 20 have started praying during the crisis, according to a new survey commissioned by Christian aid agency Tearfund.

The findings of the poll reinforced indications of an increase in the numbers of people turning to faith for succour amid uncertainty and despair.

A separate poll, commissioned by Christian Aid, found that The Vicar of Dibley, the Revd Geraldine Granger, the BBC TV character played by Dawn French, would be the public’s choice of screen priest to lead the UK through the coronavirus crisis.

London’s St Paul’s Cathedral has launched a virtual book of remembrance, Remember Me, for coronavirus victims in the UK, which is expected to eventually become a physical memorial at the cathedral.

The Dean of St Paul’s, the Very Revd David Ison, said: “For centuries, St Paul’s Cathedral has been a place to remember the personal and national impact of great tragedies, from the losses of war to the devastation of the Grenfell Tower fire.

“We have heard so many sad stories of those affected by the pandemic, and all our thoughts and prayers are with them. Everyone is valued and worthy of remembrance.”

The idea for the memorial project stemmed from a conversation the Dean had with the Bishop of London Dame Sarah Mullally, a former Chief Nursing Officer for England, when she mentioned an online book she had come across, and he decided to create a virtual book of remembrance.

The British Government lumped churches with pubs, cinemas and hairdressers as premises that must stay closed at least until 4 July. A document released after a broadcast by Prime Minister Boris Johnson on 10 May spoke of churches as part of “Step Three” in the journey back to normal life while uncertainty and despair.

The Queen Elizabeth II said she was thankful for the strength and courage that the UK, the allies had displayed.

“...Very Revd David Ison, said: “For centuries, St Paul’s Cathedral has been a place to remember the personal and national impact of great tragedies, from the losses of war to the devastation of the Grenfell Tower fire.

“We have heard so many sad stories of those affected by the pandemic, and all our thoughts and prayers are with them. Everyone is valued and worthy of remembrance.”

The idea for the memorial project stemmed from a conversation the Dean had with the Bishop of London Dame Sarah Mullally, a former Chief Nursing Officer for England, when she mentioned an online book she had come across, and he decided to create a virtual book of remembrance.

The British Government lumped churches with pubs, cinemas and hairdressers as premises that must stay closed at least until 4 July. A document released after a broadcast by Prime Minister Boris Johnson on 10 May spoke of churches as part of “Step Three” in the journey back to normal life while uncertainty and despair.

The Queen Elizabeth II said she was thankful for the strength and courage that the UK, the allies had displayed.

“The wartime generation knew that the best way to honour those who did not come back from the war, was to ensure that it didn’t happen again,” the 94-year-old Sovereign said. “The greatest tribute to their sacrifice is that countries who were once sworn enemies are now friends, working side by side for the peace, health and prosperity of us all.

“...When I look at our country today, and see what we are willing to do to protect and support one another, I say with pride that we are still a nation those brave soldiers, sailors and airmen would recognise and admire.”

Archbishop Justin Welby said there were two great tributes that could be paid to the 1945 generation.

“The first tribute is to remember the reconciliation. From 1945 until this day, we have improved our relationship with our former enemies and they are now friends,” he said.

“Jesus’ hardest commands were to forgive one another and to love our enemies. We have loved our enemies by seeking their good, yet the horror of war persists.

“That is to establish forgiveness and reconciliation is a salute to those who by their hope-filled service made our today possible.

“The second tribute is to hold on to hope. Hope kept courage alive from 1940 to 1945 ... hope shows in our determination to build a better, fairer, more Christ-like world and country...”

Ill-health forces PNG’s Primate to resign after three years

Archbishop Allan Migi has resigned as Primate and Archbishop of Papua New Guinea after almost three years in office due to prolonged ill-health and a slow recovery.

The General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea, Mr Dennis Kabekabe, said the resignation would become effective on 11 May. Senior Bishop Nathan Ingen would act as Archbishop until a new Primate was appointed.

“We thank Archbishop Allan Migi for his humility and Good Shepherd leadership with obedience and commitment in serving ACPNG as a cleric for 30 years,” Mr Kabekabe said. “We wish him well in his recovery to good health after this resignation. We take this time to also thank Mother Mary Migi for her support to Archbishop Allan Migi and the work she has done with the Mothers’ Union.

“Lastly, we offer our continued prayers for Archbishop Allan Migi and his family as they prepare to return home to West New Britain.”

Archbishop Migi succeeded Archbishop Clyde Igara in 2017.
Ten things I wish others knew about crisis before trying to offer support

The Revd Jude Benton, Priest-in-Charge of the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong, was on the ground during the devastating Mallacoota and Cann River bushfires and has stayed and served the community since then. Here, she offers her advice on how clergy and congregation members can best support people during crises such as bushfires, and highlights some of the common responses by well-meaning people that can actually make life harder.

She says: “Please, if you’ve done any of these after a crisis, don’t feel guilty. I have too. But this is what I’ve learned this year, and so I pass it on for next time there’s a crisis.”

1. People in crisis are unable to process information properly.
   Their brains are running on high adrenaline which causes a narrowing of focus to what is essential for survival right now. Complex offers of assistance, or requests for information beyond the essentials, are difficult to process. Almost everything non-essential will be forgotten.

2. The basic requirements for normal life may not be re-established for some time.
   After the fire we had no power at home for 18 days. That meant only a gas hob to cook on, using torches at night, fridge and freezer defrosting, no washing machine, no hot shower, no ability to charge a phone or computer at home. Yet we both continued to work dawn till dusk despite these challenges.

3. Admin is not a priority for the first few weeks.
   Adrenaline calls for action, not sitting doing admin.
   Without power at home I needed to go to the church to power the laptop and use a weak mobile hotspot to download messages. The first time I logged on it took more than 24 hours to download an inbox full of emails.

4. Keep the phone line clear.
   My phone went constantly the first four weeks, with many calls from people I didn’t know. Each phone call was exhausting, and while I was on one call, the message bank would fill up with more to respond to. I had no energy left for calling parishioners or even my family and friends for support. A month on, the person will be more appreciative of your call than in the first few days or weeks.

5. Keep contact to business hours.
   It wasn’t uncommon for phone calls to start at 8am and finish late in the evening. People in disaster need rest, time to recover, and opportunity to communicate with family and friends. Be professional and keep their evenings free.

6. Give money, not goods.
   Government agencies and other organisations provide essential food, toiletries, etc, in the immediate period after a disaster. A second disaster happens as well-meaning people deliver unnecessary food, clothing and goods that require exhausted volunteers to spend hours sorting and redistributing. If you are going to give goods, ask first what is required and ensure that everything is good quality before it is sent.

7. Give money with an open hand.
   If you choose to give, trust that it will be used wisely. Requests from donors for money to be spent in a certain way added considerable unnecessary stress, and to me undermined what churches’ role in a disaster is: to be there for all people. We are truly grateful to those who gave generously and with open hands as this allowed us to ensure that our ministry could be maintained through this period, rather than just the immediate when there were multiple other agencies available for instant money.

8. Give time for decision-making, for recovery is a marathon not a sprint.
   It takes three to six months before the post-adrenaline exhaustion even begins to wear off and for normal creativity and reasoning to be re-established. If your initial call was ignored in the first month or so, try again now that people have more ability to look ahead rather than just being overwhelmed by the immediate circumstances.

9. Prayer is powerful.
   Pray for wisdom, health, energy, compassion and courage to keep going. The expression “held in the prayers of the people” was very true to me over the immediate fire response. I felt out of my depth, exhausted, and so busy that prayer was elusive, yet in all this I felt closer to God and held in the prayers of others than I’ve ever felt before.

10. Ask before rushing in to visit with a group.
    A traumatised community is a sensitive and emotional being. Well-meaning people wanted to rush in with groups and “cheer us up” but we needed space and time to be alone, to re-live and re-tell the stories, and to grieve together. Wait three to four months before you begin to talk about bringing a group to a disaster zone, and six-plus months before you actually do it.

If you would like to support bushfire recovery in Gippsland or Wangaratta through the Melbourne Anglican Foundation, please click here.

The Revd Jude Benton is Priest-in-Charge of the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong (Mallacoota, Genoa and Cann River). She is supported in her ministry by the Bush Church Aid Society.

If you would like to support bushfire recovery in Gippsland or Wangaratta through the Melbourne Anglican Foundation, please click here.

---


---

**TMA**

**VIEWPOINTS**

www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au
ONE THING HASN’T changed during the COVID-19 pandemic – vulnerable people need our help more than ever.

Whether our clients are young people in state care, those affected by family violence or alcohol and drug addiction, we have embraced new ways of working so that help is always there when it’s needed. And those of the Anglican faith continue to show their trademark spirit of generosity, ensuring that people who have lost their income and independence as a result of this situation have somewhere to turn.

For an unprecedented challenge such as the coronavirus, Anglicare Victoria had to respond with unprecedented innovation in the way we deliver services. Given the client base we work with, the stakes could not have been higher. Fortunately our teams are in overdrive adapting programs to meet the needs of Victoria’s most vulnerable people.

The highly contagious nature of the virus means the health and safety of our clients and staff has to be our priority at all times. So the first step was to introduce a range of measures to minimise the risk of exposure and ensure sterilising and hand-washing became part of our everyday routine.

In some of our residential care facilities, staff played a game of "guess the song", where they played a track for 20 seconds while young people washed their hands for the length of time required by our health authorities. And overall young people in our care have adapted well to the changes, doing many things virtually through their phones or computers that they used to do in person.

Possibly the greatest surge in demand has been for our parenting services, with one region reporting three times the number of clients for our ParentZone program which supports mums and dads doing it tough. The webinars we have offered on parenting and schooling during COVID-19 continue to hit capacity, showing how much families receive care packages at these locations, and in some cases, these are home delivered. In the case of financial counselling, phone consultations have been a blessing for some clients. Some of these people are actively seeking help for the first time – and the extra distance helps to take the stigma out of the process.

We have also worked with the Victorian Government to make one of our properties available as an isolation and recovery facility for any homeless young people unfortunate enough to contract coronavirus. The facility offers 24-hour care and support to these vulnerable Victorians who need to self-isolate or quarantine. Procedures are now in place to look after both staff and patients, and clients can be transported to and from the facility in a way that ensures they will not come into contact with nearby residents and businesses.

Many began this journey fundraising for themselves, but along the way a lot of people have rediscovered their sense of community. There are a lot of small things we can do as a collective that can be a powerful force for good.

We know that the more fortunate in our community are actively seeking ways to help those in need. And Anglicare Victoria is running an appeal to raise funds so that we can assist as many children, families and individuals as possible during these times. From remote education packs to clean clothes for those in need, emergency food and essentials, and single parents who are struggling, there are so many desperate people in need right now.

The challenges of this crisis will last far longer than the next few months, but we will be there for the long haul to help those in need, whenever they need it.

Paul McDonald is CEO of Anglicare Victoria.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

If a child is in immediate danger at any point CALL 000

What is Child Abuse?
Abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to: physical abuse, emotional abuse, family violence, sexual abuse, spiritual abuse, grooming, neglect

Who can report neglect and abuse of a child under the age of 18?
Children, parents, staff, volunteers, anyone

What sorts of things must be reported?
All child safety concerns must be reported:
• Disclosure of abuse and harm
• Allegations, suspicions or observations
• Breaches of the Code of Conduct

All suspicions or reports of child abuse must be reported to the groups below:
• Ministry Supervisor
• Child Safe Officer
• Kooyoora Professional Standards

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS
POLICE 000
CHILD PROTECTION 1300 360 391
KOOYORA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS 1800 135 246
Your say on discrimination bill, Easter

Widespread concern at RD bill

Michael Bird and Mark Sneddon claim to be perplexed that Archbishop Philip Freier has queried the Government’s recently deferred Religious Discrimination Bill, recommending a Charter of Rights as a better option (April TMA).

Their criticism of the Archbishop is misplaced. The Bill divided the community at its outset, forcing the Government to hastily issue a second draft. The only friends of the new version are its original proponents, such as Mark Sneddon. The Archbishop correctly pointed out widely-held community views. A vast coalition of groups united against the Bill, concluding that it causes unnecessary division, confusion and harm. Unions have joined with business, sporting codes have teamed up, peak health authorities, legal bodies, government regulators and faith groups have all raised strong concerns.

The latter include the Uniting Church in Australia, the new Anglican Primate, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith, and a dozen major religious organisations, including Anglicare Victoria and the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Their criticism of the Archbishop is misplaced. The Bill divided the community at its outset, forcing the Government to hastily issue a second draft. The only friends of the new version are its original proponents, such as Mark Sneddon. The Archbishop correctly pointed out widely-held community views. A vast coalition of groups united against the Bill, concluding that it causes unnecessary division, confusion and harm. Unions have joined with business, sporting codes have teamed up, peak health authorities, legal bodies, government regulators and faith groups have all raised strong concerns.

The latter include the Uniting Church in Australia, the new Anglican Primate, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith, and a dozen major religious organisations, including Anglicare Victoria and the Brotherhood of St Laurence. The notion that the criticisms come from “anti-religious activists” is as untenable as it is untrue. LGBTIQ+ groups such as Equality Australia have consistently and clearly supported anti-discrimination protections for religious people.

The Archbishop’s Charter of Rights proposal is also reasonable. Three Australian jurisdictions already have such Charters and a federal version was recommended by Father Frank Brennan 10 years ago, following the largest community consultation of its kind. A Charter, or at least fair and workable discrimination laws, are practical reforms that the whole community, including people of faith, can benefit from and rally around.

**The Revd Angus McLeay**

Hawthorn East

**Angus McLeay is undertaking a PhD on religious freedom as part of an Australian Research Council project. He is a member of Merri Creek Anglican Church.**

**Australian autumn fits Easter’s mellow fruitfulness**

Thank you very much for the April Easter edition of TMA with the unusual interesting variety of content and of views, including those of Gary Heard, although I do see things differently to him.

To me there are “lenten” seasons and “Good Friday” times and so many are enduring them this year, and they may indeed worsen as the earth suffers from too great a growth of population and prophets’ voices are not heeded.

But there are also “Easter” experiences, joyful Easter tides.

But as for the climactic seasons, to me spring, preferred by Gary Heard, despite its floral beauty, is often windy and changeable and irritating.

Our southern autumn, with its transported deciduous blaze of colours, is my favourite. And in southern Australia I see Easter as a quieter, usually gentle autumnal festival, celebrating the harvest and the mellow fruitfulness, to use words from Keats, of the life of Jesus.

Furthermore, although I know that harvests of various kinds come at various times in our countryside, in my old parish we celebrated the Fifth Sunday after Easter Day, with its long agricultural associations (in the north with sowing), as our Harvest Thanksgiving. Among other things that festival was an important reminder of the dependence of city people upon the fruits of earth and of the people who work to provide them, a reminder needed today more than ever. And then Whitsunday – Holy Wit, Holy Wisdom, Holy Spirit Sunday – at the conclusion of our harvesting and autumnal Easter tide speaks to us of the fruit of the Spirit.

**The Revd John Bunyan**

Campbelltown (NSW)

**Much goodwill and inspiration at a ‘surreal’ time**

Easter this year was, to say the least, somewhat surreal. Nonetheless, unexpected inspiration has emerged from numerous sources. Apart from the dedicated commitment on the part of so many churches to connect with us online, including our own, we’ve also received so many well-wishes from Christians of other denomina-

It must be kept in mind that those around us, regardless of belief or non-belief, are our sisters and brothers in humankind. In accordance with the outstanding example and sublime words of Jesus, we therefore have an ongoing duty to love others the way God loves us all.

Additionally, how fortunate we are to have on hand the technology we possess in these challenging times. How wonderful it has been to watch and listen to the delightful morning and evening Easter prayers from Canterbury Cathedral in England, online.

May God bless, protect and guide all those associated with TMA, along with us all throughout the struggles we are all undergoing, to a greater or lesser degree.

Christopher Lynch

Kilsyth

---

**WITH MORE TIME, COULD YOU FOSTER?**

Enhanced Care Opportunities - a new kind of foster care

Care for a young person in your home for 9-12 months, receiving generous tax-free reimbursements.

www.anglicarevic.org.au/specialised-foster-care/ (03) 9293 8500

www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au
God is with us through the tragedies, traumas

During the summer of 1944 – 15 months into a two-year imprisonment that would end in his execution in the Flossenbürg concentration camp – Dietrich Bonhoeffer told his best friend that the world had reached its adulthood and that it was now time, even (especially!) for Christians, to live “etsi deus non daretur” – “as if there were no God”.

Long misunderstood by his admirers and his critics alike, Bonhoeffer’s comment has often been incorrectly interpreted to mean that he thought modern society no longer had any need of a God-concept, and that the Christian faith – if it were to survive in any meaningful way – must return to the resources of the human spirit for its mission and ministry in the world.

If this is in fact what Bonhoeffer believed, how could we possibly accept Dorothy Sölle’s well-known acclamation of Bonhoeffer’s significance, that he was “the one German theologian who [would] lead us into the third millennium”?

The reality is that this is neither what Bonhoeffer said, nor meant.

In his letter to Eberhard Bethge in which this idea was first posed, Bonhoeffer went on to stress that, far from being a capitulation of religion to atheism, when the Christian lives “as if there were no God” she is in fact offering a Christological affirmation of the way in which God chooses to be with us.

Before God, and with God”, he said, “we live without God.” And the first two parts of that were, in Bonhoeffer’s mind, the precondition for the more controversial third.

Given that this phrase has been so often misunderstood, what, in fact, was Bonhoeffer trying to say? Well, as was frequently the case with him, Bonhoeffer was making theological commentary on the state of the world – and more particularly, the church – in which he lived. In his view, the Christian faith was rendered infantile and inconsequential if it relied solely on a God who was nothing other than the omnipotent “help of last resort”. For far too long, Christian society – the polite, upper-middle class Bildungsbürgertum – and the church within it had treated God as though he were an all-powerful Solver of Problems, but one to whom the world might turn only when it had exhausted all its own innate capacities. God had been relegated to being merely the Deus ex machina of classical Greek theatre.

Against this, insisted Bonhoeffer, the God of the gospel is with us perpetually, in all of life’s ups and downs – not as the omnipotent Problem-Solver, to be sought only when all other solutions have been tried and have failed, but as the One who lives with us in the solidarity of our weakness and aloneness; who lives with us, precisely as a suffering and powerless God.

From his cell in the Gestapo’s Berlin prison, Bonhoeffer – who by this time had endured repeated interrogation – felt compelled to write that “Only the suffering God can help us.”

What does this have to do with our current coronavirus pandemic? Simply this – that there have been signs recently that, at least in some parts of the Christianised world, God is still perceived in that infantile way so roundly repudiated by Bonhoeffer.

“Jesus is my vaccine” said one protester in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (20 April 2020). “The blood of Jesus will protect this church against this virus” declared a Perth-based pastor in mid-March.

Such declarations of divine power may sound triumphantly faithful – but they are exposed in all their hollowness by the tragic fact of nearly half a million deaths worldwide.

No, God is not the “miracle cure” for coronavirus, no matter how right it still is to pray for a cure. God is not some sort of Divine Prophylactic, the incantation to whom absolves us of the need to take responsibility for ourselves and others.

Much more potently than that, God is the One who journeys with us through the tragedies and traumas of this pandemic. Far from being a God who appears only in the final scene to solve our problems, while having been embarrassingly absent from us through all our heartaches beforehand, he is, on the contrary, the One who is constantly with us in our heartaches, sharing with us in our powerlessness and sufferings.

That may not be the image of an all-powerful God we might prefer at this time – because precisely in times of pain and anxiety, we tend to want an omnipotent Problem Solver. But that image of God is commended to us by neither history nor Scripture.

Rather, we are encouraged to live “before God and with God, without God” – because the God with whom we commune is not only there, victoriously at the end, but is with us right the way through, as well.

As Bonhoeffer said, precisely as the One who suffers with us, God is the One who is able to help us.
A cry to step up, be a voice for climate justice

On Hope by Daisy Jeffrey
(Hachette, 2020)
reviewed by Sonia Poetrodjojo

Climate change: a topic that is widely discussed and then followed by murmurs of inaction. As I begin reading On Hope, I’m already doubtful. Would this book truly provide me with hope? Even then, would it convince me enough to do something? Anything?

On Hope’s author, Daisy Jeffrey, is a teenage activist and one of Australia’s leading organisers in the global School Strike 4 Climate movement which has organised a series of rallies for climate action, including on 20 September last year. In Australia alone on that day, 300,000 people attended 100 rallies across the country. School students used the opportunity to raise their voice to highlight climate inaction. Globally, it was estimated that over four million participated in the global strike, with Greta Thunberg being the most-recognised face of it all.

On Hope articulates Jeffrey’s frustration with world leaders who idly sit through climate change. She mourns the short-sightedness of people who only consider their immediate wellbeing, and expresses her passionate longing to see a world where the adults open their eyes beyond the immediate. Armed with rebuttals, Daisy is thoughtful, insightful and shows strong consideration of opposing arguments. However, her battle is not with climate change but with being taken seriously. She is seen as “tokenistic”; many people – activists and politicians – are keen to meet with activist figures but have little intention of genuinely listening to them.

Jeffrey juggles school with meeting NGOs and climate activist billionaires. Her thoughts drift between her HSC and her fight for climate justice – a term that conveys the politics and ethics in the topic of climate change. Jeffrey screams out for justice, desiring a world in which adults uphold their duty, where it’s OK for her to focus on her HSC, where children did not have to skip school, and in which she could see a hopeful future. At 17, Jeffrey is more ardent and determined to fight for earth than most adults I know, but shy of the age to vote for herself. Would the Australian leaders even listen to a child like her? “Step up adults!” she seems to say. “Shouldn’t you be advocating?” Step up! Take responsibility, be a voice.

My sense of hopelessness remains after reading Jeffrey’s story. She describes me, a fellow younger Australian, when she says “much of Australia is seen as “tokenistic”; many people – activists and politicians – are keen to meet with activist figures but have little intention of genuinely listening to them. Jeffrey juggles school with meeting NGOs and climate activist billionaires. Her thoughts drift between her HSC and her fight for climate justice – a term that conveys the politics and ethics in the topic of climate change. Jeffrey screams out for justice, desiring a world in which adults uphold their duty, where it’s OK for her to focus on her HSC, where children did not have to skip school, and in which she could see a hopeful future. At 17, Jeffrey is more ardent and determined to fight for earth than most adults I know, but shy of the age to vote for herself. Would the Australian leaders even listen to a child like her? “Step up adults!” she seems to say. “Shouldn’t you be advocating?” Step up! Take responsibility, be a voice.

On Hope articulates Jeffrey’s frustration with world leaders who idly sit through climate change.

More great winter reading on our website and in July TMA

reviewed by Clare Boyd-Macrae

The timing of the release of Phosphorescence just as COVID-19 was hitting the world must have been coincidental, but what timing! Maybe with the Western world’s fresh awareness that we are not in control, and our enforced cessation of the frenetic activity we are addicted to, this book will appeal to a great many people. I hope so.

Read the full review, and many others, in July TMA and at www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/film-and-book-reviews
Veteran Old Testament scholar tackles iso-age

Virus as a Summons to Faith: Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief, and Uncertainty, by Walter Brueggemann (Cascade Books, 2020)

Reviewed by Bishop Paul Barker

I saw a statement on social media a while back along these lines: I see you worship consumerism, so I will close your shops. You love physical prowess, strength and beauty, so I will close your gyms and sports. You are lovers of money, so I will send your stock market into a spin. Food and alcohol are your gods, so I will close bars, restaurants and cafes. You refuse to worship me, so I will close your churches. Blunt and confronting words.

Christians are confronted with the need for serious theological reflection in this iso-age. Where is God, if anywhere? What is God doing, if anything? What are we meant to learn, if anything? Is there hope? And to what extent, if any, is this virus ‘from’ God?

Already books and booklets are pouring out from prolific theologians and preachers, among them from veteran Old Testament professor Walter Brueggemann. Brueggemann, in his late 80s now, is one of the most esteemed Old Testament writers in the world. Always I have found him thought-provoking and stimulating, showing me new light and angles. I have often likened his commentary to playing with a bowl of spaghetti, exploring each strand, seeing where it leads and how it embraces other strands.

This “hot-off-the-press” small volume (the foreword was written only on 24 April, and the book was in my letterbox on 15 May) is typical Brueggemann, prodding and poking, teasing and tickling the text.

He ties the Exodus plagues and covenant with Job, commenting that true knowledge is not found ultimately in scientific exploration but in the fear of God and the shunning of evil – a caution to us not simply to see this virus as a naturalistic or scientific event, and an invitation to us to step outside the Enlightenment narrative “and to take a peek into the vast claim of creator and creation”. He says we are to wonder more deeply at God, and while the end of such wonder may come with a vaccine, its beginning must be in the fear of the Lord.

Another chapter reflects on the pestilence offered to David in 2 Samuel 24 and he concludes that chapter reflecting that maybe the virus offers this world a slow-down, an easing of pollution and our worst social habits, and he imagines that maybe, as with King David, the final word might be mercy, not pestilence, mercy to our neighbours and those in need.

From Jeremiah he muses on looking forward to dancing and joy again, post ‘exile’, along with hope, thankfulness and steadfast love. For now, we are to be waiting in faith for joy to come. From Solomon’s prayer in 1 Kings 8, a prayer that anticipates pestilence, he reflects on praying amid the virus, that prayer is an expression of a relationship that contextualises disaster. Psalm 77 shows us the great turn or reorientation of life from I, me, my, to you, Thou. Thus we are encouraged to turn and focus on God, in relationship with us.

Lingering on Isaiah 42 draws us to reflect on the importance of the biblical theme of groaning, crying out to God in a fallen world, a theme that Paul expresses in Romans 8 also. Thus we are to look forward to a life without groans, a life through the cross to resurrection hope.

Each chapter concludes with prayer – lovely and thoughtful prayers that draw together the themes of each chapter.

Brueggemann is not everyone’s cup of tea, but in his typical gentle, suggestive, teasing and tickling of texts, he has encouraged me to keep reflecting on God.

Bishop Paul Barker has oversight of the Jumbunna Episcopate.

CALL 1800 135 246

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne does not tolerate abuse, harassment or other misconduct within our communities. If any person has concerns about the behaviour of a church worker, past or present, they can contact Kooyoora Ltd.
A time of lament, and a time of awakening

by Roland Ashby

This is a time of lament. Many have lost lives and livelihoods. Jesus gave voice to such despair most poignantly on the cross when he cried out: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”, the opening words of Psalm 22.

But for many others it also has the potential to be a time of joyful awakening. I have been greatly encouraged by the large numbers of people connecting with nature again through walking. On my two regular walks along Dandenong Creek and the Yarra River at Warrandyte people of all ages are discovering, perhaps in some cases for the first time, the simple joy of walking among trees, contemplating the beauty of bark and leaves bathed in golden autumn light, and listening to the timeless sounds of bird song and gently flowing water.

American Anglican priest Matthew Fox urges us “to fall in love at least three times per day”; not in an anthropocentric kind of way, but with “creation itself and its many expressions of beauty, of the Divine”.

Jesus, too, told us to contemplate the lily (Matthew 6:28), and once compared the Kingdom of God to a mustard seed which grew into a tree (Luke 13:18-19). The late American poet Mary Oliver also fell in love with nature. She wrote that her work as a poet “is loving the world … [and] mostly standing still and learning to be astonished”. Her work is also, she said, “gratitude, to be given a mind and a heart … and a mouth with which to give shouts of joy”.

In her poem The Summer Day, in which she tries to wake us all up with the startling question “Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” she says, “I don’t know exactly what a prayer is/I know how to pay attention, how to fall down/into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass/how to be idle and blessed.”

Another word for paying attention is mindfulness, and the Vietnamese Zen Buddhist Thich Nhat Hahn has written beautifully about how to walk mindfully: “Walking meditation is really to enjoy the walking – walking not in order to arrive, but just to walk … Walk as if you are kissing the earth with your feet. We have caused a lot of damage to the earth. Now it is time to take good care of her.”

I am encouraged by seeing more people walk because only in such a way will enough people fall in love with the natural world to want to save it. Once the COVID-19 pandemic is over, a much greater threat to the future of civilisation and the whole earth is soon to engulf us – global warming. Australia’s recent unprecedented bushfire season is not just a clarion call to Australia, but to the whole world.

Roland Ashby is the former editor of TMA.

Shades of grey symbols of life’s undercurrent of uncertainty

by Clare Boyd-Macrae

We are repainting the outside of our 100-plus-year-old beach shack. From time immemorial, it has been a kind of dirty olive; we are radically breaking with tradition this time and going grey. So we’ve spent a lot of time poring over colour charts at the paint shop and fiddling around with sample pots on patches of flaking weatherboard.

There is a bewildering array of greys, and most of them are gorgeous. White greys, blue greys, green greys, all sorts. Even the names – basalt, wallaby, windspray – are enticing.

As the work begins, I go for my evening walk along the water and realise that at dusk, everything at the edge of the ocean is shades of grey. The water and the dune grasses are green-grey, the sky is blue-grey, the wet sand is gold-grey and pewter. Grey is the colour of the Victorian bush, a palate it has taken me a long time to appreciate in all its soothing, subtle, extraordinary beauty.

Grey might also be the metaphorical colour for our times. In an era of COVID-19, we are all receiving a crash course in uncertainty and, hopefully, in humility, patience and generosity. Now, more than ever, I treasure a religious faith that deals in the unexpected, and a mouth with which to give shouts of joy.

I am a passionate God-follower, but black and white religion repels me. It is cruel, flattening, excluding, unimaginative. When push comes to shove, these are probably the only absolutes I hold to:

- That I need to live with as much authenticity, compassion and courage as I can;
- That the creative power that made the universe is a great and generous heart of love, that I, like many others, call God;
- That my best chance of living a strong and loving life is by drawing on that heart of love; and
- That the story of the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth, along with the hope revealed in Jesus’ defeat of death, give me the best pictures, both of a loving God and of a human life lived with complete integrity.

That’s it. Everything else is up for negotiation. Uncertainty is the undercurrent of human life, uncomfortable as we find it. That’s what makes thoughtful religious faith, engaged with context, so hard. There are few certainties. Life is nuanced. We are all both flawed and fabulous, heroes have feet of clay and even the richest and most tender of marriages is complicated. I believe that God is love and that I want to be part of that. Everything else is shades of glorious grey.

Clare Boyd-Macrae’s blog is www.clareboyd-macrae.com

This article first appeared in The Age on 10 May 2020.

www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au
Domesticity a battleground in Mrs. America

by Wendy Knowlton

Mrs. America is a fascinating portrait of conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly. Cate Blanchett absolutely inhabits the role of this woman of strong convictions, unflagging energy and clear talents — but also contradictions. Whilst arguing against liberation “from marriage ... the best institution for women devised”, her own choices suggest a yearning for more.

The series is set in the 1970s as Shirley Chisholm makes an historic run for president and divisions emerge amongst rising feminists. Seemingly the antithesis of these trailblazers, Schlafly’s sense of duty as a wife and mother of six is clear, but the best-selling author, Harvard graduate, attorney and leader in the Federation of Republican Women ran for Congress and published an influential monthly newsletter. When described as “submissive”, Blanchett allows a flicker of quickly controlled irritation to flit across her face. She may step away from the camera to allow her husband the limelight in a profile piece, but she ensures her photograph is smiling benignly from his desk, clearly in shot.

And this is the series’ main focus. Was Schlafly truly committed to the ideals of domesticity or was this simply her preferred platform for power in a patriarchal world? In Washington she is patronised by men who haven’t bothered to read the documents she knows back to front. But in leading an army of homemakers, and challenging the views of Betty Friedan (Tracey Ullman) and Gloria Steinem (Rose Byrne), she can be a star.

There is a ruthlessness to Schlafly’s successful campaign against the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the US Constitution. She lumps communists with Libbers to foster fear, and warns of a “feminist totalitarian nightmare” where unisex bathrooms, the draft for women and the disappearance of child support could reign. The perfectly coiffed hair, pastel outfits and charm tempt many to dismiss her, but Blanchett’s disarming smile is a powerful weapon, calculating and cunning. She glows when the spotlight illuminates her.

Ultimately the most significant conflict arises between different groups of women. Schlafly resists “phony equality” that she claims will lead to the loss of male love and protection. According to Steinem, Schlafly is no more than a “clever puppet” and to others she’s a “right-wing nut” but the series, whilst positioning its audience to reject Schlafly’s views, shows she is much more than these labels. Perhaps trapped by her own rhetoric in the end, she too has to weigh up what women value and what they fear.

This nine-part series is streaming on Foxtel.

Music lovers’ podcast explores why we respond to popular songs

by Tim Kroenert

To quote the fictional, cantankerous film critic Mr Plinkett: “You didn’t notice. But your brain did.” His line captures the intuitive ways in which we engage with films, and how we know reflexively the things that do and don’t work.

Something similar might be said of our relationship to popular music. Ever feel there was a bittersweet edge to ABBA’s Dancing Queen? It could be because the triumphant lyric “Having the time of your life” coincides with a “sad” minor chord. Or do you find there’s something vaguely anarchic about the opening of Beyoncé’s dance floor anthem, Single Ladies? It’s because the first note you hear lands on the third – not the first – beat of a four-beat bar.

American musician Kirk Hamilton’s Strong Songs podcast is full of insights like this. Most episodes are committed to a single song, digging deep into tracks like the Beach Boys’ God Only Knows or Stevie Wonder’s I Wish. Using audio clips to illustrate, he breaks down what every instrument is doing, exposing the complexity of apparent simplicity. He’ll pick apart the “thump, pop and sizzle” of the song’s groove, and often recreate various sounds in his own studio, to better highlight what a particular instrument is doing at a given moment.

It’s a captivating crash course in music appreciation, but also in music theory, presented in simple language and with clear examples. The breakdown of God Only Knows has some discourse on chord inversions, the use of which contributes to the magic of what might well have been a very simple pop song. In talking about I Wish, Hamilton examines the key signature that binds together three of Wonder’s most enduring funk hits.

For an overview of alternative guitar tuning, check out the episode on Jeff Buckley’s Last Goodbye. While a trilogy of episodes focused on “through-composed” rock masterpieces — Led Zeppelin’s Stairway to Heaven, Queen’s Bohemian Rhapsody and Radiohead’s Paranoid Android – provide great insights into dynamics and song structure.

There are a few diversions from the single-song episodes. A number of Q and A episodes see Hamilton tackle questions from listeners. An episode focused on the theme music from animated TV shows (The Simpsons, Cowboy Bebop et al.) is a treat for fans of that medium. The Elton John episode lays the “straight line” of Tiny Dancer alongside the “spiral” of Yellow Brick Road. While an episode on the Dolly Parton classic I Will Always Love You traces the song’s evolution through three chart-topping versions.

It’s a podcast by a music lover for music lovers of all levels of knowledge and experience.