

*“He is risen!”*



# Gratitude a blessing to others, pathway to God

**N**OT LONG AGO I WAS ASKED to bless a new garden, the St Hilda Garden, at Melbourne Girls' Grammar School. It was a very happy event as the year 7 and year 8 girls who constitute the "St Hilda Community" celebrated a space in their school grounds that will be pretty much "theirs". Before I prayed with them, I asked the girls to stop and reflect on their sense of gratitude for the place and the day. Gratitude, if we can bring it to mind, is one of the easiest ways for us to find peace, be a blessing to others and, most importantly, approach God in prayer.

At the end of the event, as the girls were going back to their classes, one stopped and told me that she liked my words and was grateful for me coming to the school. I noted her use of "gratitude", shared a little more about it and thanked her for her comments. She then



**"Our Easter celebrations emphasise to us once more that the heart of our thankfulness is in the salvific action of God through Christ."**

told me that "before I go to bed each night, I think of three things that I am grateful for". I think that the cultivation of these habits is a wonderful part of the formation of resilient individuals and I was glad and reassured to hear her speak about it in this way.

Now, this is not a new approach. We have many statements and exhortations in the New Testament that draw us to this grateful frame

of mind. Whether Paul in Romans 8, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you", or in Ephesians 1, "I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers", we have thankfulness at the heart of the Apostle's disposition toward those he writes to and the link plainly made with prayer. If we must draw a contrast between gratitude and thankfulness, it is fair to consider gratitude sitting more

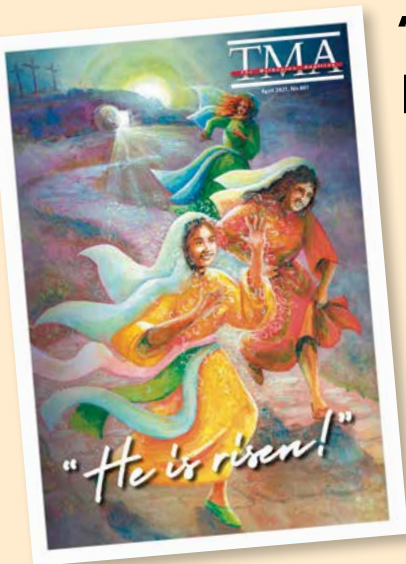
on the interior and personal side of the scale, whereas thankfulness can be found more on the interactive, interpersonal and expressive side. I think they are both manifestations of our Christian discipleship.

Our Easter celebrations emphasise to us once more that the heart of our thankfulness is in the salvific action of God through Christ. Just as the Lenten journey brings us to the point of recognising where

we stand in the great events of our Lord's Passion, the Easter liturgy calls us to a spiritual response that is both emotional and intellectual. In life and in death and in resurrection, our Lord Jesus showed an embodied faithfulness to the Father's will. Our spiritual practices help us "embody" our faith as well. A disciplined practice, like recalling our gratitude before sleep, is a commitment of will that gives shape to our thinking and to our emotions. A lived faith – or an "embodied" faith, as I'm describing it here – is the daily response that we can make, no matter what, towards God in Christ through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Easter blessings to you all.

*Philip Melbourne*



## "He is risen" based on Luke 24:1-12

**THIS EASTER'S** TMA cover is an acrylic painting by our graphic designer, Ivan Smith. He writes about its inspiration:

Fear, trembling, astonishment and joy – the emotions felt by the women who arrived at Jesus' empty tomb that first Easter dawn. Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James and the 'other women' became the privileged first to run and breathlessly announce the Good News to the disciples. "He is risen" is our

great joy and the source of our hope. We praise God our Saviour!

The women came from the tomb with a message of hope and new life. That message and their voices, and those of their sisters today, need to be heard anew.

## Melbourne Diocese appoints new communications chief

**A FORMER** communications executive and consultant with organisations as diverse as Melbourne-based Anglican aged care provider Benetas, Australia Post, the Country Fire Authority and transport infrastructure bodies is to be the Chief Communications Officer for the Diocese of Melbourne.

Ms Michelle Harris is to start work with the diocese on 6 April, the same day as the new General Manager of the diocese, Mr Justin Lachal.

Her role is a new one, though assuming many of the managerial duties carried out by Ms Emma Halgren from 2018-20 and by Mr Roland Ashby from 1995-2018. She is to lead the team that produces TMA's monthly newspaper, website and social media.

Ms Harris is to be responsible for developing and delivering the communications and marketing plan for the diocese, including social media, media liaison,

as well as strategy and advice for the Archbishop, assistant bishops and other diocesan leaders.

Mark Brolly has been interim Manager Communications and interim Editor of TMA since Ms Halgren left Anglican Media last November to take up an appointment with Tearfund.

An interview is planned with Ms Harris for a later edition of TMA.

## Clergy Moves

### Vacant Appointments as of 24 March 2021:

St Michael & All Angels Beaumaris; St Stephen, Belmont; Bellarine Anglican Parish; St Edward, Blackburn South; Brimbank; St Faith, Burwood; St Luke, Cockatoo; St Alban, Coburg West; St Dunstan, Camberwell; Darebin South; Christ Church, Essendon; St John's, Flinders with St Marks Balnarring (from June); All Saints, Greensborough; St Cuthbert, Grovedale with St Wilfrid, Mount Duneed; Hume Anglican Parish; St Hilary Kew, North Balwyn and Mont Albert, North; Jika Jika, Preston; Pascoe Vale-Oak Park; St Thomas's Upper Ferntree Gully (from June); All Saints Rosebud with St Katherine's McCrae (from May); St Matthew's Ashburton; Christ Church Dingley (from August)

### Appointments:

**CRANE, The Revd Samuel**, appointed Priest-in-Charge, St James, Glen Iris, effective 27 April 2021  
**FURPHY, The Revd Jennifer**, appointed Incumbent, St Agnes, Black Rock effective 11 June 2021  
**JOHNSON, The Revd Dr Timothy Kevin**, appointed Archdeacon, Archdeaconry of The Yarra, date yet to be advised  
**KOREN, The Revd Robert**, appointed Area Dean, Deanery of Hume, effective 18 March 2021  
**KUNOO, The Revd Hay Day Ta Tha**, appointed Assistant Priest, St Paul, East Kew, effective 11 April 2021  
**MOORHOUSE, The Revd Michele Pamela**, appointed Assistant Priest from Assistant Curate, St Luke, South Melbourne, effective 11 March 2021  
**TAYLOR, The Right Revd Alison Menzies**, appointed Mission Chaplain, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 22 December 2020  
**POPE, The Revd Nigel**, appointed Incumbent from Priest-in-Charge, St Paul, Geelong, effective 25 February 2021  
**WEBSTER, The Revd Steven**, appointed Area Dean, Deanery of Coburg, effective 18 March 2021

### Permission to Officiate Renewal:

**CLARKE, The Revd Alison Lynne**, appointed Renewal of Permission to Officiate, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 18 February 2021  
**PREMARAJAH, The Revd Thevathasan Samuel**, appointed Renewal of Permission to Officiate, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 11 March 2021

### Voluntary Relinquishment of Holy Orders:

**ABRAHAM, The Revd Daniel**, effective 11 March 2021

### Obituaries:

**MANSELL, The Revd Cary**, 20 February 2021



For Vacant Parishes listing contact [registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au)  
 See Tributes at [www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au](http://www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au)

Clergy Moves is compiled by the Registry Office and all correspondence should go to [registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au)



## St Paul's Cathedral

*Together transforming our City and Diocese*

### UPCOMING SERVICES

Wednesdays	1pm	Lunchtime Concert Series (see website for upcoming concerts)
Sun 18 April	4pm	RSL ANZAC Choral Evensong
Sun 25 April	8 & 10am	ANZAC Day Services Guest Preacher: John Langmore AM CMS Choral Evensong
Sun 2 May	4pm	

### REGULAR SERVICES

Sundays	8am	Holy Communion (BCP) *
	10am	Choral Eucharist *
	1pm	Mandarin Service 華語崇拜 *
	4pm	Choral Evensong (from 18th April)

### Weekdays

Monday	2.30pm	Choral Evensong (broadcast on Channel 31)
Tuesday	5.10pm	Choral Evensong *
Wednesday	12.15pm	Holy Eucharist
Thursday	5.10pm	Choral Evensong

Services marked with \* (asterisks) are live-streamed via our website & social media

The Cathedral is open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 3pm.

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# Be COVID confident despite 'long tail' ahead: Archbishop Freier

by Stephen Cauchi

**T**HE CHURCH COULD LOOK forward with "greater confidence" to withstanding COVID, even though there would be a "long tail" to the pandemic, according to Archbishop Philip Freier.

Parishes, meanwhile, are bracing for the loss of JobKeeper, which concluded at the end of March.

In a YouTube message last month, Dr Freier predicted there would be "a long tail to the COVID pandemic".

But he added that as the inoculations rolled out and there were more vaccinations, "I think we can look forward to being able to withstand this current pandemic virus infection with greater confidence".

Archbishop Freier said he had been in contact with a friend in South Korea, where churches have not been able to gather for six months.

"I reflect on how fortunate we are by way of contrast to live in a place where the number of infections on a daily rate is not off the scale," he said. "How fortunate we are to be able to gather together."

Dr Freier said he had enjoyed attending a number of parishes in recent weeks.

"Even though things are not entirely back to what they were – there are some restrictions – it is a blessing we have to be able to gather together in some way."

At the parishes, he said he had heard "all the different ways that people have networked together to give encouragement through the difficult times that we all went through last year".

He added that the difficult times were "not at an end, of course".

Archbishop Freier also made reference to the sexual misconduct allegations enveloping Federal Parliament, saying there had been a "betrayal of trust".

"Keep praying for those that have important responsibility in elected office and those who are appointed to assist them in their responsibilities," he said.

Bishop Paul Barker told TMA that he anticipated some churches "will begin to struggle more" after the end of JobKeeper.

"A lot of churches have gone very well and JobKeeper's actually given them more money than they anticipated," Bishop Barker said.

"Very few churches have had massive financial problems in the last year."

A lot of churches, although not all, had had "very good take-up in electronic giving".

Op shops had reopened but "maybe are below their normal rates of sale," he added.

The Diocese was "going OK". "I think things are fairly stable. I suspect the current rules are not going to change significantly for some months other than if we go back into a lockdown at short notice."



Some churches are having fewer services as a 'strategic move'.

## "Most churches are more cautious than the government rule."

In his episcopate of Jumbunna in Melbourne's south-east, only one or two churches out of 80 had not reopened, he said.

Within the diocese generally, "my guess will be less than 10 per cent have not reopened".

"I think there are still churches experiencing fewer people coming. Quite a few churches are only doing one service, not two."

Some churches were having fewer services as a "strategic move". But for others, cleaning may be an issue.

"I'm wondering if they're too anxious about the cleaning in-between (services)," he said.

"It's a tricky thing but I think the cleaning can be quite simple in my opinion. Some are getting a bit anxious about it."

Although masks were not mandatory indoors, they were still being used extensively in churches. "Most churches are more cautious than the government rule, so most parishes are wearing masks at least for singing, if not for the whole service."

Bishop Barker said that from 27 March, all electronic attend-

ance recording must be linked directly to the State Government's visitation API (Application Programming Interface).

Parishes that use the Government's free QR code service were automatically linked. Users of a different attendance recording app must check if it was linked.

"The private systems that some of us are using, or some churches are using, some of those systems are negotiating with the Government to interface. Which the Government wants to happen."

"What it's trying to do is speed up the contact tracing. It will all be interfaced with the Government so they can do it quicker."

## Appellate Tribunal statement

A national conference of bishops was held in March on Zoom. The key issue at the conference was the statement of the Anglican Church's highest court, the Appellate Tribunal, on blessing same-sex marriages.

Last November, by a five to one majority, the Tribunal effectively cleared the way for the liturgical blessing of same-sex civil marriages.

Bishop Barker said the bishops were hoping for a face-to-face meeting later in the year. They were waiting to see what dates the Anglican Primate, Archbishop Geoff Smith of Adelaide, might suggest.

# Pandemic shows potential for 'new normal' economy

by Chris Shearer

**T**HE FIRST Conversation with the Archbishop for 2021 covered a wide spectrum of economic questions that face Australia as it emerges from the pandemic, but the underlying message was clear: now is the time to be having conversations about what a "new normal" economy could be.

The Conversation was held on 23 March at Federation Square's Deakin Edge.

Spurred by the actions taken by governments during the pandemic to lessen the impacts of what independent economist and guest on the panel Saul Eslake called "the most severe recession since the Great Depression", this conversation needed to happen before we slipped back into an "old normal" that allowed disparity to flourish.

"Governments have felt a moral responsibility to do as much as they can to ameliorate the consequences of the decisions they've made in the name of public health. And I think that's why governments have been prepared to do so many more things than they might normally have done in a recession," Mr Eslake said, referring to the swathe of economic support



Archbishop Philip Freier converses with Anglicare Australia's CEO Kasy Chambers and Economist Saul Eslake.

## "Times of crisis seem like a good time to be innovative, to throw things out, to look at how we see things ... see if we can be brave."

packages introduced last year as the economy began to feel the effects of nation-wide lockdowns.

"We've learned that governments can do good."

Fellow panellist and CEO

of Anglicare Australia Kasy Chambers agreed, but noted that the recent rolling back of the JobKeeper and JobSeeker allowances was creating "an odd effect".

"It's been a remarkable year for people who rely on income support, for their wellbeing," she said, adding that the doubling of Jobseeker had brought welfare up to the poverty line for the first time since 1994.

"We talked to people constantly who had bought a fridge, they hadn't had access to a fridge before. It meant that they could save money and buy fresh food and buy it in larger amounts. We talked to people who said things like, 'I bought my 12-year-old daughter a birthday present for the first time in her life'. We spoke to people who are starting to pay down debts and do some normal things and actually get back on a ladder of hope that life might be normal."

"People are saying before this happened that's just the way [they] thought it is, that there are poor and there are rich ... People say they now know what the government thinks of [them] because they've halved that now, and because we are back to where we were."

"Times of crisis seem like a good time to be innovative, to throw things out, to look at how we see things and see if this was the real way to see things, see if we can be brave, all those kinds of things ..."

"There's a lot of conversations that we could be having as a country ... that we seem to be papering over a bit as we seem to be trying to get back to the old normal. It would be great to keep thinking about what a new normal could look like."

Mr Eslake said that part of that conversation would have to be around how this would be paid for, but added that with current interest rates, concerns about servicing government debt should be very low.

"There's nothing wrong with governments having debt," he said.

Archbishop Philip Freier, who moderated the panel, noted that politicians had often used the moral language of a "prudent household" when speaking about national debt, but that the experience of the past year had potentially overturned some of that thinking by showing how increasing debt could be beneficial to the nation, potentially opening up a pathway for a paradigm shift on the role of national debt.

The full conversation can be viewed on the Anglican Media Melbourne YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/c/AnglicanMediaMelb](http://www.youtube.com/c/AnglicanMediaMelb).



# Clergy assess pandemic’s impact on parish life

Stephen Cauchi asks vicars across the Diocese of Melbourne about the effects, possibilities, challenges and lessons emerging for their congregations after a year of COVID-19.

IT IS NOW ONE YEAR SINCE Australia’s first COVID lockdowns in March 2020. Throughout the nation, and especially in Melbourne, it’s been a year of disruption in church life not seen since the last great global pandemic, the Spanish Flu of 1918.

To mark this anniversary, TMA interviewed a number of clergy around the diocese to ask them how they’ve coped with COVID, the changes they’ve made that might endure, the problems ahead and the lessons learned. The major way churches



have adapted is by livestreaming services (or recording them) and holding meetings on Zoom. These services have attracted new attendees,

some from interstate or overseas. Even though face-to-face church has resumed in Victoria, this new reliance on technology looks set to stay.

But, as indicated by the responses below, online church has come at a cost. Absence from physically attending services can make the “heart grow colder”, as Bishop Lindsay Urwin of Christ Church Brunswick put it. Connections with the local community have suffered.

Parishioners accustomed to online services are now, in many cases, sometimes less inclined to attend face-to-face church.

Fear of COVID persists. Many parishes are yet to reopen, which amounts to a “massive collapse of our Church”, according to the Revd Dr Hugh Kempster of St Peter’s Eastern Hill. And while JobKeeper helped keep parishes afloat in 2020, what will happen when it is withdrawn?

## Dean Andreas Loewe – St Paul’s Cathedral



### How has your church coped with COVID?

In some ways, COVID was a wilderness experience. During lockdown our members have been more isolated than they ever have been. At the same time, at St Paul’s we’ve been able to strike some “living fountains from the rocks along the way”, as the hymn puts it.

We already had technology in place that allowed us to be more connected. Our in-built camera system meant that transitioning to YouTube and Facebook livestreams, as well as weekly TV broadcasts on community Channel 31, was not too difficult. We soon got used to conducting congregational Zoom gatherings and increased our pastoral phone check-ins with our members. Overall, our community has been greatly nourished spiritually by the ability to connect to the Cathedral and one another through the gift of technology.

### What COVID changes might endure?

Our online worship significantly has extended the accessibility of our programs and has brought in many new faces into our community. It’s been a blessing that, during one of the biggest challenges to our ministry and common life, our community has in fact grown. We find that in addition to those in the building, there will be an equal or larger number of people worshipping with us online at the same time.

Without a doubt we’ll continue to offer streamed worship at St Paul’s Cathedral, to enable people who are unable to attend in person to participate. As the home church for our Province, pre-COVID we frequently had “irregular regulars”: people who’d visit from across the state, making a monthly pilgrimage to St Paul’s. Our online worship means that between their in-person visits these members can now worship with us Sunday by Sunday.

The shift to online worship has made us think about how best to minister to those who can only join us online. Since the beginning of 2021,

every Sunday one of the clergy team will be our designated ePastor, engaging in the comments sections of our livestream chat and following up on prayer or other pastoral requests.

Those interactions have led to in-person pastoral conversations, and pastoral connections for those who live in our city or state, and to really interesting exchanges with people interstate or overseas who look to St Paul’s as a spiritual home.

There is much more work to be done, theologically and ministerially, in working out how the new “hybrid” form of ministering in-person and online will change the way of being church – which is an exciting challenge for the team at St Paul’s.

### Negative effects of COVID?

2020 has been a financially difficult year for St Paul’s. A large part of the Cathedral’s income comes from offerings made by the 500,000 or so visitors who come to St Paul’s in an ordinary year. In March 2020, we saw those numbers fall away completely. But when the visitor offerings fell away, our friends and members stepped in to help contribute more.

Where overseas Cathedrals had to let go a large chunk of their staff due to a lack of visitor donations, we’ve been very fortunate that we have been able to keep on most of our staff during the pandemic. In many ways, St Paul’s has grown this last year: in numbers, and in people supporting our ministry through their gift of self and money. And that has been a real blessing, and a cause for profound thankfulness to God for his gracious provision.

### Lessons from COVID?

We have experienced a great sense of belonging and camaraderie during lockdown. Our congregants helped one another adjust to new ways of doing things, provided pastoral and, occasionally, technical support, and made a great effort to stay connected.

That sense of community and solidarity helped sustain us in faith over the last year. I hope the Church at large will continue to foster that sense of togetherness and continue to help nurture our most vulnerable members as we have done during the pandemic.

I hope, too, that the Church will continue to explore avenues of accessibility. Our transition to online worship was unplanned. But it has made worship much more inclusive of those that cannot join us in person. As we look to a post-pandemic future, we are definitely carrying that forward as an intentional ministry.

## Archdeacon Dianne Sharrock – St Stephen and St Mary, Mt Waverley

### How has your church coped with COVID?

I think the parish adapted well. We went to livestreaming via Zoom each Sunday, with good numbers up to about 130 each week, which was just short of our pre-COVID numbers.

We commenced weekly emails with news about the parish, updates about COVID, an order of service and a pew leaflet.

Teams of parishioners delivered printed parish updates and pew leaflets to those who didn’t have Internet access.

We had a phone pastoral ministry – clergy and the pastoral care team kept in touch with parishioners. We continued with Zoom kids’ church, Zoom morning prayer, Zoom café catch-ups both evening and afternoon, Zoom parish council and wardens meetings, and Zoom home groups.

### What COVID changes might endure?

Livestreaming of one Sunday service and other important liturgical services will continue. Zoom morning prayer will continue, and Zoom parish council will continue. We’re trialling two services on



Sunday morning instead of three due to COVID cleaning restrictions.

### Negative effects of COVID?

Some parishioners may not return mainly due to losing the habit of regular worship together. Some parishioners enjoy livestreaming more than physical gathering for worship.

### Lessons from COVID?

That they see COVID brings opportunity to be more missional and strategic in their outlook.

## The Revd Canon Matt Williams – St James Old Cathedral, West Melbourne

### How has your church coped with COVID?

I would say very well from the point of being a worshipping community. From the point of view of being a missional community, less well.

Our community has really been faithful, gathered, consolidated – if anything enriched – by the opportunities provided by breakout rooms on Zoom and things like that. That strength in the community is evident as we’ve gone back to the building.

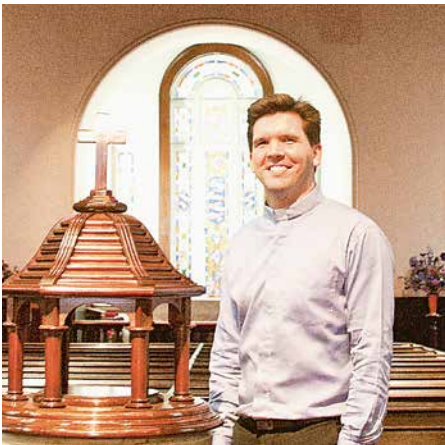
A lot of the programs that we ran to help people or to reach out to the community, a lot of that has just been cancelled and unable to be sustained.

### What COVID changes might endure?

We introduced daily morning and evening prayer, so that the weekly services – and even special weekend services like Ascension Day – we’re doing those on Zoom. That’s worked really well. It’s a dispersed community, so people can’t really gather for all these little opportunities to pray. We’re three times a day, doing that on Zoom. That will continue as long as there’s demand for it.

We’ll keep those as a complement to Sunday face-to-face worship.

We’ve introduced automated livestreaming. That changes things because when people go on holidays, they are more likely to stay with their home church. When people are sick or disabled or are in a nursing home and can no longer come,



they can remain with the community that they’ve been worshipping with.

### Negative effects of COVID?

The interruptions to our outreach programs ... there’s a lot more work to get those going from scratch again. This time may condition us to make church about ourselves rather than people who represent God to the wider community. If I have one fear, it’s that we lose sight of our missional edge.

### Lessons from COVID?

When everything can be (suddenly) cancelled ... I’ve certainly found that extremely difficult as a planner and I think there is a lesson of faith, or a development of faith and humility, that that is calling out of us.





## The Revd Keren Terpstra – St Margaret's Eltham

### How has your church coped with COVID?

We started services via Zoom on the Sunday after the lockdown was announced last year. It was pretty primitive: just the clergy with the laptop set up to face the altar in the church.

Over the months, we adapted the technology to need. We purchased a USB microphone, which helped with the sound, we purchased a webcam which helped enormously with the vision, we found a way to hook the sound system in the church into the laptop.

Finally – knowing that our worship was going to continue in a hybrid form post-lockdown – we installed two 360-degree remote action cameras and other hardware to prepare for livestreaming.

The biggest struggle in COVID adaptation has been the ever shifting and changing requirements. Just when everything's been set up and put in place for one modality, the rules change again. That's been exhausting.

During the lockdown, we also found it challenging to maintain connection with those who didn't have access to technology – we did it through phone calls, parishioners keeping in contact with five others, and sending out a bimonthly communique and the service sheet for folk at home to follow, as well as several "drop and runs": packs for Holy Week, Pentecost, and Advent.

### What COVID changes might endure?

The move to Zoom I think in some ways is permanent across a number of parish activities: meetings continue to be on Zoom (a particularly handy thing in winter!), and services continue in a hybrid form.

Zoom and livestreaming open a great array of options going forward. We chose Zoom because it facilitates involvement from those at home. We've also set up our tech deliberately anticipating a day when we won't need to bring in readers, etc, from



home, and can switch to livestreaming.

But tech is here to stay. There are some big ongoing questions around how we do pastoral care and membership with those who are only online and not in person.

### Negative effects of COVID?

We've definitely seen a fall-off in numbers returning to church. Some of this is because being in lockdown for many hastened the loss of mobility associated with changes as bodies age, and so they no longer feel able to make it to church.

I wonder about some of the special services which in the past have brought large numbers of folk to church: will the pet blessing and children's Christmas services still draw the large numbers, post-pandemic? Or will the break in routine/tradition mean people's habits and commitments have changed?

Lastly, while there's still a sense of loyalty to the friends and parish community for many, the fact that you can pretty much "go to church" online anywhere in the world makes me wonder how many will choose that option rather than face-to-face commitment.

The other aspect with that is convenience. You can sit at home in your pyjamas and when the service is over, turn off your TV or electronic device and go on with your day – no need to be roped into yet another rostered commitment over morning tea!

### Lessons from COVID?

I suspect that we haven't yet seen the full fall-out from the pandemic in terms of how parish life runs. For some, the pandemic has "hastened the decline". Maybe? But it's also shed light on issues we've been burying our heads in the sand about.

It also presents opportunity. The kingdom of God hasn't shut down! The mustard seed of faith still grows wild, and we have good news to proclaim to a world where the Spirit of God still goes ahead of us.

## The Revd Phil Meulman – Glen Waverley Anglican Church (GWAC)

### How has your church coped with COVID?

It adapted well. People tuned in and we had high numbers initially watching livestream and then as you went on, you could see the numbers dwindle, which I think was pretty common across churches.

We came out of COVID ... and numbers have increased most weeks at our services in person – not to what it was, but numbers have increased each week.

### What COVID changes might endure?

We've put fixed livestreaming in and so we will be livestreaming from now on, as well as in-person services.

Livestreaming is not an attempt to gather a new audience from around the world. People check the livestream to see what your church is doing and we've actually picked up a couple of families as a result.

### Negative effects of COVID?

Anxiety and fear of getting COVID or spreading COVID are reasons for people not to come back and therefore watch livestream.

The main problem we've got to deal with is laziness, can't be bothered ... people actually watch church and are not the church.



Our finances have actually held up quite well – people have pivoted to online, so very few cash envelopes come in now. The large bulk of it is direct debt.

If we keep on shutting down ... what will that do to people's connectedness to the community? People will think it's just as easy to watch it online. The thing that's really taken a hit is reactivating our Sunday roster and having certainty around the weekday ministries that we run – can we run it this week?

### Lessons from COVID?

The main lessons are that we can actually adapt. And I think that is a very positive thing for the church to learn

because the church can become very staid in its ways.

Learning to adapt has been a forced change on people and actually has been a positive change for us. We can pivot quickly if we need to. It's made us think long-term in our planning and do an audit of all our ministries. In a sense we've had way too many ministries and this has given us an opportunity to look at it and sharpen our ministries to make sure we are on mission and not just doing something for the sake of doing it because we've always done it.

## The Revd Glenn Loughrey – St Oswald's Glen Iris

### How has your church coped with COVID?

Considering the age of the congregation, very well... They have supported one another and numbers are coming back pretty good.

### What COVID changes might endure?

Livestreaming's one thing. Some of our people have got older and it's a convenient way for them to keep in touch. We've updated and increased our pastoral care callers – phone callers who call regularly to keep in touch with those that are vulnerable. That will keep on going.

### Negative effects of COVID?

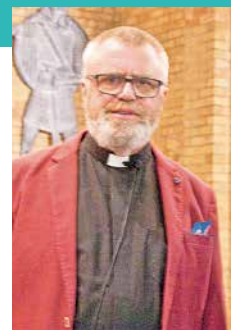
I think the big negative effect is the impact on our older congregation who were isolated for 12 months without social interaction. It

has impacted on them in many different ways and that will stay on. They've kind of aged three years in 12 months.

### Lessons from COVID?

We have to care for each other, stay in contact with each other, support each other. Be adaptable – we went to online, Zoom morning teas, Zoom AGMs. They adapted very well to that, so I think that's been a good lesson.

Our way of being church has changed and we have to investigate what that's going to look like as we move forward.



Being young and out of work is at crisis point. Before COVID-19, youth unemployment was already at 16 per cent and leaving many young people behind. For someone like Selam, high unemployment, and now a recession, means finding work has become extremely difficult. The Brotherhood of St. Laurence's (BSL) Multicultural Communities Team works alongside young refugees in partnership with employers and educators to provide training, work experience and support. Together we help create meaningful employment and share our country's prosperity. Ensuring all young people have a future to aspire to is a responsibility that needs to be shared by the whole community.



Wishing you a Holy and Blessed Easter

**Debra Saffrey-Collins**

Head of Chaplaincy and Diocesan Partnerships



I'm Selam. I'm 22 and came to Australia from Ethiopia in 2013 as a refugee. It was really hard being a teenager in a new country. There were language barriers and I felt isolated. When I finished school and started looking for work, that was hard too. I dropped my resume at so many places, but I rarely got a call back. The team at BSL helped me with interview skills and I won an internship, which was my first paid job. My communication, administration and writing skills improved a lot. And the team was so nice and supportive. After I got my Diploma in Leadership and Management and I used BSL's support to gain my new job as Authorised Officer at Metro Trains. My message is don't give up. Seek help and keep moving forward.



Brotherhood of St Laurence  
Working for an Australia free of poverty

For more information on how BSL helps refugees and migrants, visit [bsl.org.au](https://bsl.org.au)

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Bishop Lindsay Urwin

Christ Church Brunswick

How has your church coped with COVID?

I feel we did fairly well. We poured a lot of effort into online services, and that brought forth many more participants than there are members of the congregation. Our giving stayed up – our giving was slightly more than our budget.

People sustained relationships with each other by our online services, people began to collect Holy Communion, we have a weekly email that goes to 200 email addresses that keep people in touch, so I feel that by and large we managed.

What COVID changes might endure?

We have continued with filming the Mass and putting it up online. We'll continue to do that for the time being. It's not livestreaming, it's just up there for anyone who wants to watch at any point. I suppose we're getting 150 views every week. And also some teaching videos – teaching ministry.

Negative effects of COVID?

I think that absence can make the heart grow colder. People get used to not coming to church and getting back into a habit is more difficult than leaving one.

We need to be forbearing with one another because people are coming back at different paces. Some people are still anxious – not so much about the virus, they've got used to not being in crowds. It's going to take time.

Our church was always open. I felt we broke trust with the people of Brunswick by closing the church. That has to be won back.

(Sunday attendance) is back up to 80 per cent. (Weekday and evening services) are back to full strength. The daily rhythm is back to normal.

Lessons from COVID?

The primary lesson is when the church can't meet for the Eucharist, it starts to die. That's the one lesson. The church can't exist without it.

All three of the lockdowns, people could come here on Friday and Saturday, collect the sacrament, take it home, and share the Eucharist online. It made a lot of difference. The idea that lots of people will watch church on television – that's not the church. For me, that's the great lesson of COVID.



The Revd John Forsyth – St Jude's Carlton

How has your church coped with COVID?

St Jude's has adapted as well as could be expected to COVID-19. Lockdown was particularly difficult for all but we were able to transition to two live-stream services relatively quickly (22 March 2020). We were acutely aware that St Jude's was blessed with the resources and staff to adapt relatively well, and that this was not the reality for many other churches.

We also spent considerable time thinking through how we pastorally care for people during this time, as well as seeking to intentionally create online spaces for prayer, evangelism, discipleship, bible study and community. We were able to run Christianity Explored and Discipleship Explored online as well as begin daily Zoom morning prayer.

We have now returned to meeting in person at all of our five congregations. However, the two-square-metre requirement has limited the size of our larger congregations, which has created challenges in how we meet on Sundays. To help alleviate this problem and to pastorally care for those unable to come to church, we still livestream one of our services.

We are also helping those who "joined" St Jude's online now become part of the church "in person". It has been strange to run a welcome lunch and meet people for the first time who have been part of St Jude's online for six months or more.

What COVID changes might endure?

I believe that the pandemic has pushed churches three-to-five years into the future regarding how we use technology. The massive increase in livestreaming which the lockdown facilitated has led St Jude's (and most other churches) to consider what role online ministry has in the life of the church.

We will certainly continue to livestream at least one service for the foreseeable future. Our thinking behind this is both pastoral and missional. It is pastoral in that we want to care for those who are unable to come to church for a number of reasons, and it is missional in that it is a great way of reaching people who are not

Christians, but keen to investigate who Jesus is.

Anecdotal evidence we have received is that watching church online has been an easy and not threatening way for those who have never been to church to see what it is like. As a church, St Jude's are continuing to work out how we best use this technology to make the Word of God fully known. We will also continue to provide an online morning prayer service each weekday at 8am.

Negative effects of COVID?

I think parishes will face a number of different challenges, and the challenges will differ from parish to parish. For some, the challenge will continue to be to how to engage anxious people in the work of God's church. Some people are keen to return to church while others have concerns.

Related to this issue is the exhaustion of many staff and clergy, who are not only working in a high change environment, but also may not have had as much leave. Financial viability will also be genuine concern for a number of parishes once the JobKeeper subsidy finishes at the end of March.

Behind this sits a broader uncertainty about what the future will look like, which can make planning and preparation difficult. This being said, we can always find peace in the unchanging truth that our God is the sovereign Lord of all and his promises are always fulfilled.

Lessons from COVID?

One of the key outcomes of lockdown is that it has forced us to focus on what we believe is fundamental in the life of the church. It has also helped us focus on how we reach out to the rest of our society with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. My hope is that as people who serve the Lord Jesus Christ, our churches will utilise our unique place to respond to the pandemic by proclaiming the love and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our society's health and prosperity has covered us all with a veneer of self-confidence. Science and modern medicine have helped us believe that



we have control over our lives and over our world. But now we become terribly aware that we are not actually in control at all. The truth is, we are still the same frail, helpless beings that we have always been. These challenges give us as churches an extraordinary opportunity to engage in the big questions: What is really valuable in life? Who can I truly rely on when everything seems out of control?

Christians know that God is the ruler of history. Not only that, but God is a loving Father to his children and rules history for our good (Romans 8:28; Matthew 28:18). Christians know that Jesus has saved us from our sins, that our future in his Kingdom is certain, and that every day until then is an opportunity to serve him. This Gospel drives Christians out of themselves and their own personal interests in order to serve others in gratitude to God for all that he has done for us in Christ. This is because love asks how our actions can best serve the needs of our neighbours rather than ourselves.

The Gospel frees Christians from fear so that even our very lives can be offered in the service of others ... We know we are mortal, but we know and trust the One who gives eternal life. We are not immune from anxiety, but we know and trust our heavenly Father who loves us and bears our burdens.

Our world is desperate for good news, and we have the wonderful opportunity to share the extraordinary news that Jesus is Lord with those around us.

Archdeacon Greg Allinson – St Mark's Camberwell

How has your church coped with COVID?

St Mark's has made multiple changes over the last year in responding to COVID. We initially shut down one week earlier than we had to as we predicted where this was going.

We began making YouTube services, which got better and better in editing quality. We added more and more ministries to keep people connected. More structured pastoral care follow-up by all members of the parish. Zoom morning tea, to which we added an interview per week. Zoom Bible studies and meetings.

We then planned a return, only to hit the second wave. We then re-planned the return when we could have 100 people in our buildings. We then moved from recorded services to lives-

treating. We returned with one service only, then two and now back to the usual three.

Because we livestream the first service, we also aim to keep the service to one hour – so music has been adapted and preachers are conscious of a public online as well as in person audience.

What COVID changes might endure?

We plan at this stage to livestream at least until we reach herd immunity through vaccine roll-out. We will then revisit the livestreaming decision, as it does encourage some people to stay at home.

Some meetings will continue on Zoom, such as Morning Prayer and every second council meeting. We will also trial a Zoom marriage course and start

Alpha on Zoom. In sheer practical terms, I expect less unwell people will come to church in the future.

Negative effects of COVID?

Already we have had two families and one single move to country Victoria. As well, the pandemic and lockdowns gave a number of people "time to think" about their commitment to St Mark's and we are farewelling two other families who will seek a different style of church over the next months (e.g. more charismatic). This will affect our music ministry at one service.

At the same time, we have already gained three new families who had engaged with our online service through the period. We also note slightly lower numbers as people don't come when sick – and if one



child in a family is sick, then the whole family stays home.

Our finances have been surprisingly stable, especially with JobKeeper, which we have "banked" in order to support ministry over the next two years.

Lessons from COVID?

Our parish ran a survey for all parishioners to try and measure where each person was up to

with their personal faith. From that, our staff and a small group of leaders structured our strategy for the next 12 months.

We will re-ask the survey questions after 12 months in order to see whether our strategy has made a difference. In particular, we need to continue to work at keeping people connected to church – especially families. It has surprised us that some elderly people have been quicker to return to live church than some families.

Nevertheless, we continue to encourage people with the words of Hebrews 10: "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."





## The Revd Maria Brand-Starkey

*Mullum Mullum Anglican, Ringwood*

### How has your church coped with COVID?

Our Parish has adapted to COVID by seeking to continue to be who we are and do what we do – but in a different way. During the lockdowns, we continued to seek to bring glory to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through worship, outreach and discipleship, adapting to the changed circumstances.

For example, we began online services, morning teas via Zoom, Kids Church via Zoom and video, outreach via contactless delivery and pickup of food parcels, online Alpha, prayer, discipleship, pastoral care and outreach via platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Zoom, our website, email, mail, telephone and dropping off packages.

### What COVID changes might endure?

Beyond the pandemic, we hope to have a clear strategy for how virtual/digital ministry fits into our church mission and how we can be effective in both online and in person/hybrid ministry.

We hope to build on what we have learnt from the past year to help us better fulfil our mission to see more people come to know Jesus, more people growing in their faith and our Lord glorified through worship. It has been a great joy to meet again onsite. However, we have continued our online service, which enables a greater number of people to join us for worship each week.

Online services and digital platforms have created a safe space for people to join us. Prayer, discipleship and fellowship over WhatsApp and messenger groups continues to be another way that we can connect as a community even though we can meet again in person. Social media continues to provide both an avenue for outreach and connection among community members.

Pastoral care groups begun during COVID continue to be relevant. While many meetings have resumed onsite, Zoom continues to be a useful platform to engage a greater number of people. During the pandemic, we began a food parcel and frozen meals ministry, providing food security to those in need in our local area.

There is still ongoing need that we are able to meet, which in turn opens up further opportunities for a practical outworking of the Gospel in our local community.

### Negative effects of COVID?

There have been many challenges over



the course of the pandemic. Along with illness and grief, many people lost their employment and livelihood. Change and social isolation have long-term impacts. However, with challenges come the joy of knowing that we are not alone, that God is with us.

He has given us one another to encourage and care for each other. He has given us the great privilege of being part of the working out of His glorious purposes in this world. The challenges of the pandemic have opened up great opportunities to speak and demonstrate God's love and hope for us in Christ Jesus.

### Lessons from COVID?

I hope that the pandemic will help our parish and the church more broadly to be flexible, open to and willing to change. The eternal truth of God and the good news of Jesus is unchanging but the way we express it and embody it must change to fit our current time and circumstances.

The pandemic has pushed us out of our comfort zones and I pray that we will stay there, rather than retreating back to "the easy and well-known". Many people all over the world spend their time in both the virtual and physical world – if we are to be Jesus' witnesses to the ends of the earth, we must be present and active in both of these spaces.

**"The pandemic has pushed us out of our comfort zones and I pray that we will stay there, rather than retreating back to 'the easy and well-known'."**

**The Revd Maria Brand-Starkey**

## The Revd Dr Hugh Kempster – *St Peter's Eastern Hill, East Melbourne*

### How has your church coped with COVID?

I am very proud of how the faith community of St Peter's Eastern Hill has adapted to the pandemic, and especially the veritable trauma of the COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020. As a parish, we have shown a remarkable level of resilience, especially in our development of both online and social services.

Firstly, online services. As with so many parishes, our move to online church happened quite literally overnight. Prior to lockdown, we had no regular online video capabilities, but remarkably the parish didn't miss a beat. As an Anglo-Catholic parish, daily Mass is central to our worshipping priorities. We were allowed five at Mass, to live-stream, so we were forced to reduce our face-to-face congregation from 120 on a Sunday to five overnight.

At first we live-streamed to Facebook on the vicar's laptop, with quite frankly shocking sound and video. But a significant percentage of our congregation very graciously put up with the low-tech and tuned in.

Our 7.15am weekday Mass could well have been an early casualty, but by God's grace and the dedication of a small team of priests and servers, that congregation grew from an average of five each day pre-lockdown to a regular "views" following of 35 or 40 that has remarkably stayed strong over the year.

One of our most regular weekday Mass-goers these days lives in Sydney. She told me that she had lost her job when the lockdown hit, and happened to find our live-stream one morning. Almost every day she now tunes in, and as a church we were even able (to provide) pastoral care through illness and family crisis.

Secondly, social service. Since 1992, St Peter's has fed the homeless breakfast seven days a week, 365 days of the year. As an essential service, in partnership with Anglicare Victoria, our breakfast program didn't miss a beat either.

Just six months before the lockdown, our Parish launched the Social Enterprise Coffee Caravan "Heaven at The Hill." The week of the first lockdown, our neighbours in the State Parliament kitchens, where I serve as Chaplain, asked if we would be able to distribute food to those in need. We said yes. At first, we picked up 60 meals each day and froze half of them.

But pretty soon the impact of the impact of the lockdown started to kick in, especially among international students, most of whom were not eligible for JobKeeper or JobSeeker. Students began to turn up on our doorstep who were quite literally starving. One of the St Peter's staff members is also Chaplain to RMIT University, so we got the word out amongst the 17,000 international students who had applied to the University for emergency relief, and they started flooding to the church for help.

At the height of the pandemic, we were distributing 500 meals to hungry students every day, seven days a week. Many of the students coming for food wanted to give something back, so we

ended up with a team of 40 volunteers, and for six months the program was run entirely by volunteers. After the ABC News ran an article on our Meals Program, a number of complete strangers donated funds, which enabled us to create employment pathways for a number of these international students. The St Peter's Social Enterprise now employs seven young people, most of whom are international students.

### What COVID changes might endure?

(Live-streaming and food provision) have become a significant part of our ongoing worship and mission as a parish. We are in the process of upgrading our audio-video system in the church, so that we can sustain quality online worship and our choral program well into the future.

State Parliament has indicated that their provision of food relief will come to an end in June this year, but the St Peter's Social Enterprise is planning to continue this ministry by developing a student cafe.



### Negative effects of COVID?

In a recent letter to clergy, from one of the Melbourne bishops, I read that an estimated 20 per cent of parishes in our diocese have not yet reopened for face-to-face worship. This is a massive collapse of our Church. My biggest fear is that the end of JobKeeper will only compound this collapse of so many Anglican parishes.

### Lessons from COVID?

The end of JobKeeper will undoubtedly be a massive challenge for most parishes, St Peter's included. But as they say, necessity is the mother of all invention. As Anglicans, we now have a much higher tolerance for change as a result of the pandemic. We have all experienced a year of sink or swim. The things we used to fight over tooth and nail somehow seem of less importance.

So now is a golden opportunity for us to think outside the box and be proactive in exploring new ways of being Church. Let's look at what is working and what we can learn from that on our own patch.

At St Peter's over the lockdown, we have connected with St Martin-in-the-Fields in London, and in particular their HeartEdge movement. Here in Melbourne, Bishop Kate Prowd has been working hard to bring a group of us together online to look at this inspiring new model of being Church.

At our Parish Leadership retreat this year, we will be reading together the Revd Dr Sam Wells' book, *A Future Better than the Past*. Dr Wells' "Kingdom Model" encourages us to shape our mission planning the "four Cs" of: Congregation, Culture, Compassion and Commerce. It's well worth a look.

## The Revd Russell Trickey – *Christ Church Geelong*

### How has your church coped with COVID?

After the cruel lockdowns, most parishioners have returned to worship with social distancing and contact tracing, etc. Our pastoral care team kept the parish operating as a community by being in regular contact with each other. During the lockdowns, we had our service loaded on to our website for those interested.

### What COVID changes might endure?

Changes include communion of one kind, no shared plates at morning tea, no hand-shaking at greeting of the peace.



### Negative effects of COVID?

The pandemic has created a sense of uncertainty among people. It's hard to say what will happen next or when it will end.

### Lessons from COVID?

I hope we learn how to survive as a faith community. Our pastoral care team has expanded and people have stepped up to showing more care for each other. We have had to learn to encourage one another via phone calls and visits during the times we were unable to meet for worship.



## Archdeacon Helen Phillips

*The Anglican Parish of Mornington and Mt Martha*



### How has your church coped with COVID?

As with most churches, there have been a wide range of responses from within our parish. During the extended period of lockdown, some members felt very isolated, especially those who are elderly, frail or who live alone.

Those without computer or smart phone access have been particularly vulnerable to this sense of isolation and we produced quite a bit of printed material each week, which we hand-delivered to them with a brief “wire-door ministry” when restrictions allowed. This included sermons, prayers, articles and reflections and the daily ADOM Prayer Diary entries for each day.

A network of pastoral care, with regular contact by several parish members, kept people connected and our prayer chain continued to uphold those in need, as these became known to us.

After a few weeks of uploading reflections, readings and sermons to our Facebook page, we began Zoom services on a Sunday morning. These went very well and have brought about a renewal of faith and commitment amongst a core group. A strong sense of connection has been established and has remained as we have returned in recent weeks to gathering again in person.

For some, the time without the normal distractions has brought them closer to God, renewed their faith and their desire to share this with others. This is such a delight to see. There is much truth in the saying that when all we have is God, we begin to understand that God is all we need. Our prayerfulness as a core group has grown much stronger, as has a daily commitment to Bible reading and discussion.

Our Children’s and Families Ministry has coped well, utilising Zoom for Mainly Music and NextGen Youth. Although numbers were down during his period, they have grown since our return to onsite activities.

The need for a new group emerged naturally during the lockdown and we have begun a MOPS (Mothers Of Pre-Schoolers) Group fortnightly over Zoom, which has continued to enable Mums to connect once their little ones have gone to bed. This group is also growing and meeting a need for “genuine connection” and missional opportunities and conversations.

### What COVID changes might endure?

We are gathering in our hall for worship and, at this stage, we are only having a single combined service. One of the key observations from Zoom church was that, for the first time ever, worshippers

could see each other’s faces and actually talk about their faith and pray together, rather than the more structured seating in a traditional church building, where we mostly see the back of heads rather than faces.

We spend time reflecting and sharing together after the readings and sermon and there is a strong desire that this continues. It is good to be able to sing again and to share in Holy Communion.

Unfortunately, some have moved on and others have not returned to church. There are many and varied reasons for this but what is really encouraging is the number of new people who have come to join us – both on Zoom and now in person. New faces each week is becoming the norm, which is most encouraging.

We are maintaining our social media presence and keeping our website as current and user-friendly as possible. Most people look for us through these avenues. We record the sermon each week and, when we are in a position to acquire a decent camera, we are looking to make parts of the service (including the sermon) available to watch as well as listen to. We don’t currently have the capacity to livestream, but are exploring possibilities moving forward.

### Negative effects of COVID?

The church generally will never return to what it was. Personally (and as a parish council), we see this as a positive thing. Christianity has always thrived in the midst of challenge and struggle. Losing some people is always sad, but the past 12 months has brought many to a decision point and provided the time and distance to stop and ask ourselves why we go to church, what it means to be a Christian and what is really important (and what is not).

Attending out of habit or because of friendship groups alone does not grow a healthy vibrant faith community. This, of course, has had very strong negative impact on us financially but we are confident that the new church emerging from the ashes here will grow strong and will contribute for generations to come to growing the Kingdom of God in this area.

Our ministries have become fewer and more intentional. This, too, is a good thing.

### Lessons from COVID?

My greatest hope is that we will keep our focus where it belongs – on our relationship with God, through Jesus and in the power of the Spirit. I pray that we may rediscover the passion and energy of the early Church and grow together in faith, hope and love, reaching out in service to share the gospel with a broken world and connecting with those who do not yet know Christ in their lives.

May we discern where God is already present and active and align ourselves with what God is bringing about. May we remain open to grow and change together. I believe these need to be key commitments for the emerging post-COVID church.

## The Revd Richard Bruce – St Hilary’s Kew

### How has your church coped with COVID?

Being a large active Anglican church, different parts of the church adapted quite differently.

I think we adapted really well. Being a large church, we were watching closely what was happening around the world and had started talking through what being and doing church would be like if we went in to lockdown like other countries. We had plans in place and were able to implement quickly as the decisions had already been made about how we would respond.

The parishioners have been very supportive of all the work that has gone in keeping our community vibrant and connected over the past year.

We had already been working on the technology for livestreaming services from 2018 as our vicar, Bishop Stephen Hale, had the vision to livestream our church services. So, when the decision was made to livestream, we had the majority of equipment in place ready to go live, with the decision made on Friday morning and broadcasting on Sunday from the Kew site.

Even though we had never livestreamed a full church service, with a very capable volunteer and staff team, we were able to successfully livestream with just 48 hours’ notice. It was far from perfect production wise, but we did it successfully.

We started with a full service of people – in the bands, praying, Bible reading – just without a congregation. As the restrictions increased, we ended up reduced to a preacher, service leader and three technical people with all other components being pre-recorded, edited and played as a video in the service.

It was a wonderful balance of being in the church building and people participating from their homes using their gifts, talents and abilities as they would in a normal week.

We were able to record a whole lot of worship music with a variety of musicians in the early stages of the restrictions, so we had a good pool of music which had been well played and recorded, giving us a good selection of music clips for our services. With a couple of incredibly hard-working video editors and audio engineers, we were able to make some wonderful videos of music, prayers and kids ministry for our services.

We already had a Zoom account, so we were able to instantly increase the number of accounts we had so that our ministries were able to run simultaneous meetings without interrupting each other.

We had everything from prayer meetings, staff meetings, communion services, after and before church gatherings, Alpha, Children’s

Ministry, Youth Ministry, Young Adults games nights, Connect Groups, Bible Studies to Parish Council meetings.

We had technology in place whereby all the staff were able to instantly work offsite and still access all their files and communicate with each other. Like most people, we got online fatigue very quickly, but adapted as we needed to. The staff worked extremely hard to connect with people to see how everyone was responding as we had a great variety of impact upon our people.

### What COVID changes might endure?

We have continued to livestream our services each week, which was the original vision, which is fantastic. We have been able to connect with many people who were not able to physically attend a service, which they have greatly enjoyed, being a part of our worshiping community again.

We are far more aware of our online presence, but also more aware of the importance of in-person gathering and the differences there are across the variety of ministries and demographics we have.

### Negative effects of COVID?

The biggest challenge for us is probably the lack of routine which COVID brought to young families especially. While the livestream church service to your loungeroom was great, it has also highlighted the sacrificial nature of getting up and physically going to a church service.

Our semi-regulars are the group we haven’t seen come back to in-person gatherings yet in the same numbers as our regulars. If young families don’t engage and re-engage, the local church is only one generation away from extinction.

### Lessons from COVID?

The great challenge for us was and is that there are now thousands of churches who are livestreaming. People can more than ever choose where to “go to church” and be more consumeristic than ever. Thus, we need to know and work on keeping our strengths, while learning how to reduce our weaknesses.

We also need to not fall into the trap of trying to be another church... we need to keep being committed to who God is calling us to be in our community, learning from others, but becoming a better and stronger us, not them.

Online ministries are wonderful and there are great opportunities there. But, at the end of the day, most people want relationship and so we will remain having a priority and greater value on “in-person” gatherings.



## The Revd Chris Lancaster – Anglican Parish of Altona/Laverton

### How has your church coped with COVID?

We adapted fairly well to sharing services online – a mixture of livestreaming and Zoom. Most of our members were able to access one or both of these, including by phoning in to Zoom services. But we really missed the face-to-face contact with the wider community, especially through our op shop, playgroups and community lunch.

### What COVID changes might endure?

We have continued with some livestreaming and online content, seeking to reach both our existing members and also the wider community. We have also continued to hold some of our meetings (e.g., parish council, wardens) on Zoom, which works well in a parish covering quite a large geographical area. During



the pandemic we started a youth group meeting on Zoom, and this is now continuing in hybrid mode, alternating between Zoom and in-person.

### Negative effects of COVID?

There were some parts of parish life where the pandemic interrupted the momentum of growth and energy, but it has also offered the chance for a reset and rethink in some areas, too.

### Lessons from COVID?

I hope it has taught us to value the gift of being together in person, but also opened us up to different ways of sustaining our faith when we are not together. It has shown us that relationships can be nurtured online in ways that are different from in person, but still fruitful.



# St Andrew's Hall reopens after \$17m rebuild

by Stephen Cauchi

**T**HE CHURCH MISSIONARY Society's main Melbourne training facility, St Andrew's Hall, reopened on 20 March after a \$17 million redevelopment.

The director of training and development for CMS, the Revd Dr David Williams, told the opening launch that despite the interruption caused by COVID, the project had been delivered "on time, on budget and safely".

"I've been watching people's faces as they come through the heritage home onto the deck and every time there's been a jaw drop, a wow. Every single time."

"I think the buildings speak for themselves ... I stand in awe of what our great God has enabled us to do."

Dr Williams said the project began in 2014 when CMS formed a working group that developed a design brief for the architects, Jackson Clements Burroughs.

The project was tendered in January 2019 and demolition started in January 2020.

While the redevelopment was



The reopening of St Andrews CMS Hall.

Photo: Soo-Sing Goh from CMS Australia

underway, CMS training was held at St Columba's, Hawthorn, with students staying in rented apartments in that suburb.

CMS moved their main training facility from East Melbourne to St Andrew's Hall in 1965. The Hall opened that year after an accommodation block was built at the rear of a historic Federation house.

The Hall has capacity for around sixteen adults, depending on the

configuration of families in each cohort. More than 1000 adults have passed through its doors.

The St Andrew's Hall property is owned by the Anglican Evangelical Trust, who have partnered with CMS since 1919 to provide training facilities for overseas mission.

The Revd Canon Peter Rodgers, International Director of CMS Australia, said that the \$17 million redevelopment had been fully

funded without a loan.

"A large part of this came from the reallocation of \$6 million in CMS fellowship assets," he said.

"As this means reduced funds for ongoing missionary operations, we are seeking to raise another \$2 million towards the project and CMS."

The Revd Neil Bach, chairman of the Anglican Evangelical Trust, told the launch the redevelopment was "mind-blowing in every respect".

Archbishop Philip Freier officially opened the redevelopment. "We ask God's blessing on St Andrew's Hall, this centre of seeking, learning and teaching, and we ask that those who are entrusted with the preparation of candidates for missionary service, that they may teach each how to join their natural giftedness and talents with the truth of the gospel."

The Revd Dr Wei-Han Kuan, the Campaign Executive Director of the St Andrew's Hall Redevelopment Project, gave thanks for the prayers and generous giving of friends and supporters.

"We praise God for bringing the project to a successful finish in the midst of a global pandemic. He is faithful. We have prayed that the project would be delivered on time, on budget and safely; and God has answered," he said in a statement.

"The handover of the building to CMS has occurred and training of our 2021 missionary cohort is underway in the new premises. Staff and trainees have settled into the wonderfully purpose-built learning environment and facilities."

## Lessons for church from the changing lives of birds

by Brian Holden

**THIS IS** not a lockdown article. It is about pigeons. Well ... pigeons in lockdown.

Last month, I went into the city for the first time in a while and I noticed something fairly obvious: there were fewer people than I'm used to seeing. Fewer people making less rubbish, leaving fewer crumbs.

In a flash of curiosity, I wondered: *What are the pigeons eating?*

You know the ones – they perch on the bronze-covered shoulders of our past – what are they eating now the world has changed? Are they beginning to starve?

Many hours of Disney movies with my kids has shaped my imagination in specific ways. I began ruminating about anthropomorphised birds and how they



would address this crisis. Perhaps a great pigeon council would gather to call on the best minds of pigeon-kind to work on the problem. Everything is changing, the food is drying up, the humans have abandoned the city and covered their eating holes with masks. How are the pigeons to survive the change?

Never far from my heart or mind, perhaps it's not surprising I shifted to thinking about church. *As the world shifts, how are we surviving and adapting?* If we continue to cling to the shoulders of how things were and wait for the

return to normal, we may – like the pigeons – starve.

I was curious enough about the birds to look into it and it turns out the pigeons are getting bolder in order to survive. There are numerous stories of pigeons leaving the safety of their statues and going out into the local community.

One family reported that a group of pigeons has begun visiting their home eating from the table after dinner as the family stack the dishwasher ('The tale of Ollie and Dollie', *National Geographic*, Jasper Doest). Those birds have stopped waiting for old patterns to return where humans would come to them. Rather, they have taken it to the suburbs, and the streets, and to the doors of the people.

I wonder if as a church we are called to adapt in the same ways?

To walk more locally, engaging with our neighbours in a very real sense. The idea of gathering on a Sunday for worship has been a stretch for many youth and younger people without faith for some time. It used to be different; an older friend told me how there was nothing else to do on a Friday or Sunday but go to church, so he did. Now there are options like work or sport or socialising, each potentially more enticing than what's happening in our church buildings.

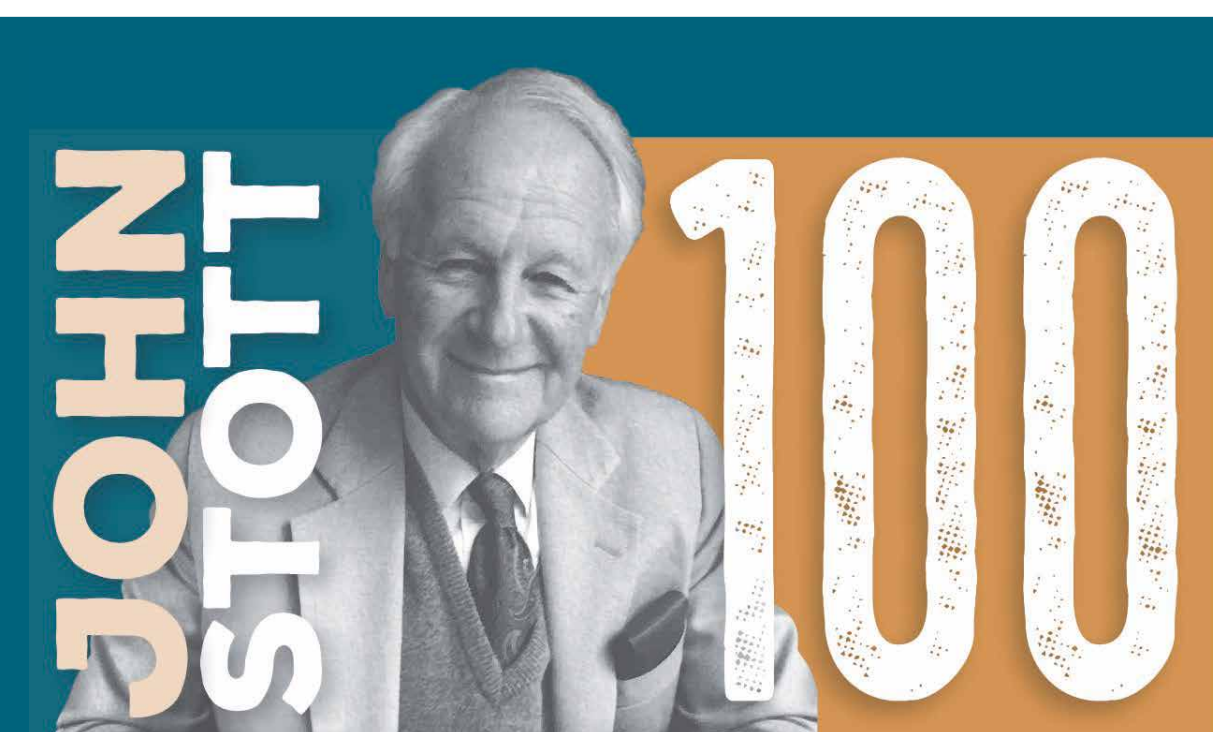
I think of the birds who for so very long could simply wait for people to come to them, and how they were able to shift, adapt and evolve. I expect there was a pigeon equivalent of bravery involved. I wonder how will the church look as we do the same? Our mission is not to gather food to support and

make baby pigeons, but to love people and make disciples.

A range of those people still aren't comfortable with gathering in larger groups because they're out of practice, because of the undercurrent of health fears, and for other reasons. So, how do we invite them to explore faith?

I wonder if the church is again being called to go out. Not in search of food, but to go and as we go make disciples. To be the people of God scattered among the houses in our local areas. There has been a significant shift for many back to less travel and local identity, and we are well positioned to live that out and be both a people gathered and a people sent.

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



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# National church constitution: future challenges

by Muriel Porter

**IS THE CONSTITUTION OF THE** Anglican Church of Australia flexible enough to meet future challenges? This was the question posed by Justice Debra Mullins in the fourth annual Robin Sharwood Lecture in Church Law at Trinity College Theological School last month.

Surveying the recent Appellate Tribunal decision concerning same-sex marriage blessing, Justice Mullins, a Queensland Supreme Court judge and Chancellor of the Diocese of Brisbane, said it was clear that that decision would not settle the debate.

“Those who identify with the minority opinion will not be persuaded by the arguments that prevailed with the majority opinion and vice versa”, she said. “That was anticipated by the opposing views reflected in the Doctrine Commission’s publication *Marriage, Same-Sex Marriage and the Anglican Church of Australia*.”

There would be challenges for the church from same-sex bless-

ing and other issues that might arise from the 2017 change to the *Marriage Act* 1961.

Justice Mullins, who is also Chair of the General Synod Church Law Commission, repeated the Sharwood Lecture

said, was possible reform of the Tribunal disciplinary system, to provide a national review system by the Appellate Tribunal or other tribunal to ensure consistency of decisions made under Professional Standards legislation.

## “The need for ‘substantial amendments’ to the constitution [will] inevitably arise in the future”

last month at St James’ Church, King Street, Sydney, in a growing collaboration between Trinity College Theological School and the Sydney parish.

In the lecture, Justice Mullins identified challenges as well to the existing Australian diocesan structure, as foreshadowed in the Viability & Structures Task Force report presented to the 2014 General Synod. And an issue that concerns her as a lawyer, she

Clergy deprived of their Orders under the Tribunal system have a right of appeal up to the Appellate Tribunal, but this is not possible if they have been deprived under Professional Standards laws.

A new national church constitution to deal with these and future challenges was unlikely, she said, but the need for “substantial amendments” to the constitution would inevitably arise in the future.

She noted that the church



Justice Debra Mullins.

does have the capacity to work harmoniously despite differing opinions. Different views among the dioceses on issues concerning episcopal standards “were subservient to the Church’s need to respond to the scrutiny of the Royal Commission”, she said, reflecting on the 2017 General Synod’s response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Australia-wide legislation was the

response, with new legislation passed with overwhelming support. The General Synod “exemplified that goodwill can be found in a conciliatory way to maintain unity and the respect and support of the Australian community”.

The Royal Commission had shown that “when the Church is under scrutiny, the strength of the response from the Church is more effective from a united Church than a fractured Church”, she said. The Australian public expected the church to address issues affecting the safety of persons in a cohesive and consistent way, and because the church functions within, and as part of, Australian society, it must be open to being judged by that society, she said.

Justice Mullins concluded that “what is required for the effective carrying out of the mission of the Church in an Australian society that is not itself static will influence ultimately whether there is an appetite among Australian Anglicans for constitutional change to meet the ongoing challenges”.

# Ex-Primate, judges to teach new course to ‘demystify’ church law

by Muriel Porter

**THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF** Australia is governed at all levels – national, diocesan and parish – by church law. This year, for the first time, Australian clergy and lay people have the opportunity to explore and understand Australian Anglican Church law in a new unit being offered at Melbourne’s Trinity College Theological School, within the University of Divinity.

Anglican Church Law and Governance, an intensive five-day unit, will be taught over two sessions in Melbourne in July. It is designed for non-lawyers as well as lawyers, and while it can be studied as part of a degree course, people who simply want to understand how the church is governed are encouraged to enrol as audit students.

The unit is supported by the Sharwood bequest, established in his will by the late Dr Robin Sharwood, a former Warden of Trinity College and an esteemed academic lawyer. It is led by the



Former Supreme Court Judge Professor Clyde Croft AM SC.

newly created Sharwood Lecturer in Church Law, former Supreme Court Judge Professor Clyde Croft AM SC, who said that the unit was intended to give people a good base in Anglican Church law as well as its theological underpinnings.

Topics covered will range from the bases of the canon law through to its day-to-day implementation at all levels of the church.

“Until people have an understanding of these basics there is

no solid foundation for church governance, because church law is not the same as ‘vanilla’ corporate governance,” says Professor Croft. The unit, he added, is intended to be both solid intellectually, and practical in its application.

## “The large body of church law concerning public worship needed to be demystified.”

The Revd Canon Professor Dorothy Lee

An impressive range of 14 guest lecturers has been gathered to teach the unit. Four bishops will participate, including the Archbishop of Brisbane and former Primate, Dr Phillip Aspinall. Leading legal practitioners will include Judge Elizabeth Brimer of the Victorian County Court, and the President of the church’s Appellate Tribunal, the Hon. Keith Mason, former president of the NSW Court of Appeal. Two academic theologians, the Revd

Canon Professor Dorothy Lee and the Revd Professor Mark Lindsay, both on the staff of Trinity College Theological School, will explore the theological dimensions of church law. Two parish priests, the Revd Dr David Powys, and

the Revd Dr Alex Ross, will offer expertise from the perspective of church law in parish life.

“Church law has a reputation for being complex and difficult to understand, with no textbooks to guide us,” says Bishop Alison Taylor, who will be teaching alongside Dr Powys in the area of public worship.

“Public worship – what we do together as a church at our services on Sundays and at other times – has been a constant source

of controversy, from Reformation times through to the recent Appellate Tribunal decision about the blessing of same-sex civil marriages,” she says. “The large body of church law concerning public worship needed to be demystified.”

Professor Lee, who, with Professor Lindsay, will be teaching ‘Theological understandings of the church and of law in the New Testament and early church’, said that the unit was “profoundly relevant for where our church is moving at the moment”. “I commend this to both laity and clergy, experienced and inexperienced, and to Anglicans of every persuasion,” she says.

The first session of Anglican Church Law and Governance commences on 1 July for two and a half days, with the second session running from 22–24 July. It can be taken as part of either undergraduate or postgraduate courses, or as an audit student. Further information and enrolment is available at [trinity.edu.au/church-law](http://trinity.edu.au/church-law).

See advert page 17.

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# TMA's first editor reflects on 'tumultuous' times

by Muriel Porter

**T**MA HAS JUST PASSED A significant milestone. Last month's issue was the 600th since the newly-named monthly newspaper began, taking over from its forerunner, *See*.

The midwife at TMA's birth in 1994 was Angela Grutzner, who had been editor of *See* since 1985. "The management committee I was working with at the time decided that the paper needed a new name," Mrs Grutzner told TMA. "They thought the name was a bit tired, and besides, they said, who knew what *See* meant anymore?" ('See' means 'diocese', derived from the Latin 'sedes' for the seat or chair of a bishop, the chair being a symbol of the bishop's authority.) So TMA - *The Melbourne Anglican* - it became.

Mrs Grutzner, now enjoying playing the piano and Bridge in retirement in Malvern, was not just the editor of *See/TMA* for 10 years. She was also media officer for both Archbishop David Penman and Archbishop Keith Rayner. It was a time when the secular media was vitally interested in the church, unlike now, not least because the ordination of women debate was raging in most of the decade she was media officer.

She worked very closely with



**"[The church] did not respect media professionalism."**

Archbishop Penman, who really liked working with the media. And the media liked him, some very deeply. When he died in 1989, Mrs Grutzner has recalled, journalists cried when she phoned to tell them of his death. Some wept openly at his funeral. "He was very human and very engaging, and they loved him for it", she said. They also really appreciated



Angela Grutzner.

the press conferences he held at Bishops Court, where his wife Jean handed around scones and cakes and tea in fine china.

Those years were "hair raising", she remembered, and though she has said she had a lot of fun, it was not always pleasant. She received any number of nasty late-night phone calls from people opposed

to women's ordination during those tumultuous years - and her callers were mostly church people. She was often a convenient scapegoat for people not prepared to take their complaints to the hierarchy, she recalled at the time of her retirement in 1995.

In an interview in TMA to mark her retirement, she said

that, if there was anything that constantly disappointed her, it was the church's persistent unwillingness to understand the media. Its expectations of the media and its role were unreal, and it did not respect media professionalism.

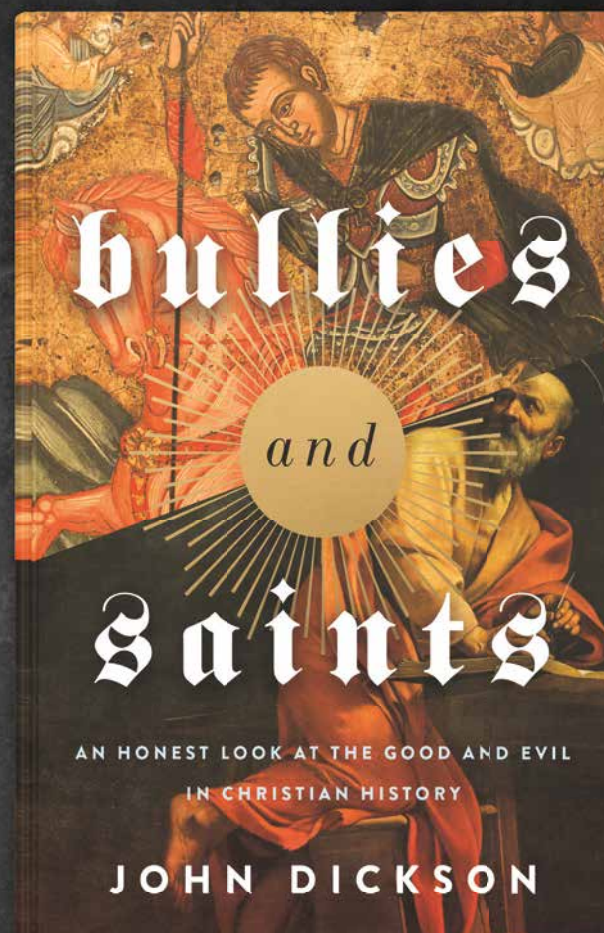
In the second half of her time as media officer, she supported Archbishop Rayner. His approach to the media was different to Archbishop Penman's, but highly respected by journalists, she recalled. But he did not much like publicity, so with a bit more time, she began the church's first national directory, an annual compilation of the details of clergy around the country, as well as diocesan and agency information. It was always fondly known as "the Grutzner". "It was one of the few signs of unity in the national church", she said.

She is delighted that, largely through Colin Reilly's initiative, a new national directory is now available after a hiatus of some years. *The Anglican Church of Australia Directory 2020/21* was published late last year by Broughton Publishing.

And she is full of praise for today's TMA, and particularly the work of her successors Roland Ashby, Emma Hलगren, and now Mark Brolly. "It is very, very good," she said.

## Does the Church have an image problem? And what's to be done about it?

In his groundbreaking book, John Dixon offers a thoroughly researched, historical and candid chronicle of the Church's mixed reputation throughout the centuries. Featured alongside this historical account is an invitation to repent of the Church's and one's own bullying tendencies, in order to pursue a path which is in accord with the teachings and life of Christ.



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REFLECTIVE



# Clergy, new and experienced, celebrate

by Mark Brolly

**T**HE MASKS WERE A GIVEAWAY that this was no ordinary ordination service, not that they ever are for the ordinands and their loved ones.

But the 16 deacons ordained on 6 February marked a return to the traditional venue for ordinations, St Paul's Cathedral.

Due to COVID restrictions, last year's ordinations of 16 priests had to be done individually in their parishes by Archbishop Philip Freier and his four assistant bishops over the weekend of 28-29 November.

The new deacons did miss having their traditional group photo on the Cathedral steps

published in *TMA* last month along with a report about the service, but we're pleased to be able to do so now.

Two of them were joined by colleagues from the Brotherhood of St Laurence. The Revd Debra Saffrey-Collins, Head of Chaplaincy at the Brotherhood, and Honorary Chaplain the Revd Bruce Everett were congratulated by their BSL family, including Bishop Kate Prowd (a board member of the Brotherhood) and the organisation's Executive Director Ms Conny Lenneberg.

And while a new group of Anglicans were celebrating their admission to Holy Orders, five men were marking their own ordinations to the diaconate

40 years earlier, on 15 February 1981.

Female deacons were still five years off when they were ordained but Bishop Genieve Blackwell led a service at St John's Bentleigh marking the anniversary for the Revds Grant Edgcumbe, Philip Higgins, Howard Langmead, David Powys and Peter Martin, followed by lunch together with their spouses.

Dr Powys noted that between them, they had clocked up nearly 200 years of ordained ministry, most of those in parishes as vicar.

There were two apologies, from David Lamont – now in Queensland – and Tom Sansom.



Archbishop Freier ordained 16 deacons on 6 February in St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne.

# Church needs to be part of conversation about gender inequality

by Chris Shearer

**FAITH COMMUNITIES** are an important part of the conversation about gender equality around the world because of the way faith shapes people's "norms, practices and structures".

This was one of the key messages shared by Melbourne's Robyn Boosey, Manager of the diocesan Prevention of Violence Against Women (PVAW) program, during the 65th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) that was held online from 15-26 March.

Ms Boosey, who was selected to represent the Australian Province of the Anglican Church as part of the eight-woman Anglican delegation to the UNCSW, spoke as part of an event held in conjunction with the UNCSW organised by the Anglican Communion and Mothers Union entitled 'What's faith got to do with it?'.

What was important to understand, she told *TMA*, is that faith plays a role in the lives of the majority of people around the world, and therefore needed to be part of the wider conversation about gender inequality.



Robyn Boosey.

"Faith communities shape people's norms and practices and structures," she told *TMA*. "We have influence in that way. So for example, people go to church to learn, to reflect and to prayerfully consider 'How can I live my faith more and better?', so it's a space where we can be positive agents of change for our own faith communities."

"Also we're often quite involved with our local communities, and so we can also be a positive agent of change in spaces like our play groups and youth groups, marriage courses, food banks and those

activities where we are engaged in the community."

"We can have a really positive impact, so we need to be included and part of that solution."

Ms Boosey said it was the partly the role of the Anglican delegates to remind secular organisations dealing with gender inequality that they were working towards the same thing, and that forming partnerships together would help achieve their shared goals.

"That's important because there has been a historic distrust between some secular organisations working for gender equality and the Church, because the Church hasn't always treated women fairly or respectfully," she said. "So part of our role is to rebuild that trust and build partnerships."

"God's intention for us ... [is to] care deeply [about] injustice, so it's important for the Church to take part and be part of the positive movement for change. This is all relevant to the Anglican Communion because it's part of the fourth mark of mission: to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace and reconciliation."

The 65th UNCSW coincided with increasingly public conversation about women and respect in Australia, after the Federal Government was rocked by several high profile allegations of sexual misconduct. In mid-February former Liberal party staffer Brittany Higgins alleged that she had been raped by a colleague in a minister's office in 2019, and soon after Attorney-General Christian Porter revealed himself as the Cabinet minister accused of rape in 1988 in a letter sent to several prominent politicians, including the Prime Minister. Then in mid-March, a Coalition staffer was sacked after an alleged lewd act in a female MP's office.

The incidents have raised questions about the culture in Parliament, with Prime Minister Scott Morrison last week vowing to make changes and welcoming a focus on "the rubbish" that women have endured.

Ms Boosey says the public discourse in the weeks following Ms Higgins' allegations has been "quite revealing".

"Even though Australia has been one of the first countries in the world to have a national preventing

violence against women framework, and there is a lot of good trailblazing work happening here, when you see those conversations happening you do realise there is a lot more work to do," she said.

"I think the public outcry and the number of women sharing their stories in a kind of 'Me Too' type way, it's shown how prevalent and urgent this issue still is, and it's really important for the Church to be equipped to be positive agents of change in this space. I think it shows women across the nation are exhausted and are really desperate to be heard and are really desperate for change, and that we're just carrying that heavy weight and that we really need our brothers to listen and come and find a solution with us."

"I think what we need to be doing is listening to women, believing them, and amplify their voices and calls to change by adding our voices. The Church needs to be a part of that conversation."

The PVAW program is holding a 'Preventing Violence Against Women' forum on Saturday 15 May. For bookings see: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing?eid=719251&>



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# Victorian Anglicans join global climate protest

by Stephen Cauchi

**ANGLICAN CHURCHES IN** Victoria were among the many global participants in the Sacred People Sacred Earth global event organised by the GreenFaith international network on 11 March.

Hundreds of multi-faith events were organised in 43 countries to draw attention to the lack of action on global warming.

Anglican participants in Victoria included St Oswald's Glen Iris, St Philip's Collingwood, All Saints' Parish of Newtown and Geelong West, and the Queenscliff Point Lonsdale Anglicans.

GreenFaith is a multi-faith environmental alliance whose partners include the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC), Greenfaith USA and Faith for the Climate Network (UK).

The President of ARRCC, Ms Thea Ormerod, said hundreds of global events were held on 11 March at 11am in varying time zones.

This was to symbolise the fact that it is the "eleventh hour" for action to address the worsening climate emergency, she said.

More than one hundred local faith communities across Australia from diverse traditions held events. These included Christian, Jewish



St Oswald's, Glen Iris, parishioners gather for their participation in the Sacred People Sacred Earth event.

and Muslim faith communities.

There were also multi-faith vigils outside the offices of Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Treasurer Josh Frydenberg and Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef, Warren Entsch.

"The Day of Action is in support of a Sacred People, Sacred Earth statement signed by very prominent religious leaders including the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams," Ms Ormerod said.

"There are also high-profile Australian signatories including Bishop Philip Huggins, President of the National Council of Churches, and Bishop Vincent

## "We vow to cherish all creation."

Long of the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta.

"The statement has been signed by over 200 faith leaders and thousands of people from a very wide range of faiths.

"The signatories seek net zero emissions for wealthy countries by 2030, a leap ahead of net zero by 2050."

At St Oswald's, parishioners and guests gathered for the event at the church's Womenjika Reconciliation and Healing Garden.

Hosted by St Oswald's Vicar, the Revd Glenn Loughrey, the event also attracted representatives from the Church of Christ, a local Buddhist monastery, the Australian Conservation Foundation, Inclusive Catholics Australia, the Lutheran Church and the Interfaith Centre of Melbourne.

The event, organised by parishioners Lisa Williams and Barbara Loh, was marked by the unfurling of a Sacred People, Sacred Earth banner designed by parishioner and artist Rosza Ganser.

Those assembled sang *All Things Bright and Beautiful* and the phrase "We vow to develop understanding, to cherish and care for all creation".

They also repeated the vow "we vow to cherish all creation".

"We vow to stand for nature, stand for creation and stand in a way that brings the unity of all to this place," Mr Loughrey said.

"We do cherish creation, we do vow to live in a way that will mean that creation is able to live its fullest and most abundant life for all of us.

"We give thanks that we have this opportunity, an attitude of gratitude towards the beauty of all that has been given to us and all that we share."

Bishop Philip Huggins, the locum at All Saints' Parish of Newtown and Geelong West, said the world was facing a "worsening climate emergency".

"Our Federal Government has a crucial leadership role both in our nation and as good neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region," Bishop Huggins said.

"The transition to net-zero carbon emissions requires we make a bold Australian contribution to COP26 (the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Glasgow on 1-12 November 2021) as is expected by the Paris Agreement.

"It means coordinating Regional Industry Plans so that workers in fossil-fuel industries can transition to durable and clean energy employment.

"We have the innovative expertise to ensure our economy flourishes and our climate is safe for this and future generations."

But Bishop Huggins said that Australia needed "coherent national leadership" that "builds trust and takes initiatives to prevent more suffering".

To view the St Oswald's event, visit <https://www.facebook.com/stoswaldchurchgleniris>

See Bishop Huggins' Growing in Faith article on page 19.

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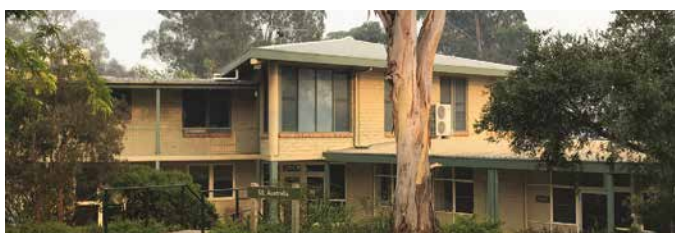
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# Sydney's dean, three assistant bishops nominated to succeed Dr Davies

by Russell Powell and  
Mark Brolly

**T**HE DEAN OF SYDNEY AND three assistant bishops of the diocese are the candidates to succeed Dr Glenn Davies as Archbishop of Sydney when the Electoral Synod meets early next month.

The Very Revd Kanishka Raffel, Dean of Sydney since 2016, Bishop Chris Edwards of North Sydney, Bishop Peter Hayward of Wollongong and Bishop Michael Stead of South Sydney have each received the required 20 names of Synod members in support of their candidacies.

Archbishop Davies, who has led Sydney's Anglicans since 2013 and deferred his retirement last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and his wife Dianne were honoured at a Service of Thanksgiving and Farewell in St Andrew's Cathedral on 26 March.

The service was attended by dignitaries including former Prime Minister John Howard and his wife Janette, Sydney's Lord Mayor Clover Moore, two NSW Cabinet ministers as well as the Primate, Archbishop Geoff Smith of Adelaide, two of Dr Davies' predecessors, Archbishops Harry Goodhew and Peter Jensen, and bishops of the Province of NSW.

Bishop Hayward, as Administrator of the diocese, will preside over a one-day ordinary session of Synod at the International Convention Centre in Darling Harbour on 3 May, but at the Archbishop's election Synod, which begins the following day, the President of the Synod will be Bishop Peter Lin of the Georges River region, as Bishop Hayward is a nominee. By a process of elimination, a final list of up to three nominees will be drawn up and the next Archbishop will be chosen by a secret ballot (or ballots).

At his farewell service, Archbishop Davies paid tribute to his mentors, colleagues and his wife and family.

"God's been good to me," he said. "It's more blessed to give than to receive but tonight I feel very blessed in receiving your



The Very Revd Kanishka Raffel.

gifts, your love, your affirmation and I bring it all to the glory of God."

Dean Raffel was born in London to Sri-Lankan parents and spent the first two decades of his life as a Buddhist before he was given a copy of the Bible while studying law at the University of Sydney.

He succeeded Phillip Jensen, brother of former Archbishop Peter Jensen, to become the first person from a non-European background to hold the post.



Bishop Chris Edwards.

Bishop Hayward was born in Sydney in 1959 but his formative years were spent on the NSW South Coast. A graduate in civil engineering, he was ordained in 1992 and founded churches in Australia and the US before becoming Bishop of Wollongong 11 years ago.

Bishop Edwards became Bishop of North Sydney in 2014, having worked as a marketing executive in the finance and banking sector before studying at Moore Theological College and



Bishop Peter Hayward.

entering the ministry in 1994. He had previously served in Adelaide and Belgium before taking up the position of Director of Mission at Anglican Retirement Villages in Sydney.

Bishop Stead has a high profile in the church in Australia and overseas, particularly through his involvement with Gafcon (the Global Anglican Future Conference).

A member of the General Synod Standing Committee, he has been the Secretary of



Bishop Michael Stead.

the General Synod Doctrine Commission since 2005 and is also a member of the Sydney Diocesan Doctrine Commission. With Gafcon, he was part in the operations team that coordinated Gafcon in 2013 and 2018, as well as being a member of the writing group that produced the Nairobi Communiqué (2013) and the Letter to the Churches (2018).

He was consecrated Bishop of South Sydney in 2015 and his research interests include Biblical Theology, the Atonement, Hermeneutics and Eschatology.

In his final "Archbishop Writes" column, Dr Davies wrote that one dear friend prayed for him daily as he filled the kettle for an early cuppa.

"I am therefore going to follow his good example by doing the same each morning for the next Archbishop," Dr Davies wrote.

"Do pray for each of the nominees. Remember, they are not candidates for office – as if they were seeking the position. Rather, they are nominees, recognised by some members of the Synod as good and godly men who, by God's grace, can take the reins of episcopal leadership for the whole Diocese, and for the glory of God and the benefit of God's people.

"Do pray for them and pray for the Synod that God's mind might be clearly discerned by its members.

"May God's blessing rest on all Anglicans in our Diocese, that we might see Jesus honoured as Lord and Saviour in every community. Amen."

## Parting leader helps launch biography of predecessor

by Mark Brolly

**ONE OF** Dr Glenn Davies' last official duties as Archbishop of Sydney was to chair the launch of a biography of one of his predecessors, Archbishop Harry Goodhew (1993–2001).

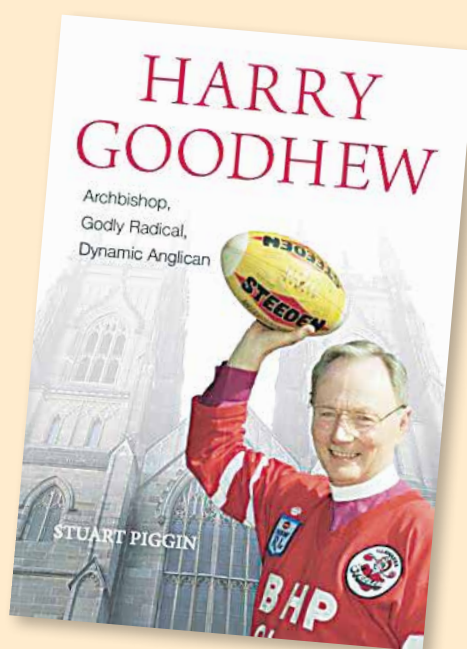
*Harry Goodhew, Archbishop, Godly Radical, Dynamic Anglican*, by award-winning author and historian Dr Stuart Pigginn, was launched at St Andrew's Cathedral on 23 March.

The publicity blurb says: "For Harry Goodhew ... the way to make Jesus known is not complicated. 'Just love people and preach the gospel,' he says. And this is what he has done most of his life.

"Harry was Archbishop through some turbulent times in the life of national and global Anglicanism – the early conversations about gay priests; the ongoing debate about ordination of women; the controversial topic of lay presidency. His inclusive, non-combative, prayerful leadership elevated his influence beyond Sydney to the Anglican Communion."

The former Archbishop's literary life is in good hands with his biographer. Dr Pigginn is a former Director of the Centre for the History of Christian Thought and Experience at Macquarie University, and has written and co-authored several books, including *Evangelical Christianity in Australia* (1996), *The Fountain of Public Prosperity* (2019) and *Attending to the National Soul: 1914–2014* (2019).

The book is published by Morning Star Publishing, an imprint of Bible Society Australia.



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# New Indigenous Studies Centre to be established at the University of Divinity

by Garry Deverell

**T**OWARDS THE END OF 2021, the University of Divinity, Australia's oldest and largest theological school, will launch its Indigenous Studies Centre. The purpose of the Centre will be to encourage the development of Christian theologies that have their roots as much in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imaginations as they do in the perspectives brought from Europe by colonists. Recognising that most Australian theological activity has been generated by white people, the Centre will deliberately seek to both decolonise Christian traditions and to engage them anew, beginning with a uniquely Indigenous sense of relationship with country, waterway and sky. Through the Centre, the University's students, graduates, teachers and researchers (whether Indigenous or not) will be encouraged to form a relationship with Christ that grows from the imaginative roots of the world's oldest living cultures.

This vision gestated over many years through conversations between local and international Christian leaders, both Indigenous and white. It was often noted that Australian theological colleges and seminaries were run by white people for white people, and that their curricula invariably reflected this fact. More recently, of course, there has been a welcome influx of recent migrants into Australian theological schools and a subsequent expansion of consciousness about the mission of the church. Some schools have even employed people of colour as tenured lecturers. But it remains the case, to this day, that no Australian theological college has ever employed an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

theologian to teach tertiary-level theology in a secure and tenured position. Some of us have been visiting lecturers and tutors. Three or four of us have even held down short contracts. But the overall picture remains fairly bleak for our people. Amidst the diverse cultures of modern Australia, in the churches Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are still regarded as the "wrong kind of black" to be occupying senior leadership positions in our churches or theological colleges. And that sends a fairly clear, and fundamentally racist, message to our mobs: "Stay away; you, along with your spiritualities and theologies, are not welcome."

The Indigenous Studies Centre aspires to change all that. Beginning with a ground-breaking agreement in 2019 between the University and NAIITS – an international learning community offering tertiary theological studies from Indigenous perspectives – we have begun to offer degrees, diplomas and certificate courses in theology that are taught by Indigenous scholars, from Indigenous perspectives, using Indigenous teaching methods. Although the courses are open to any student who meets the academic entry requirements of an Australian university, we have sought to make it clear that this particular learning experience offers a safe space for Indigenous students. Non-Indigenous students must therefore agree to refrain, for example, from badgering Indigenous students with inappropriate questions born from Australia's particular talent for casual racism, whether that be conscious or unconscious. All students agree to treat other students with respect, and to accept the ruling of their Indigenous teach-



The Revd Dr Garry Deverell.

**"Indigenous students feel like the windows have been thrown open, that theology in Australia is finally beginning to engage our own ways of imagining the life of God amongst us."**

ers on what that respect looks like in practice.

The evidence of three years of teaching the program is now in. Indigenous students feel like the windows have been thrown open,

that theology in Australia is finally beginning to engage our own ways of imagining the life of God amongst us. And non-Indigenous students report that their perspectives on God and faith have been

fundamentally transformed, even revolutionised, in the most positive ways possible.

These humble and fragile beginnings will, we hope, become the foundation for a Centre which is able to lead both church and academy into a theological journey which is, for the first time, genuinely *Australian*: "Australian" because it will seek to re-read the Christian traditions that arrived with colonists through the lens of a long and ancient experience with this continent and its peoples; "Australian" because it seeks to engage country and waterway as sacred text; "Australian" because we want to expand the meaning of that term to include the *gondwanan* heritage of this country alongside its colonial renderings. My colleague, Naomi Wolfe, and I are privileged to have been appointed by the University Council to establish the Centre. We hope that Christian people of good will from all our churches will both support and learn from us.

The Revd Dr Garry Deverell is a Trawlwoolway man, an Anglican cleric and the Vice-Chancellor's Fellow in Indigenous Theologies at the University of Divinity.

This article first appeared in VOX, the online service publishing news, articles and events from the University of Divinity community.

Further information about the Indigenous Studies programme at UD can be found at <https://divinity.edu.au/study/indigenous-theology/>. The development of the Centre will rely on private donations. To contribute, please download the donation form from <https://divinity.edu.au/giving/> and tick the "Indigenous Theology Fund" box.



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[www.ststephensrichmond.com.au](http://www.ststephensrichmond.com.au)



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# Versatile musician at home in church and opera

In the latest in an occasional series on church musicians, Rodney Wetherell explores the life and career of Michael Fulcher, Director of Music at Christ Church South Yarra.

**M**ICHAEL FULCHER IS among the most able and versatile church musicians in Australia, even conducting several operas.

He was a boy chorister at St John's Cathedral, Brisbane in the mid-1970s, and loved his time there. Then he took up the organ, learning from Robert Boughen, who was at the Cathedral for 45 years.

Like Geoffrey Cox (profiled in the December 2020 issue of TMA), he went to the Brisbane school known as Churchie (Anglican Church Grammar School), later enrolling in the School of Music at Queensland University, and doing an organ major with Boughen. Also in Music was Michael Leighton Jones, now in Melbourne, who needed a repetiteur for the department's choir, and says he found a splendid one in Fulcher, who "seemed to know what I wanted before I did".

The first choir Fulcher conducted was that of the Queensland University Music Society, then at a low ebb, and here he began to acquire his reputation for building up choirs. One of the keys to it, he says, is choosing the right repertoire for a choir, at whatever stage it happens to be: finding works a choir can sing and enjoy, that are also challenging – a choir under stress is unlikely to perform well.

Moving to the Queensland Conservatorium, he did a graduate diploma course in choral conduct-

ing under Dr John Nickson, who was revolutionising the choral world, says Fulcher.

It seems that he was seldom content to pick up skills along the way – he did a series of courses, to learn from the best in a field. And he proved his versatility when he was asked to be assistant conductor for the first Australian production of Benjamin Britten's opera *Billy Budd*. This led to him working on Donizetti's *Lesisir d'amore*, as well as a staged version of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

In 1994, Fulcher had his first Melbourne appointment, as Director of Music at Trinity College. Philip Nicholls calls this a visionary appointment by then Warden Evan Burge. As well as conducting the choir for weekly services, he prepared them for a performance of *Messiah* using period instruments, with soloists including the famous Gerald English.

Next came six months in Oxford, and to London for a very busy few years there. To learn more about opera conducting, he became a private pupil of Charles Mackerras and Mark Elder, observing many of their rehearsals. Fulcher's skill as a repetiteur proved useful, in getting him work with the English National Opera.

In Brisbane, he had met Janice Chapman, an Australian-born soprano who is an international expert on voice training, and in London he worked on and off at

her singing studio. And there was always organ playing, as he filled in at Wadham College Oxford, and in London parishes such as Clerkenwell. The dizzying variety of his work at that time shows the number of career possibilities he



Michael Fulcher.

had – and there were more moves to come, to Paris for example, where he played the organ at St George's Anglican Church.

I asked Michael how he chose among his numerous options, and he said he just let things unfold, believing he would be shown the right course.

After several years in Europe, Fulcher felt the need to return to Australia, partly because his father was ill – but the appointment he accepted was actually in New Zealand, as Director of Music at St

Paul's Cathedral Wellington. It was his years there that seem to have determined his future in music, as primarily a church musician.

What are the main differences, I asked, between coaching and conducting opera singers and training a church choir? The voice types are different, he said – big projection and vibrato for opera, and the "white" sound of choral voices. Yet it is a mistake to think that vibrato has no place in church music – some of the famous English choirs have tenors and basses using plenty of vibrato, though boys do not. Moreover, weeks might be spent on preparing opera singers for a production, but church choirs must "turn around" anthems and settings quite quickly, as the church year goes by.

Fulcher was extremely busy at St Paul's, but made time to conduct the Wellington Orpheus Choir, in the "philharmonic" tradition. He also prepared a huge choir for Mahler's 8th Symphony, the "Symphony of 1000".

He is someone who straddles the worlds of secular and church choirs, which is unusual these days – there are differences and some rivalry between the two. Fulcher left Wellington after the death of his father, to be closer to his mother in Brisbane, going back to St John's Cathedral as organist, under Director of Music Graeme Morton. There he coached opera singers, and gave organ recitals.

In 2013 came another move, to his present job as Director of Music at Christ Church South Yarra, noted for its long musical tradition. Here he succeeded Philip Nicholls, now at St Paul's Cathedral.

I asked Fulcher about the place of the choir within the spiritual life of this or any other parish – experience tells me that this is rarely discussed among choral singers. Fulcher replied by quoting his first mentor, Robert Boughen, who told him that church music was a vocation, not just a job. Naturally, one can't worship in the same way when actually conducting or playing the organ, or the music would suffer. Yet it is an offering to God like any other – the whole context is that of prayer, and using a gift in his service.

Congregations tend to be conservative in their musical tastes, he says, preferring favourites from the 18th and 19th centuries, but at Christ Church he has regularly included contemporary anthems – a balance needs to be struck. The choir sings some polyphonic mass settings by composers like Victoria, but also leads congregational settings of the present day, of which five are familiar at present.

Anglican chant is alive and well too, mainly at the monthly choral Evensong.

With Easter approaching, I asked him for a favourite work for this great festival, and he nominated *Joy is Come, Eastertide*, a traditional carol arranged by Andrew Carter.

Michael Fulcher will go on within an ancient but lively tradition of church music, while continuing to perform and commission new works.

Rodney Wetherell is a retired ABC producer who worships at St Martin's Hawksburn and attends Evensong and special services at St Paul's Cathedral.

## Prayer Diary

(Can also be downloaded from <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/spiritual-resources/>)

### APRIL

**Easter Day 4:** Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; The Diocese of Bunbury (Bp Ian Coutts, Clergy & People); Ecumenical Affairs Committee; Christ Church Melton (Neil Taylor, Ruth Li); St Paul's Cathedral – Easter Sunday Service (Abp Philip Freier); St Matthews Wheelers Hill – Easter Service (Bp Paul Barker); Tamil Christian Congregation (TCCV) – Easter Service (Bp Paul Barker); St Paul's Cathedral – Easter Day Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); St Mary's Camberwell South – Easter Day Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); The Anglican Parish of St George's Queenscliff & St James Point Lonsdale – Pastoral Service (Bp Kate Prowd);

**Mon 5:** The Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn (Bp Mark Short, Asst Bps Stephen Pickard, Carol Wagner, Clergy & People); St Augustine's Mentone (Ben Soderlund);

**Tue 6:** Ministry to the Defence Force (Bishop Grant Dibden, Chaplains & Members of the Defence Forces); Firbank Grammar School (Jenny Williams, Principal); Christine Croft, chaplain; Parish of St Matthias Mernda (Craig Ogden, Sandy Solomon);

**Wed 7:** The Diocese of Gippsland (Bp Richard Treloar, Clergy & People); Defence Force Chaplains; Merri Creek Melbourne (Pete Carolane, James Hale, Beck Miller, Robert Miller);

**Thu 8:** The Diocese of Grafton (Bp Murray Harvey, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of The Yarra (Tim Johnson); All Saints' Mitcham (Penny Charters);

**Fri 9:** Ministry with the Aboriginal people of Australia (Bp Chris McLeod, National Aboriginal Bishop, Aboriginal Clergy & People); Geelong Grammar School (Rebecca Cody, Principal); Gordon Lingard,

Howard Parkinson, Chaplains); St George's Monbulk (Simon Elliott);

**Sat 10:** Ministry with the Torres Strait Islander people of Australia (Torres Strait Islander Clergy & People); Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion (EFAC) (Adam Cetrangolo, Chair); St Thomas' Moonee Ponds (Vanessa Bennett);

**Sun 11:** The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean; The Diocese of Melbourne (Abp Philip Freier, Asst Bps Paul Barker, Bradly Billings, Genieve Blackwell, Kate Prowd, Clergy & People); Evangelism in the Diocese; St David's Moorabbin (Johnsan David); All Saints St Kilda – Confirmation service (Abp Philip Freier); St Luke's Vermont – Pastoral Service (Bp Paul Barker); Casey Anglican Dinka Congregation – Pastoral Service (Bp Paul Barker);

**Mon 12:** The Diocese of Newcastle (Bp Peter Stuart, Asst Bps Charlie Murry, Sonia Roulston, Clergy & People); Police Force Chaplains (Drew Mellor, David Thompson & other Chaplains) and members of the Police Force; St Nicholas' Mordialloc (Ron Johnson);

**Tue 13:** The Diocese of North Queensland (Bp Keith Joseph, Clergy & People); Hume Anglican Grammar School (Bill Sweeney, Principal); Peter Waterhouse, Chaplain; St Augustine's Moreland (Angela Cook, Christopher Swann);

**Wed 14:** The Diocese of North West Australia (Bp Gary Nelson, Clergy & People); Examining Chaplains (Gail Pinchbeck, Lindsay Urwin, Turi Hollis, Noelene Horton AM, Chris Appleby, Peter Martin, Jan Joustera, Dawn Treloar, Victor Yu, Robert Vun, Jane Freemantle, Yvonne Poon, Heather Schnagl, Michael Flynn); The Parish of St Peter's, Mornington

w. St Martin's, Mount Martha (Helen Phillips, John Phillips, Liz Rankin); Senior Leadership Retreat Day (Abp Philip Freier); **Thu 15:** The Diocese of Perth (Abp Kay Goldsworthy, Asst Bps Jeremy James, Kate Wilmot, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Williamstown (Glenn Buijs); Parish of Mount Dandenong (Andrew Smith);

**Fri 16:** The Diocese of Riverina (Bp Donald Kirk, Clergy & People); Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School (Deborah Priest, Principal); Mount Eliza Church (Jennie Savage); Special Session of Synod – St Paul's Cathedral (Abp Philip Freier);

**Sat 17:** The Diocese of Rockhampton (Bp Peter Grice, Clergy & People); Girls' Friendly Society (Alison Benfield, Chair); St Philip's Mount Waverley (Ruth Newmarch);

**Sun 18:** The Church of Ireland; The Diocese of Sydney (Abp Glenn Davies, Regional Bps Chris Edwards, Michael Stead, Peter Hayward, Peter Lin, Malcolm Richards, Gary Koo, Clergy & People); Lay Ministry; St Stephen's and St Mary's Mount Waverley (Dianne Sharrock, Greg Wong); St Luke's Mulgrave – Pastoral Service (Bp Paul Barker); St Agnes' Glenhuntingly – Confirmation Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); Holy Trinity Williamstown – Confirmation Service (Bp Kate Prowd);

**Mon 19:** The Diocese of Tasmania (Bp Richard Condie, Missioner Bp Chris Jones, Clergy & People); Anglican Criminal Justice Ministry Chaplaincy (Rob Ferguson, Senior Chaplain & Chaplains); St Luke's (Bruce Ollington);

**Tue 20:** The Diocese of The Murray (Bp Keith Dalby, Clergy & People); Ivanhoe Grammar School (Gerard Foley, Principal, John Sanderson, Chaplain); Mullum Mullum Parish, Ringwood (Maria Brand); St Stephen's Werribee Karen Anglican

Authorised Congregation – Commissioning Service (Bp Kate Prowd);

**Wed 21:** The Diocese of The Northern Territory (Bp Greg Anderson, Clergy & People); Relationship Matters (Janet Jukes, CEO); The Parish of St Peter's, Murrumbidgee w. Holy Nativity, Hughesdale (Lawrence Anbalagan);

**Thu 22:** The Diocese of Wangaratta (Bp Clarence Bester, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Box Hill (Dianne Sharrock); Christ Church Newport (Mark McDonald);

**Fri 23:** The Diocese of Willochra (Bp John Stead, Clergy & People); Janet Clarke Hall (Damian Powell, Principal); All Saints' Parish of Newtown/Geelong West (John Walz);

**Sat 24:** Anglicare Australia (Bp Chris Jones, Chair); Kasy Chambers, Exec Director; Melbourne Anglican Foundation; St Aidan's Noble Park (Gerald Loos); Senior Leaders and AiC Joint Committee Chairs workshop (Abp Philip Freier);

**Sun 25:** The Nippon Sei Ko Kai; Theological Colleges, Church Schools & Church Kindergartens; Ministries to Youth; Parish of Oakleigh – Holy Trinity & Emmanuel (Colleen Arnold-Moore); St Luke's Frankston – Pastoral Service (Bp Paul Barker); RAFT Anglican Church Rowville – Confirmation Service (Bp Paul Barker);

**Mon 26:** Mission Agencies of the Anglican Church of Australia; The Parish of St Peter's, Ocean Grove w. All Saints, Barwon Heads (Jill McCoy, Jill Poole);

**Tue 27:** Religious Orders serving within the Anglican Church of Australia; Korowa Anglican Girls' School (Helen Carmody, Principal); Kirsten Winkett, Chaplain; Parish of Ormond (Kevin Pedersen,

Amanda Lyons, Sam Crane); St James Glen Iris – Commissioning Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell);

**Wed 28:** Locums and all retired clergy; Mission to Seafarers (Neil Edwards, Chair; Onfré Punay, Chaplain); Overnewton Anglican Community College, Keilor (Helen Dwyer, Robert Koren, chaplains);

**Thu 29:** The Anglican Church of Australia (Primate Abp Geoffrey Smith, General Secretary Anne Hywood, the General Synod & the Standing Committee); Archdeaconry of Dandenong; St James Pakenham (Matt Scheffer, Kathleen Mildred);

**Fri 30:** The Diocese of Adelaide (Abp Geoffrey Smith, Asst Bps Denise Ferguson, Timothy Harris, Christopher McLeod, Clergy & People); Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School (Elisabeth Rhodes, Principal); Fiona Raika, Chaplain; The Parish of St Matthew's, Panton Hill w. St Andrew's, St Andrews (Jonathan Lopez);

### MAY

**Sat 1:** The Diocese of Armidale (Bp Rick Lewers, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Essendon (Vanessa Bennett); St Aidan's Parkdale (Daniel Gebert);

**Sun 2:** The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & The Middle East; The Diocese of Ballarat (Bp Garry Weatherill, Clergy & People); University of Divinity (Peter Sherlock, Vice-Chancellor); The Anglican Parish of Pascoe Vale/Oak Park (vacant incumbency); Church of the New Guinea Martyrs Anglican Church, Croydon South – Pastoral Service (Bp Paul Barker); St Augustine's Moreland – Confirmation Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); St Paul's Cathedral – Tintern Grammar (Bp Genieve Blackwell); Christ Church Melton – Pastoral Service (Bp Kate Prowd).



# Your say on church change, unity and division

## Openness to Spirit-led change needed for churches to flourish

Ken Morgan's article in the most recent TMA about being open to change in church life was excellent. Especially his point that failure to change leads to atrophy and ultimately the closure of parishes. In the words of Leonard Sweet, if we don't change we die.

It reminded me of the saying that Jesus disturbs the comfortable and comforts the disturbed. There is evidence that the COVID lockdowns here in Victoria have resulted in new

growth and new ways of being Church in a number of churches.

We need to be alert to the resistance to change we can all develop as we grow older and become more set in our ways. May we always be open to the fresh winds of the Spirit.

It's very encouraging to see the new life that the Diocesan Parish Renewal program is bringing.

(The Revd) Paul Arnott,  
Ringwood East

## Plea for unity an argument to go separate ways

The "plea" by Dorothy Lee and Peter Sherlock "for Anglicans to hold together" ironically provided sound logic for moving apart (TMA March).

The quoted aphorism: "What holds us together is far more than what divides us" is symbolic of the irony because the reality is, what divides us is far greater than what unites us. God's Word is the issue. "... Our reception and interpretation of Scripture is shaped by where we stand." In fact the opposite is

true – where we stand is shaped by Scripture (2Timothy 3:16).

"It is not a question of whether we accept Scripture or not." It is precisely the question! Jesus said that our relationship with Him is contingent upon believing and receiving His words (John 14:21).

Finally, and significantly, is the understanding of salvation. "... At the end of time we will face the Day of Judgment and throw ourselves on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus." This is not the Biblical view. A sinner will throw themselves on the mercy of God when they first repent and

believe the Gospel; they will daily ask forgiveness, won for them on the cross, as they seek to live a Godly life; but at the end, will be received into God's presence as His child, which they became at conversion. Any amount of having to "throw ourselves" on His mercy would diminish Christ's perfect work.

To quote Fiona McLean: "It is impossible and impractical to live with two diametrically opposed points of view in the one church."

Stephen Fry,  
Hoppers Crossing

# Dr Freier, AOA in urgent plea for Mozambique's displaced people

ARCHBISHOP PHILIP Freier and Melbourne-based Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA) have appealed to Australians to help relieve the suffering of more than 500,000 displaced people in northern Mozambique.

Dr Freier, in a video message on 17 March, said the new, fast-growing diocese of Nampula had to receive 500,000 displaced residents because insurgents were carrying out "unspeakable atrocities" against civilians in the north of the country.

He said the people of Nampula were utterly destitute, yet were trying the cope with the influx fleeing the terrorist regime.

Archbishop Freier said Mozambique – with 29 million people, more than Australia – was one of the least-developed countries in the world, with 46 per cent of the people living in poverty. On a scale of 188 countries ranked in terms of their development, Mozambique was 181st.

He appealed to Anglicans to bring this situation to their prayer and concern as part of their committed alms-giving.

Dr Freier said AOA was making Nampula the focus of its Easter appeal, but the needs are so urgent



People who have fled their homes to relative safety in Pemba are grateful to receive food, water purifiers and hygiene supplies from the Anglican Missionary Diocese of Nampula.

Photo credit: Anglican Missionary Diocese of Nampula

that Anglicans should not wait to respond.

Alluding to the feast day of St Patrick, the great missionary to Ireland who emptied himself of everything for the sake of carrying the Gospel to those who had not heard the Good News in his time, Archbishop Freier said St Patrick had recorded in his Confessions how difficult it was to be a Christian missionary in Ireland.

AOA's Easter appeal 'Hear Their Cry' aims to provide immediate

relief to more than half a million people in Mozambique.

"Mozambique is a country that does not often make the news," the agency says on its Easter appeal webpage. "As well as the ongoing recovery from Tropical Cyclones Kenneth and Idai in 2019, and the more recent Tropical Cyclone Eloise in January this year, civil and military conflict has gripped the north of the country, devastating whole communities and sending

them fleeing for their lives.

"The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has called for peace in the region, endorsing a statement by international faith leaders highlighting the trauma the Cabo Delgado province is enduring, with close to 2000 people losing their lives and over 500,000 people forced from their homes.

"Because of this tragic loss of life and massive displacement of people, there has been an increase in poverty, with a lack of food and shelter being key issues. With so many in temporary housing like tents, and little access to water and sanitation, increases in malaria and other water-borne diseases highlight the reality of what has become a humanitarian disaster in the region.

"The displaced people have lost their homes, security, and livelihoods, and many have lost their family members. They are wandering, looking for help. They are groaning in pain and need their cries to be heard."

AOA said it was working with its partner, the Anglican Missionary Diocese of Nampula, to help them in their work with Internally Displaced Peoples in

the Cabo Delgado province.

"This Easter Appeal, we are asking you to assist with the urgent needs of more than 500,000 people in Mozambique who have lost their homes and face poverty and vulnerability. The needs are widespread and immediate. They include reliable access to food, arranging for adequate shelter, and healing from the trauma the people are experiencing. Communities currently hosting the displaced are struggling to share meagre resources as their population doubles in size.

"The Anglican Missionary Diocese of Nampula has advised us that they need the following:

- assistance with the distribution of reliable access to clean water, food and adequate shelter,
- help with the provision of agricultural supplies for food production,
- support to advocate for strengthened dialogue, peace and reconciliation."

For more information and to donate, please go to <https://anglicanoverseasaid.org.au/give/hear-their-cry-2021-easter-appeal/>

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Enquiries/application to the Rector Rev'd Chris Johnson, [chris@anglicanchurchnoosa.org](mailto:chris@anglicanchurchnoosa.org)  
PO Box 342 Tewantin Qld 4565,  
Ph 07 5449 8009

## Expressions of interest invited for Canowindra Campus Chaplain Overnewton Anglican Community College

Overnewton Anglican Community College is a co-educational P-12 College located 20 minutes west of Melbourne CBD. Our Junior School and Year 9 Centre are located on Canowindra Campus, Taylors Lakes and our Middle and Senior Schools are located on Yirramboi Campus, Keilor.

**Expressions of interest are invited from suitably qualified people with a calling to provide ministry in the position of Canowindra Campus Chaplain**

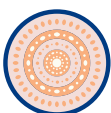
Christian values and faith practices are embodied in the life of the College.

We require a Chaplain who will relate faith issues to student experience in an educational, worship and pastoral context. The Chaplain will lead worship and provide pastoral support to the Canowindra Campus community, including weekly chapel services for Junior School and Year 9.

Applications from ordained Anglican priests will be received favourably. The chaplaincy position is 0.8 FTE. This may be increased for a VIT registered teacher.

This position will commence 19 July, 2021 (negotiable). Information about the position can be found at [overnewton.vic.edu.au](http://overnewton.vic.edu.au)

Applications to be emailed to the College Head of Human Resources, Mrs Di Nunan, by Monday, 10 May 2021: [humanresources@overnewton.vic.edu.au](mailto:humanresources@overnewton.vic.edu.au)



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# COVID should prompt moral clarity on big issues and revive civil society

**The pandemic has provided Australia with the opportunity to rethink, reform and revive the institutions of a civil society and to re-engage with the issues standing between us and a better world, says the Honourable David Harper AM.**

**T**HE COVID 19 PANDEMIC gives substance to what would otherwise be a trite observation: a crisis must never be wasted. The pandemic has created an opportunity to destroy shibboleths, re-imagine our future and call upon the “fierce wisdom” of which Dr Matthew Fox spoke in the March edition of the TMA. COVID could then become a springboard from which to create a new dynamism in both public discourse and public policy. In this, government, business and civil society would all be essential participants. Issues of broad social import – issues of direct relevance to the creation of a better post-COVID world than that which existed before the pandemic – give rise to problems which only good governance and the commercial sector, coupled with an informed and engaged civil society, can resolve.

We are that civil society. We must shoulder our responsibility. The first step is to identify where change is most needed. Climate policies stand out. My list of other areas demanding change includes an additional four; but there are, of course, many more. Apart from climate, my additional four are: a constitutionally entrenched voice for Australia's First Nations; a significant lessening in the gap between rich and poor; repairing democracy; and respect for all, not least those of the opposite sex.



## **A constitutionally entrenched voice for Australia's First Nations**

The Uluru Statement from the Heart points clearly to the justice in giving our Indigenous peoples a constitutionally entrenched voice. It does not propose the power to change the law. It merely asks for a constitutionally guaranteed right to speak to the Federal Parliament on proposals which affect Indigenous interests. This surely must be granted.



## **A significant lessening in the gap between rich and poor**

The divide between rich and poor in Australia is a matter of national shame. Our wealth is not shared

## **“Policies that deny support for the needy while adding to the wealth of the wealthy are seriously skewed.”**

equitably between traditional owners and the rest of us; indeed, society as a whole is diminished by inequity which goes way beyond Indigenous disadvantage. According to Samuel Alexander, a research fellow at the University of Melbourne's Sustainability Society Institute, the top 20 per cent of Australian households hold more than 60 per cent of the nation's total worth. The bottom 20 per cent hold less than one per cent.

As John asks in his first epistle (Chapter 3, verse 17), if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? It certainly doesn't abide in the tax and welfare systems. Policies that deny support for the needy while adding to the wealth of the wealthy are seriously skewed. Most economists acknowledge that extremes in wealth have a profoundly adverse effect not only on the nation's economic health but also on its social cohesion. The Australian National University has since 1987 conducted surveys of Australian voters' confidence in our system of government. In 2019, 41 per cent were not satisfied with it; and only 25 per cent thought that people in government could be trusted.



## **Repairing democracy**

The trust deficit must be addressed. Much of the scepticism about honesty in government is attributable to the fact that, in politics, money buys influence. Judged against any ethical standard, this is immoral. But at the federal level in Australia, the system almost requires politicians to beg for large donations; and these will be given and received on the implicit or explicit promise that donor benefits will follow.

Bad systems encourage deviance from a fundamental principle of democratic governance. A former Australian Chief Justice, Sir Gerard Brennan, described that principle in a 2016 speech in Parliament House, Canberra. Members of Parliament, he said, hold a fiduciary duty to the public, and undertake – and have imposed upon them – a public duty and a public trust.



## **“Disrespect for women and minorities – for any of us – is deeply offensive and belittling to those not respected.”**

This, he said, “demands that all decisions and exercises of power be taken in the interests of the beneficiaries and that duty cannot be subordinated to, or qualified by, the interests of the trustee”.

There are many reasons to conclude that governments of both political persuasions have no concept of public office as a public trust. Space allows reference to only two. One is the sports rorts affair, involving grants worth \$5 billion. Another is the purchase in mid-2018 of 12 hectares of land near the Western Sydney airport for \$29.8 million when 12 months earlier it had been valued at only \$3 million. The Commonwealth Auditor-General has referred this to the Australian Federal Police. Meanwhile, funding for the office of the Auditor-General has since 2013 been cut in real terms by 22 per cent. Removing the necessary resources from the Auditor-General is the perfect means of avoiding democratic accountability.

A robust Federal Integrity Commission would be one mechanism for improvement. The model proposed by the Commonwealth has had the required robustness

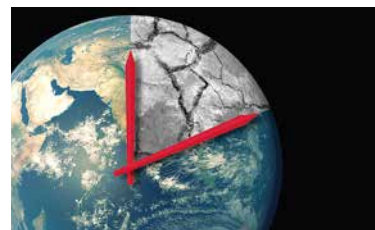
surgically removed from it. It would, if the Bill presently being considered became law, shield the corrupt. It would not prevent the improper use of political donations for the purchase of influence. It would do nothing to stop the misuse of public funds for improper political advantage. It would not even allow for an investigation unless the Commission received a reference from one of a limited

number of referees, none of whom is likely to initiate that reference. Only criminal activity would be investigated, even though serious corruption is not necessarily a criminal offence. No politician, and no public servant not involved in law enforcement, would be subject to a public hearing, to a finding of corruption, or to a public report of the Commission's findings. Yet those who deal in the huge sums involved in Federal Government procurements are both influential and skilled at concealment. The proposed Commission could never penetrate their patina of innocence.



## **Respect for all, not least those of the opposite sex**

To love thy neighbour is, at the least, to respect the humanity inherent in us all. Here resides my fourth area of concern. It arises from evidence, to be found everywhere and not least in parliaments, that disrespect for women and minorities – for any of us – is deeply offensive and belittling to those not respected. It more than occasionally leaves the deepest of physical and mental wounds, and every instance of it diminishes society generally. It is a curse that must be fought with a variety of weapons, some of them blunt, others not so; but in a fight that cannot cease until the curse is extinguished. There can be no justice without respect; and, as St Thomas Aquinas has taught, “God is Justice”.



## **Climate policy**

And so to climate policy. Nobody in public life could be unaware of claims that the world faces an existential crisis if global warming exceeds 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures. You might be – you should be – sceptical when first confronted by these claims. But given the scientific basis on which they are made, you could not as a holder of public office ignore them. The public trust that you are by your office bound to uphold imposes on you a crucially important duty to scrutinise with great care claims of existential

## **“Australia has the opportunity to become a green energy powerhouse, more than compensating for the economic impact of eliminating greenhouse gas emissions well before 2050.”**

danger. And at the conclusion of that scrutiny, you could not fail to appreciate that the scientists might be right and your scepticism might be misplaced. The conclusion is inescapable: your duty as a public trustee requires nothing less than that you direct everything in your power to the elimination of that risk.

This is especially so because a catastrophe might be turned into its opposite. As Professor Ross Garnaut has shown, Australia has the opportunity to become a green energy powerhouse, more than compensating for the economic impact of eliminating greenhouse gas emissions well before 2050. All it needs is a parliament with moral clarity, the vision which goes with it, and a receptive civil society. We are that society. We cannot escape our duty to respond.

The Hon David Harper AM is a former judge of the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court of Victoria.



# Looking forward to the Eternal with Easter faith

**Attending to our thinking and what we choose to express can bring healing and peace among individuals and nations, says Philip Huggins. Jesus has shown us the way.**

**W**HEN I FIRST SAW THIS painting (see right), I thought of the symmetry between the Creation, the Incarnation, the Cross and the Resurrection.

The symmetry is in the love of God for us all.

God creates from nothing this universe of beauty and splendour; comes amongst us as vulnerable as baby Jesus in a manger; lives, dies and rises to show us the Way, the Truth and the Life.

It is all a matter of love. In return, we are invited to be loving of God and of one another.

This is our Easter faith. At a local level, individuals and faith communities express it in many different ways – maintaining a life together of worship, pastoral care and community engagement.

What else can we do to ensure we are in the right Spirit, the Holy Spirit, for current circumstances in the eternal now?

Can I make one suggestion?

It comes with a story that gives context for why I think this is utterly crucial.

Recently, I have been in meetings both in our Federal Parliament and with our Multifaith Advisory Group to the Victorian Government.

Amidst matters such as support for Myanmar's democratic future, the provision of vaccines to the vulnerable health workers of our region and climate change policy, there also has been such deep concern about gender violence and about racism.

How do we become a society without such cruelty – without racism and misogyny?

What is the role of faithful disciples of the risen Jesus in our local faith communities – schools, parishes, agencies?

Simple as it may sound, it starts with the universal wisdom of attending to what we think about and what we let influence our thinking.

vulnerable, Jesus challenges those full of righteous hostility to reconsider their own condition of being.

Silence and then only words of grace...

That is, seeing folk afresh in a spirit of giving and forgiving rather than trapping them and us in some negative stereotyping, based on the past.

healing, grace and peace can find a spiritual home.

Looking back on my many years of Church leadership, much of it has had to be about trying to stop people making their lives even more unhappy together. This is because people have become alienated by not being careful about what they think and say to one another.

Our faith communities, which are meant to embody the Easter faith, are much weaker than they could be and should be when people are not careful about the effect of what they think and say to one another.

The sorrow this causes our beloved Saviour is itself unspeakable.

Our national and international context is so in need of hopeful beings in agape love with God and one another. There is such a need for patient listening to facilitate healing and reconciliation.

Another meeting I had recently was with a fine young man who teaches music to troubled teenagers in a special school for kids who are from families of abuse, violence and neglect. Music helps them to find a new, unifying and uplifting language. Making music together gives them hope and helps them, in education, to shape a positive way forward.

If we are to also help such young lives, damaged by the thoughts and actions of elders, then our own lives together must be "the change we seek".

I have learned to try and be more careful myself with matters of thoughts, words and actions. Accordingly, humbly, I offer this heartfelt reflection in Easter faith.

As St Anthony of Egypt said: "Each day we begin again."

With prayers in the grace and peace of the Risen Jesus, the One who was before all time and "in whom all things hold together" (Colossians 1:17).

Bishop Philip Huggins is President of the National Council of Churches in Australia and a former Assistant Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. This article first appeared on the NCCA website.

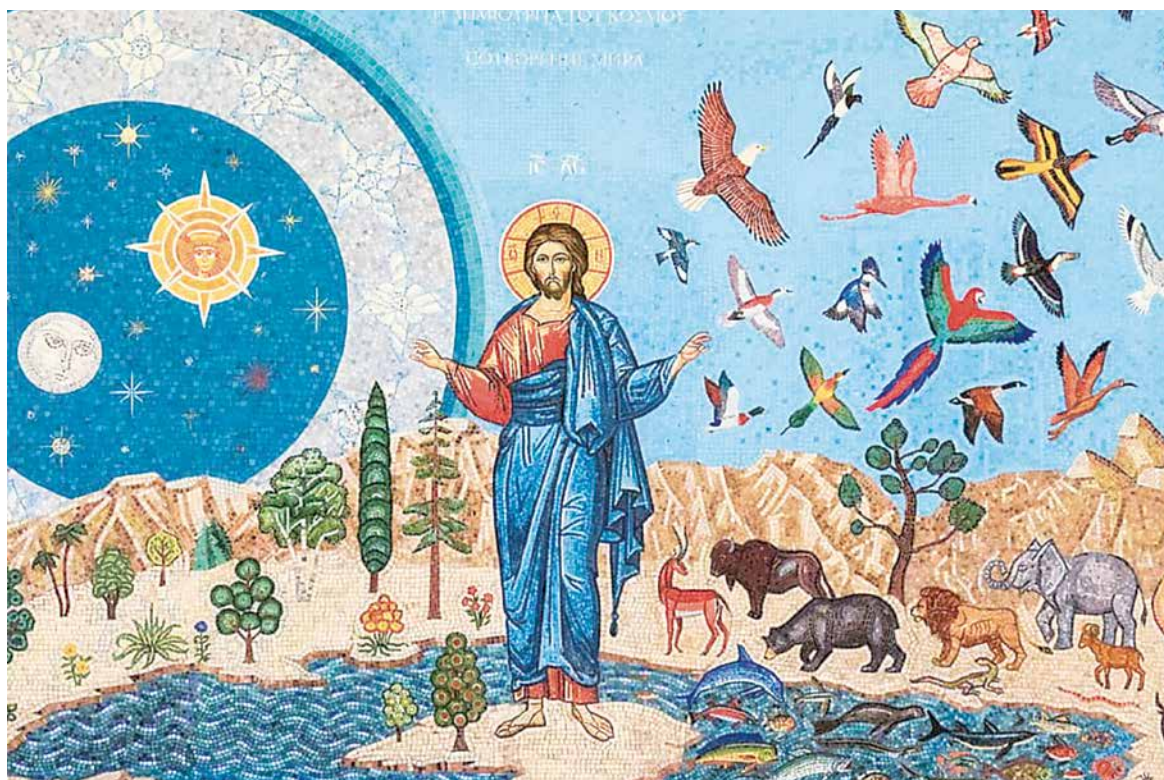


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This is because our thinking shapes our words and our other actions.

The pattern of our thinking, over time, shapes our character and our destiny – individually and corporately.

We become what we think.

It is estimated that we have some 50,000 thoughts per day!

Imagine the change in atmosphere if we only thought and spoke that which is beautiful, kind and true!

Imagine the difference if we practised "silence is golden" and did not speak the thought that is on our lips but is actually only divisive gossip or some form of "us versus them" unkindness?

The silence of Jesus before His accusers at the trial in Holy Week is so poignant. Likewise poignant is the story of the woman whom Jesus helps find freedom and a new beginning in John chapter eight, verses 1-11. As that person stands silent and

**"Imagine the change in atmosphere if we only thought and spoke that which is beautiful, kind and true!"**

Finding ways to create new beginnings is Easter faith in action. Redemptive narratives warm our hearts. Reciprocal negativity is so familiar.

Imagine the difference if we saw folk we know as if afresh in a new meeting, without preconceptions, especially people with whom we have had a negative history?

Whilst this negative stereotyping is seen as "normal" in much of public life, it is utterly unifying and takes us nowhere new.

However, to make a "new normal" and choose to think only that which is speakable in grace does take sustained discipline!

Hence the place of the Jesus Prayer and other spiritual practices (See *Growing in Faith*, page 22) so as to enhance our self-awareness and help us make good, Godly choices.

The fact is that we are currently poisoning ourselves and causing much suffering by thoughts and actions that do not respect these essential realities.

This will only change when we all clean our minds with the same discipline that we clean our bodies, our homes and our streets.

I cannot overstate how important this matter is to health. For local communities of Easter faith, when there is this healthiness of relationship, then people seeking



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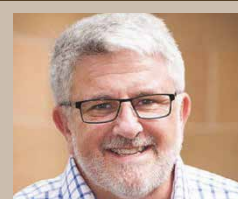
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# FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

The Revd Dr Scott Harrower  
is Lecturer in Christian Thought at  
Ridley College, Parkville.



## Drawing near to God makes sense of our human nature

**Although God loves us, human life on Earth has been a chaotic scramble for survival since the Fall. But Jesus shows that union with God through Himself and the Spirit has love for others as an outcome that goes together with loving God, says Scott Harrower.**

**S**TUDENTS SOMETIMES ASK ME what they should do with their life and opportunities. I often answer “draw near to God”. By this I mean that one of the most important aspects of life is drawing near to God in the context of an interpersonal union with Him. “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8). Drawing near to God deals with the intensification of our organic relationship with him. In the midst of our everyday callings such as family relationships and loving our neighbours, our life is chiefly concerned with developing increasing closeness with God in a spiritual, intellectual and emotional way. Naturally, this sounds a little daunting and we may not be sure about how to draw near to God. It is tempting to think that intensifying our intimacy with God is best left to the John Stotts or St Clares of the Christian world. For our encouragement, Jesus reminds us that drawing near to God develops within a secure attachment that He has already established with us; we do not need to find and claw our way to God. In what follows, I’d like to unpack our attachment to God as the context within which we may draw nearer to Him and He will draw nearer to us.

We can understand the kind of attachment we have with God by analogy with the psychology of how children form attachments to their parents. The background to this is that neurologically typical children are born with the drive and capacity to seek out other human beings for the sake of relating to them. Long-standing research has generally shown that if you show a baby or toddler a shape, a number and a human face, they will usually focus on the face as their first priority. This focus on faces is because people are wired up to find human faces as a way into developing person-to-person relationships with other people. These relationships are critical and vital to us because human beings develop most fully within person-to-person relationships, especially with older trustworthy figures under whose watchful gaze we feel safe to explore the world around us.

For example, three year-old Luc is more likely to confidently explore the grass, soil, sand and other children in a playground if he can do so within the safety of Nana’s gaze. If Luc has a strong attachment to

Sadly, in Adam and Eve, all of us humans sought the advice of a non-trustworthy figure instead of God. The serpent confirmed what Adam and Eve wanted to hear: they could explore the world in their own way, and have their own impact on it. This was justified by the claim that

draw near to Him. As described in the Old Testament, the history of Israel shows us that we need God to safely draw us into a secure attachment with Himself once again. Such a union would be the best context within which, as human beings, we begin to can fulfil our vocations

in terms of our fundamental relationship as human beings as well as our basic orientation for worship. Those who respond to God in faith become His children. This special status in God’s eyes is the basis of our attachment with Himself: we are God’s own and He gazes over us with a love that even exceeds Nana’s!

Jesus explains that union with God through Himself and the Spirit has love for others as an outcome that goes together with loving God: “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command” (John 15:13-14). Healthy human development will occur in the process of loving our brothers and sisters, friends and enemies. Psychological sciences suggest this, too: we develop as human beings as we take care of others and behave in other-person focused ways. Jesus therefore promotes love in his friends in the same way that we would like to have a positive and healthy impact on our own friends.

In Christ, God is restoring His images (us people) to live in ways that make sense of our human nature: as creative, perceptive, moral and relational beings. God does so in a way that is analogous to a parent promoting healthy relationship skills in their own children, both for the sake of their child and for the sake of those whom the child will impact. This seemingly near-impossible task of loving other people is enabled by the presence of the Father, Son and Spirit within us. Jesus promised that “we will come to them and make our home with them” (John 14:23). God’s loving view of us as His children is matched by the presence of His own loving life within us. This is where drawing near to God makes sense as a response to a strong union He has made with us. Our drawing near to God is the trusting, child-like at times, intentional movement towards Him who dwells within us and heals our human nature. In addition to drawing near to God through love and service of others, Christian practices and art forms that speak to our five senses may be powerful instruments through which we may draw near to God. At this point, we may like to ask what did John Stott or St Clare put into practice in their lives – such as committed prayer, the use of art, devotional reading of the Bible, Christian symbols (and others) – in order to draw near to God? We have much to learn and enjoy from their wisdom, all with the aim of drawing closer to God. As you draw near to God, may He draw even nearer to you and to those whom you love.



God re-establishes with us the rich connections with Himself that are fitting and natural to human beings.

Nana based upon her previous care and attention, he will assume that she will intervene if there is a problem today. As a result of his trusting connection with Nana, Luc will not feel unduly stressed as he has new learning and relational experiences. Luc’s brain and body will develop as a result of him interacting with new and old surfaces as well as new and old acquaintances. If Luc does not feel safe, he will be less likely to explore the world, and hence will not flourish to the extent that he may have done so otherwise. A secure attachment with his trustworthy Nana is one of the key foundations for Luc’s development and is an expression of a deep loving relationship between Luc and Nana. Luc will express his love for Nana in many ways, all of which are part of him drawing near to her in ways appropriate to their relationship.

By analogy, God made Adam and Eve to flourish in the Garden of Eden in His company and under His loving gaze. Within such a safe and stable attachment to God, Adam and Eve were to name the animals, till the earth, care for the creatures, as well as have children and develop life-giving cultures. A trusting spiritual, mental and emotional union with God was to be the framework and core commitment of human life. Faithfully drawing near to God in this context was the basic human vocation.

God was neither a good nor trustworthy caregiver. Satan said: “You will certainly not die” [if you eat the forbidden fruit as God said]. “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:4-5 NIV). Humans doubted their caregiver, broke His trust and disordered their ability to fulfil their vocations for His glory.

with respect to caring for one another, the animals and the Earth and developing cultures that ensure a common good. In other words, God will bless humanity through re-establishing our attachment or covenant relationship with Himself.

Happily, Jesus assures us that God’s divine presence, fruitful power and friendliness have drawn us into a union with Himself. Jesus

**“Those who respond to God in faith become His children ... we are God’s own and He gazes over us with a love that even exceeds Nana’s!”**

Though God loves us, human life on Earth has been a chaotic scramble for survival since the tragic Fall. Cultures and kin groups often war over limited resources, and see each as threats to one another’s wellbeing. In the process, we have become oftentimes dangerous to one another. Looking out for the best outcomes for other people, especially if it comes at our own expense, is often dismissed as unrealistic and unwise. Throughout history, especially in Israel, great prophets and leaders tried to draw people back to God, but few would

said: “I am the vine, you are the branches,” “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit,” “I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:5, 15, 16). With these kind yet powerful words, Jesus assures us that God is the one who offers us a stable and secure attachment with Himself, within which we may draw near to Him. God re-establishes with us the rich connections with Himself that are fitting and natural to human beings



# Paying tribute to a giant of science and faith

**Sir John Polkinghorne, Fellow of the Royal Society and Anglican priest, died on 9 March. John Pilbrow reflects on the life and work of a world-class scientist who saw no conflict between science and faith.**

IN 1979, THE INTERNATIONAL scientific press announced the shocking news that a Cambridge University Professor of Mathematical Physics was resigning to become a priest!

They were referring of course to John Polkinghorne, who died last month.

Sir John was both a renowned physicist and an Anglican priest who did much to reconcile science and religion. For him, there was no serious conflict between his commitments as a world-class scientist and his deep Christian faith.

A lifelong Anglican, he studied mathematics at Cambridge, where he was the top mathematics undergraduate. After appointments in the US and Scotland, he returned to Cambridge, ultimately becoming Professor of Mathematical Physics in 1968. He was elected to the prestigious position of Fellow of the Royal Society in 1974 but, by 1979, he felt that he'd done his best research. He resigned his position and announced he was heading to Anglican ordination.

In 1984, Sir John published the first of his 27 books at the faith-science interface, *The Way the World Is*. His aim was firstly to explain to scientists the basis of his faith, and secondly to show how a thinking person could be a Christian.

In 2002, he won what was perhaps the world's richest award, the Templeton Prize for progress in religion.

## Visits to Australia

Sir John came to Australia many times, visiting Melbourne in 1993, 1995 and 1998, and I was privileged to host him often at Monash University.

His 1993 visit, at the invitation of ISCAST-Christians in Science and Technology, drew about 100 people at his public lecture in Melbourne. At Monash, he also presented a lunchtime talk on faith and science, attended by about 150 people. He also gave a lecture to students and staff from Monash Physics called 'Six Problem Areas in Physics'.

On his third and final visit to Monash in 1998, a particular highlight was a lunchtime lecture on the nature of reality to an audience of 200. His visit culminated in a dinner in his honour, attended by about 20 people including Anglican Archbishop Keith Rayner. Although we had a good discussion about the place of faith-science issues in the training of clergy, those present who were involved in theological education, including the Archbishop, could not see where it would fit in the curriculum!

Sir John's lectures were always lucid, presented in a language that a well-educated audience could comprehend. This was exemplified in the kinds of questions that his lectures generated. Always gracious, he had a great capacity to turn dumb questions into something

significant by engaging with the questioners, by saying something like, "Have you thought of it this way?" or "Perhaps this raises a deeper issue". Such questioners went away several feet taller! A rare gift.

## Sir John's generous orthodoxy

Theologically, while Sir John held a very orthodox Christian position, he had the rare gift of engaging with people from across the broad Christian spectrum. This orthodoxy is most eloquently expressed in *Science & Christian Belief: Theological Reflections of a Bottom-up Thinker*. In the book, he reflects on the Nicene Creed both theologically and scientifically in the light of the best of modern science.

**"If we are seeking to serve the God of truth then we should really welcome truth from whatever source it comes."**

He also placed much emphasis on the centrality of the Resurrection as a strong basis for hope. Aspects of his thought may be found in Tom Wright's *Surprised by Hope*.

Sir John was also able to engage with other faiths without compromising Christian faith. He often reminded us that different faith traditions actually make rather different truth claims. But for him that was a reason to keep dialogue open.

After 1979, he focused on encouraging and enabling good conversation and dialogue amongst and between scientists and theologians. The establishment of the International Society for Science and Religion was consistent with this and he served as its first President.

## A commitment to truth

Sir John certainly believed in the unity of knowledge; the task of

science was to describe a unified reality that we encounter in our experience. Further, he was a critical realist who believed that truth, whether scientific or theological, needed to be carefully assessed. In the following we get a taste of some of his key insights:

*"If we are seeking to serve the God of truth then we should really welcome truth from*



Sir John Polkinghorne.

*whatever source it comes. We shouldn't fear the truth ... The doctrine of creation of the kind that the Abrahamic faiths profess is such that it encourages the expectation that there will be a deep order in the world, expressive of the Mind and Purpose of that world's Creator. It also asserts that the character of this order has been freely chosen by God, since it was not determined beforehand by some kind of pre-existing blueprint ... As a consequence, the nature of cosmic order cannot be discovered just by taking thought, ... but the pattern of the world has to be discerned through the observations and experiments that are necessary in order to determine what form the divine choice has actually taken." (Quantum Physics and Theology: An Unexpected Kinship, 2007).*

There are two particular insights of Sir John that stand out for me.

## Sir John's free-process defence

Sir John's "free process defence", which he articulated very skilfully, may well turn out to be one of his more profound contributions. By extending his arguments about human free-will to the whole universe, he was able to understand

that the processes in the universe from the Big Bang until now have a level of genuine openness (*Science & Providence: God's Interaction with the World*, 1993, pp. 65–67). In this context, he also wrote: "God didn't produce a ready-made world. The Creator has done something cleverer than this, making a world able to make itself." (*Quarks, Chaos & Christianity*, 1994).

*"I believe that a full understanding of this remarkable human capacity for scientific discovery ultimately requires the insight that our power in this respect is the gift of the universe's Creator who, in that ancient and powerful phrase, has made humanity in the image of God (Genesis 1:26–27)." (Quantum Physics and Theology: An Unexpected Kinship, 2007)*



## The relationship between knowing and being

Another of Sir John's insights was his frequent claim that "epistemology models ontology". In other words, what we know about the world represents the reality it seeks to describe. He further argues that "anyone who wishes to speak of agency, whether human or divine, will have to adopt a metaphysical point of view" and "metaphysical views are ontologically serious". "They seek to describe what is the case." (*Chaos & Cosmology: Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action*, 2000, pp. 148–9).

In this context, he also said that it is God's faithfulness that allows our knowledge to model how the world really is. What this means is that there are in fact gaps in our knowledge of reality, resulting from indeterminacy at the most basic level of matter: quantum indeterminacy. And he was always careful to remind us that we mustn't confuse epistemological ignorance (gaps in knowledge that might one day be uncovered) with *ontological unknowability* – those things which we cannot know in principle.

## A lasting legacy

John Polkinghorne gave heart to those of us who were Christians and scientists in academia and, particularly through his many books, gave us new tools for talks, conversations and for engaging with others about science and Christian faith.

I count it a great privilege to have known him and I have benefited enormously from his contributions and insights. He articulated ideas many of us may have reached independently but he made them more accessible.

We shall miss a true, gracious and generous Christian and we are all the better for his example. His many books and insights will continue to help us explore the interaction between Christian faith and modern science.

John Pilbrow is former Head of Physics at Monash University and former President of ISCAST-Christians in Science and Technology.

A version of this article was first published by *Eternity News*. A longer version of this article can be found on the ISCAST website at [www.ISCAST.org/Polkinghorne](http://www.ISCAST.org/Polkinghorne).

Roland Ashby's 1998 interview with Sir John Polkinghorne has been published in *A faith to live by* (Vol. 2) (Morning Star Publishing).

**You are invited to join Alister McGrath and others in an Online Tribute to John Polkinghorne**

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**ISCAST-Christians in Science and Technology** will host an online two-hour tribute to the life and work of **John Polkinghorne**. **Alister McGrath**, perhaps the most prolific writer on science and faith, will join us from his home in England. **Nicola Hoggard-Creegan**, a theologian and co-director of New Zealand Christians in Science, and **John Pilbrow** will also contribute as we reflect on Polkinghorne's influence.

More details can be found on the ISCAST website at [www.ISCAST.org/JPtribute](http://www.ISCAST.org/JPtribute)



# Aligning ourselves with the Real is unimaginable bliss, says Rowan Williams

by Roland Ashby

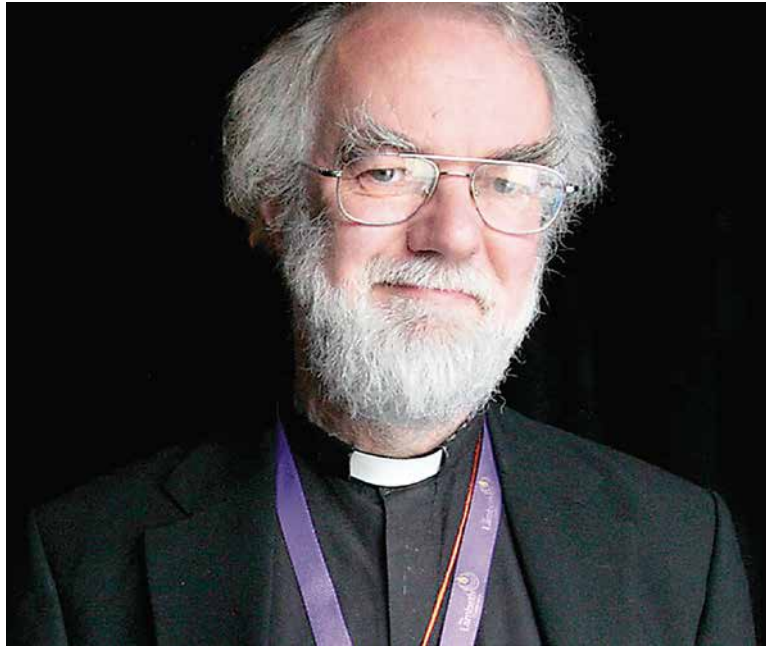
**M**EDITATION IS NOT ABOUT having “nice experiences” or becoming more “effective” in whatever we do, but about ‘aligning ourselves with the Real and the True’, according to former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams.

He was speaking on 9 February via Zoom on the theme of ‘Meditation – with or without expectations’ as part of a monthly series of talks organised by the Bonnevaux Centre for Peace, the international home of the World Community for Christian Meditation in France.

Dr Williams, who meditates by silently repeating a mantra – the Jesus Prayer (“O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner”)\* – said: “The ‘I’ that emerges from the far side of a sustained practice of meditation and contemplation is not the ‘me’ I started with... In the practice of meditation and contemplation we are seeking... no result except a more complete alignment with what is Real, and that it is what is Real, what is True, that makes us grow as persons.”

This can be “quite tough and unrewarding”, he said, “because a lot of what we feel on the surface is going to be the truthful reality of God rubbing up against the different kinds of story I tell myself about myself”. “It’s going to be a steady, gentle but relentless wearing away of that protective surface. Because, after all, why would I want to align myself with the Real unless I recognised that there is something making me less than real – something cluttering up or blocking the path... a sort of screen between myself and what is Real?”

Quite a lot of this experience in meditation and contemplation, he said, will be of “recognising, naming and confronting, more and more honestly and in truth those things that are responsible for the clutter... the blockage”.



Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams.

This required us “to let go of the expectations that imprison us and keep us within our comfort zone” and to “undertake the risk of the unknown, which will allow who I am to be aligned with the Real, with Truth, with God, in a way that lasts, in a way that liberates, in a way that brings the kind of joy, which... you cannot really imagine”.

Dr Williams said meditation using a mantra can be a helpful discipline in becoming less self-occupied. “The sheer regularity and discipline, the sheer focus of the mind on the mantra, the posture, really does help. We’re not thinking about how wonderful it would be to be selfless and saintly. We’re thinking about how we draw the next breath, pass through the next five minutes in stillness, and keep our minds receptive, clear as we can, and not go down the rabbit holes of our anxiety.”

The outcome of this “is another kind of self – a self that has a certain freedom from the obsessions and anxieties that so imprison us...”

“Many of the great saints have emphasised that one of the things that is supposed to be happening as we grow in practice is that we see

more. The normal haste, pressure and self-oriented anxiety that we bring to our daily lives is relaxed, lessened and released so that we

**“We’re thinking about how we draw the next breath ... keep our minds receptive, clear as we can, and not go down the rabbit holes of our anxiety.”**

are actually free to see and hear more. [This is] not something we can tabulate [or] quantify. We may find ourselves, to our own surprise, saying, after a bit, ‘I never noticed that’, and realise that without undue self-consciousness, something has shifted in the ecology of our insides. Something has shifted to allow Reality to impact upon us more freshly and more fully.”

Dr Williams said meditation is not just about seeing the world around us more clearly. “It’s about being aligned with the boundless, unimaginable life which is the Source of All – the Life of God...”

The ultimate expectation in our practice is simply that we become what God intends creation to be. God intends that creation find indescribable fulfilment, homecoming bliss, in receiving and reflecting His own glory and love, in all eternity. The Word, the Son, the eternal Christ receives and reflects the glory and love of the Source and wellspring of his being, the Father, and that receiving and reflecting eternally overflows in the gift of Spirit, breath, bringing life to the world.”

He continued: “So what we are, when we are mostly aligned with the Real and the Truth, is reflections of... versions of that perfect and everlasting response of receiving and reflecting, which is Christ, which is finally the eternal Word of God. That’s what we’re for.”

“Why on earth God should create the world is a question which God alone can answer. But if God does create a world, it is a world which he wishes to share bliss,

receptiveness, that readiness to see to be aligned, harmonised with the Real that is God. And so, at the end of the day, the expectation we bring to the practice of [meditation], is – and it’s a very ambitious thing to say – the expectation that we may become like Christ...”

“We are summoned by Jesus Christ and enabled by the Holy Spirit that flows from Him, so that we may pray to and gaze upon the mystery of the everlasting source of love. That’s the expectation...”

Dr Williams said that if we approach meditation or order to have “nice experiences” or in order to make ourselves “more effective [in whatever we do]”, we’ll be disappointed. “[But] if we approach meditation... ready to grow, ready to change – that kind of expectation is what will make us, or rather allow us, to grow beyond the fear that keeps us prisoner, the habits of instinct and protectiveness that hold us back, the clutter, the blockage of which I spoke earlier.”

“So it’s right that we expect to be changed, expect that we shall ultimately, be made new... We know, says St John, that we are brought into the life of Christ, and what we shall be does not yet appear. We live in the joyful expectation of it, and our daily slog, our daily grind of faithfulness, sitting, silence, mantra, that’s part of an everlasting joy and bliss of God, takes us and changes us beyond expectation.”

Roland Ashby, Editor of *TMA* 1995-2018, is the Contributing Editor of *Living Water*, where this article first appeared. See [www.thelivingwater.com.au](http://www.thelivingwater.com.au)

\*As discussed in an interview with Roland Ashby in *A faith to live by* (Vol.1) published by Darton Longman and Todd and Morning Star Publishing.

For more information about the Bonnevaux Speaker Series, see <https://wccm.org/events/speaker-series/>

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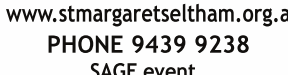
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# Confessions of a doomscroller in search of truth

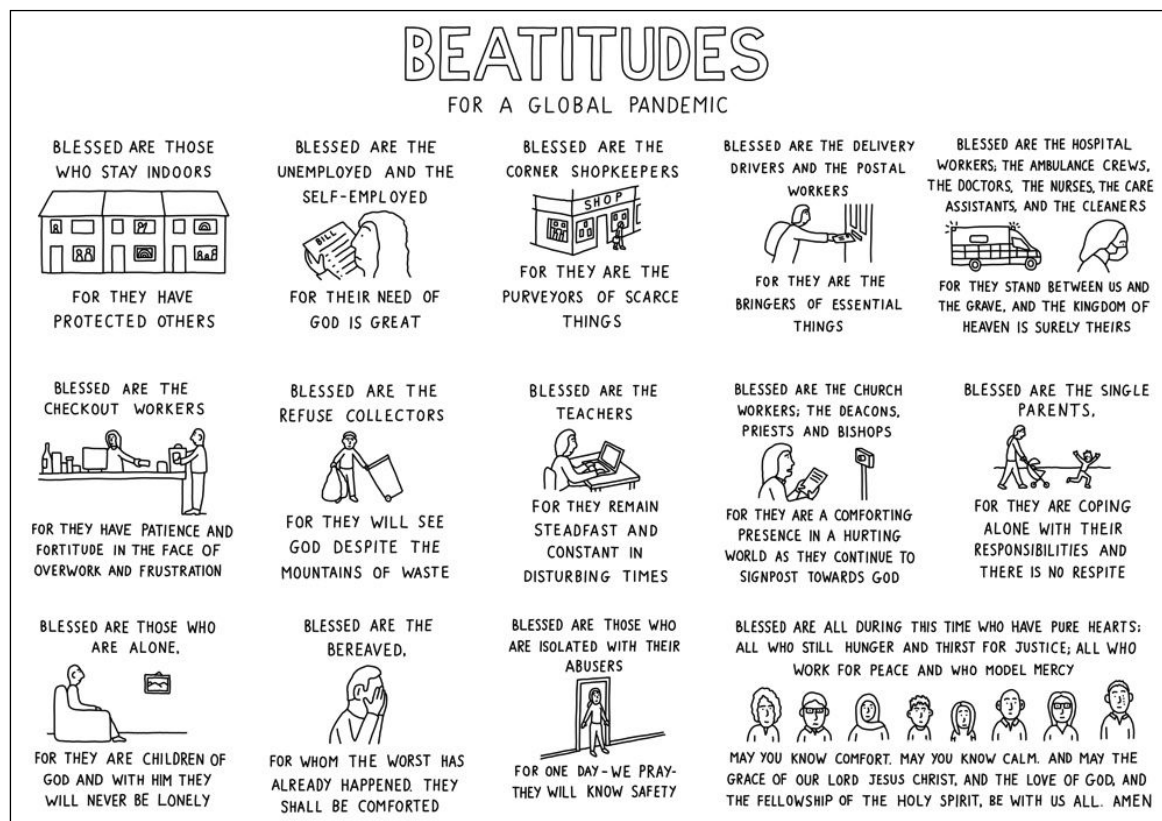
by Barney Zwartz

**AM A DOOMSCROLLER.** There, I've said it, and I'm not ashamed. If you don't know what doomscrolling is, here's Wikipedia: "Doomscrolling (also known as doomsurfing) is the act of consuming a large quantity of negative online news at once." The next sentence reads: "Mental health experts have stated that the practice can be detrimental to mental health." Well, I wouldn't know. My mental and emotional state has been a mystery to me for decades (after all, I'm a bloke), but I do know that I have been addicted to news all my adult life. I realised this during a family holiday 15 years ago when I swore to myself I wasn't going to worry about the news but found myself at the island shop each day at 10.55 because the papers arrived at 11.

Doomscrolling is a wonderful neologism, *Macquarie Dictionary's* 2020 word of the year, but it highlights a truth as old as journalism: most news is bad news. Even the Good News that rescues us by God's grace is wrapped in plenitudinous accounts of bad behaviour and unfortunate consequences.

One might think, with Mark Twain, that when it comes to the news you have two choices: if you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed. If you do read the newspaper you are misinformed. Even in his day, "fake news" – *Macquarie's* words of the decade – was around, but not like today. For extremists of left and right, fake news has become any report they don't like.

Lord Byron summed up the popular opinion of journalists 200 years ago when he wrote of: "A would be satirist, a hired



Dave Walker, [www.cartoonchurch.com](http://www.cartoonchurch.com)

buffoon, / A monthly scribbler of some low lampoon, / Condemned to drudge, the meanest of the mean, / And furbish falsehoods for a magazine."

Journalist Hannen Swaffer cynically but accurately observed around a century ago that freedom of the press means freedom to print such of the proprietor's prejudices as the advertisers don't object to.

Trust in journalism has never been lower than today, and yet good journalism has never been more important amid the proliferation of disinformation and falsehoods on social media and fringe sites that people turn to so they can have their prejudices reinforced.

I visit websites of both left and right to discover and

challenge the echo-chamber assumptions of both – naturally I am disliked by both sides – and often find reputable and careful media such as the *New York Times* dismissed even without reading the report because of the source. It reminds me of the great 1990s Australian satirical series *Frontline*, in which host Mike Moore is asked waspishly by an author if he has even read the book they are discussing. "No," says Moore. "And that means I can be objective!"

On both sides of the culture wars, the group line has to be followed carefully. The late British historian Alan Bullock described the reason. "The true object of propaganda is neither to convince nor even to persuade," he wrote, "but to produce a uniform

pattern of public utterance in which the first trace of unorthodox thought immediately reveals itself as a jarring dissonance."

The dissenter invites scrutiny not of the issue, but of him or herself.

One of Donald Trump's legacies is the idea of "alternative facts", previously known as lies – as for example the claim that his inauguration crowd was the largest ever. Perhaps there are some senses in which truth can be subjective, but the number of people standing on Washington's Mall for a presidential inauguration is not one of them.

I doomscroll because I am incurably inquisitive and because I think truth is the core value democracy relies on if it is to work. Reading so widely by



**Barney Zwartz** is media adviser to Archbishop Philip Freier and a senior fellow of the Centre for Public Christianity.

no means guarantees that the picture I get is accurate, or even that I could know if it was, but it's a start.

As a journalist, I seek truth. I am not naïve enough to suggest I always found it – it's wonderful how strongly governments and institutions believe in transparency and accountability in principle and how little in practice – and certainly I have made mistakes. Yet John 8:32 – "the truth shall set you free" – has a general application as well as the specific salvation meaning that Jesus is talking about.

I mentioned earlier the possibility of subjective truth, for example of people experiencing a conversation or event in different ways – "she was forthright and honest"; "she was overbearing and rude". Postmodernists talk about people's "own truth" in many arenas. But ultimately, all truth is God's truth, and this applies to theology, to the created order, to science, to relationships – everything.

All we have to do, as the philosopher Cornelius van Til, put it, is to think God's thoughts after him. There, that's not so hard, is it?

## Don't just do something, sit there!

by Clare Boyd-Macrae

**YEARS AGO**, our youngest gave me a card that I have treasured ever since. It shows a woman in a yellow armchair, on a wooden deck by a river. She wears a crimson dressing gown and holds a mug, gazing into the middle distance, to where the foliage of early autumn borders the still water.

During a period of profound malaise of body and soul, my spiritual director asked what deep resting might look like for me. Immediately, I thought of that picture with yearning. The woman is not reading. She's not knitting. She's not checking a damn phone. She's probably not even praying. She's just staring into space.

"What I long to do," I told my spiritual director, "is to sit and not read or even meditate but to do absolutely nothing."

It's hard to do this because it is utterly counter cultural. It's harder than ever in a place and



time where it feels as though every precious empty minute is filled with the drinking in of whatever it is people have on their devices – information, news, entertainment, games, kitten videos. It is so rare to see someone, even on public transport, simply gazing vacantly out the window.

For so much of my life, I have prided myself on usefully filling every spare moment of the day. Between scheduled tasks I would squeeze in something worthwhile – ringing a sick friend, cleaning a toilet, tidying a cupboard, scooting to the shop for supplies. This was

partly a matter of survival in a household of six – there wasn't a lot of opportunity for loitering. But it has become habitual and now, as it has for so many, it has become my modus operandi.

We become addicted to action and to "just checking" some apparently crucial thing – Facebook, the weather app, news from our kids, news of the world, the latest must-listen-to podcast. And we lose the ability to not do anything.

On a recent silent meditation retreat, I was struck by how much easier it is to connect with God when I am not frantic. I know that I run myself ragged

with constant doing and absorbing, that sooner or later I lose all grace and energy, and that sitting doing nothing is the cure for this.

When I manage to sit without even meditating, I am taught powerfully about grace. I need reminding that when I am idle I am as surrounded and swamped by God's unstinting love, every bit as much as when I am engaged in some more obviously worthy activity. Simply sitting reminds me of this.

In my life, I have been graced by interactions with those rare people who don't seem to be busy. There is a spaciousness around them that is a gift to all those they encounter. I long to be like that. I want to be the woman by the river, cradling her cup of tea, engaged bountifully in doing nothing.

Clare Boyd-Macrae's blog is at [www.clareboyd-macrae.com](http://www.clareboyd-macrae.com)



## Spirit Words

*I am the resurrection and the life*

John 11:25

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here!*

2 Cor 5:17



# A life is sacrificed to bring power to the people

by Wendy Knowlton

**F**EAR IS A STRONG MOTIVATOR in *Judas and the Black Messiah*. This tense film immediately immerses its audience into the warzone of Chicago, 1969. Petty thief, Bill O'Neal (LaKeith Stanfield) is caught impersonating an FBI officer but Agent Roy Mitchell (Jesse Plemons) offers him an alternative to prison. He must infiltrate the local arm of the Black Panthers and report back on charismatic Chairman Fred Hampton. (Daniel Kaluuya) O'Neal takes the deal. A desire for self-preservation trumps political idealism or racial loyalty and he rises quickly within the organisation, never beyond suspicion, but trusted enough to provide what Mitchell requires.

The contrast between Hampton and O'Neal is stark. Both Kaluuya and LaKeith have been nominated for Oscars and their performances are mesmerising. Hampton is an orator, a poet and an inspiration. Driven and committed to the



Fred Hampton (Daniel Kaluuya) and Bill O'Neal (LaKeith Stanfield, background, right) brave enemy territory in an ongoing war.

Panthers' stated mission of liberating the oppressed – whatever colour they might be – he is above fear – truly prepared to die for the people. O'Neal, on the other hand,

is terrified by the twin threats of incarceration and the torture that would come with discovery. There are moments however when something other than self-interest

flits across his face. LaKeith makes us wonder if this performance ever becomes his reality. He begs to be released from the deal on several occasions, but is fear or remorse the driving force behind his desire?

Mitchell seems similarly conflicted. Whilst clearly committed to his world view, his discomfort at hearing of an FBI-facilitated murder leads a reptilian J. Edgar Hoover (Martin Sheen) to drip poison into his ear, evoking scenarios of his daughter "bringing home a negro", or visions of rape and pillage. Hoover is the true villain of the piece. He wields fear as a weapon and sees prison as a "temporary solution" that only creates heroes. The sudden death of Panther, Jimmy Palmer (Ashton Sanders) – on the road to recovery after being shot by police – or the fact that Hampton's flat was sprayed with bullets with only one shot being fired in return, are Hoover's means to an end.

Hampton's rhetoric can be confronting, but the film humanises him. "It's not a question of

violence or non-violence but of resistance to fascism" he says and calmly walks into hostile situations keen to unite warring groups for the greater good. His tender relationship with Deborah Johnson (Dominique Fishback) and his involvement with setting up free healthcare and a breakfast program for children emphasise why Hoover fears this "Black Messiah". Ultimately facing entrapment, Hampton rejects offers of escape. He sees himself as there to serve the community, not draw focus from its needs.

When those with badges decide the threat needs to be "neutralised" O'Neal is reluctant, but complies. The final meal at Hampton's flat and the drugged drink O'Neal offers him are laden with symbolism. In the aftermath, Mitchell tells his informer, "You're free". As much a victim as a villain, O'Neal's haunted face and subsequent fate suggest something quite different.

MA15+ Strong language and violence.

## Brilliant cinematic technique mimics a dementia-distorted mind

by Tim Kroenert

**I**T IS illuminating that of the six Academy Award nominations *The Father* has received, one is for the work of its editor Yorgos Lamprinos. Editing is, along with the movement and placement of cameras, a definitive feature of cinema compared with other dramatic forms, such as theatre. As one Jean-Luc Godard character put it, "Every cut is a lie," creating the illusion of cohesion and continuity among disjointed pieces. On a story level it allows for jumps forward and backward in time and space, and it masks the passing of time and movement between locations that occurred during the film's making.

In *The Father*, editing is more than merely a technique. It is an analogue for the workings of a mind affected by dementia. The film's central character, Anthony (Anthony Hopkins) is so afflicted, and events unfold as he experi-

ences them. Characters walk out of the room and seem to disappear into thin air. When they reappear, thanks to a trick of casting, they no longer look like the same person. Events seem to happen in the wrong order, or to contradict things that have occurred previously.

One scene begins and ends at the same moment, via a winding path that circles impossibly back on itself: if A caused B, how can B also have caused A? The disparities and paradoxes are all the more disorienting because of their superficial cohesion. The audience experiences this discombobulation along with Anthony, because the edits mimic the invisible seams that juxtapose disordered memory with distorted perception of the present. Notwithstanding that the film is based on a play, cinema, in particular because of editing, is a medium uniquely capable of creating this precise experience.

It's all the more laudable given



Anthony Hopkins gives a heartbreaking performance as Anthony, a father with dementia.

that the film's director, Florian Zellar, is not a filmmaker per se, but a renowned playwright. He adapted *The Father*, his first film,

from one of his own plays, *Le Père*, with the play's English translator, Christopher Hampton. Their concise and finely crafted script

provides plenty for the actors to work with, notably Hopkins – whose career-best performance runs the gamut from hilarious to frightening to heartbreaking – and Olivia Colman as Anthony's long suffering daughter. (Both actors, along with the screenplay itself, are also in the running for Oscars.)

But most remarkable, for a master of one medium stepping for the first time into another, is how effectively Zellar employs those cinematic techniques. Not just the editing, but also the judicious use of closeups and handheld camerawork among the more mannered, fixed-point medium shots, to track a given scene's emotional content. Zellar has said he was determined to make something more than a mere filmed version of his play. He has achieved that, crafting a devastatingly relatable dramatic film in which the technical aspects are not just tools but essential parts of the story.

## There's little to choose between Shanghai's sleuth Miss Su and our Miss Fisher

by Beryl Rule

**F**OR THOSE who feel like crime with a lighter touch in an exotic setting, and particularly for fans of the *Miss Fisher Murder Mysteries*, *Miss S*, the Chinese version of that popular series, is available on SBS On Demand, with English sub-titles to offset the Mandarin dialogue.

In the first episode, set in the 1920s, socialite Su Wen Li, (played by Ma Yi Li) has just returned to Shanghai from Paris, bringing with her the aura of sophistication and elegance associated with the French capital. Her self-assurance is unbounded, her smile ravishing, and a sideways flicker of her lashes from beneath the flattering shelter of a wide-brimmed hat, is enough to stop men in their tracks.



Shanghai's answer to Miss Fisher – Su Wen Li (Ma Yi Li).

Miss Su is also intensely curious, and is drawn at once to investigate the sudden assembling of a strong police presence in the city. As the men line up, glancing in trepidation at a high tower they are expected to climb, they appear more like the Keystone Cops than the finest of Shanghai's Central Police Division. The arrival of Inspector Luo Qiu Heng (Vengo Gao) tips the balance back to the serious side, and this interplay of humour and gravitas sets the tone for the series.

As with Miss Fisher and Inspector Jack Robertson, the relationship between Miss Su and Inspector Luo is a mixture of power-play and growing attraction. She gives him the full eye and smile treatment as well as the benefit of her very considerable powers of observation and reasoning. He

acknowledges the latter, but refuses to let her step inside the police cordon and behave like a member of the force.

After intervening successfully in several cases and gathering a coterie of disciples around her, she sets up in opposition to the police and establishes her own detective agency.

However, although Miss S is brilliant at crime solving, she frequently has to rely on the Inspector and his resources to confront criminals and rescue her from some perilous situations. When his deputy announces there has been a call to say Miss Su is in danger and needs immediate help, the Inspector heads resignedly for the door, muttering, "Again?"

The case stories are well-plotted but since we are never in any doubt

that *Miss S* will survive and mysteries will be unravelled, it might as well be admitted that there is a good deal of interest simply in seeing which outfit she will appear in next. (It is certainly unusual to linger eavesdropping in a ruthless drug dealer's doorway, while clad in a highly noticeable scarlet cock-tail dress.)

Viewers are treated to plenty of high life spectacle in *Miss S*, with the glitter and glamour of the Shanghai social set shown in the most opulent settings.

But it is Miss Su who carries the series. Beneath the sophisticated exterior she is revealed as a woman of warmth and compassion, determined to use all the weapons at her disposal to right the wrongs of those downtrodden and unjustly treated in society.