

THE Melbourne Anglican

APRIL 2023, No 623

*Our wondrous star is alive!
Risen in splendour.
He is among us!
Blood has been shed.
The promise fulfilled.
He is risen!!*

Wondrous Star by Robyn Davis, Acrylic on Canvas.

Robyn Davis



As we consider the Voice, we must remember Micah's words

■ Archbishop Philip Freier

Nearly six years ago, 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders gathered at Mutitjulu, a community near Uluru in the Northern Territory, where they agreed the **Uluru Statement from the Heart**.

Over the two years before this, 13 preparatory dialogues had taken place across Australia. The Uluru Statement from the Heart is an invitation to the overall Australian community to unite in addressing each of the three elements of the Uluru Statement, Voice, Treaty, and Truth. Each require elaboration and that only happens through dialogue and greater understanding.

We all know that later in the year there will be a constitutional referendum to establish in this foundational document of our nation a First Nations Voice to Parliament. It is important that we inform ourselves about the question so that the referendum can truly reflect the will of the electorate. To assist this process, Canon Glenn Loughrey is taking a period of sabbatical from his parish responsibilities at St Oswald's Glen Iris to speak among Anglicans and the wider community from



his perspective of why the Voice is important and merits support. I am grateful to Dean Andreas Loewe of St Paul's Cathedral for assembling the funding support to make this possible. It is good that we are participating in the discussion in this way.

I have found the recent book by Henry Reynolds, *Truth Telling: History, Sovereignty and the Uluru Statement*, most helpful in opening up the question of sovereignty and the assumptions made at various times throughout Australian history about the exclusive sovereignty of the Crown. Other nations such as New Zealand and Canada have very different historic narratives and contemporary responses to the question of the continuing sovereignty of First Nations people to that arrived at so far in Australia. The Treaty of Waitangi, agreed and signed in 1840, is known to most of us as a formative

document in Maori and settler relationships that has continued to have an enduring influence on the development of contemporary society in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Victorian government has initiated a Pathway to Treaty process that has involved, amongst other things, the formation of a First People's Assembly of Victoria and the Yoorook Justice Commission. Much is underway at various levels of our society at community, corporate and government levels. It is good to be informed about these initiatives and to access the resources that are available through our local government bodies and the state government. Many of our city councils in Melbourne have appointed reconciliation officers who may be a helpful resource for your parish community. Reach out to them and see what they can offer.

Micah's words are well known and often repeated but I hope their enduring truth will rest in the hearts of many as the question of the Voice Referendum continues to be opened up to us. "God has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6.8).

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Light shines in the darkness

This month's cover *Wondrous Star* is by artist the Reverend Robyn Davis.

Ms Davis is a Wadi Wadi woman from the Balranald and Swan Hill area and now living on Jarra land.

"Painting is part of my life,

my nature, my being and my spirit, it is inseparable from my Christian faith and Indigenous heritage," she said.

Ms Davis has a strong Christian faith and believes that God has given her this gift as he gives all of us gifts.

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The Reverend Angela Cook will take on leadership of the merged St Augustine's and St Alban's.

Picture: supplied

Two parishes unite for stronger future

■ Maya Pilbrow

Two parishes in Melbourne's inner-north are set to merge, to provide more space for a growing congregation at one and ordained leadership at another.

St Augustine's Merri-bek's congregation has grown, and is now bursting out of its space, while St Alban's Coburg West has been without a vicar for more than two years. To solve their problems, St Augustine's will move in with St Alban's.

St Augustine's parish priest the Reverend Angela Cook will take over duties for the combined congregations.

Ms Cook said both parishes had historically been small, and the merger was a way to combine resources to better reach the community. She said the issues facing each parish were complementary. St Augustine's

runs services in a building now too small for its congregation, with a growing number of children attending, while St Alban's has an outdoor space, big building and carpark, but quite a small congregation.

Ms Cook said the merger was an opportunity for both church communities to figure out how best to reach a wide range of people.

She said the churches were working out how to honour both St Augustine's evangelical tradition and St Alban's more reflective, liturgical style, while continuing to grow.

St Alban's incumbency committee member Roxanne Maule said St Alban's had struggled with outreach due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as a long period without an incumbent priest. But she said she was excited to have more human resources to

help with ministry. Ms Maule said the merger had caused excitement as well as trepidation among St Alban's parishioners, but it was a chance to try new things.

"There's always challenges with change. I think it's probably been done as well as you could do a change process," she said. "[We can] really move forward differently and create opportunities for people who are seeking a variety of ways of engaging with the church."

Bishop of Marningatha Genieve Blackwell said the merger was a chance for both parishes to reinvent themselves by overcoming challenges.

"[Merri-bek] have been limited by their buildings, and now Coburg West have been limited by their lack of numbers," she said.

Services under the merger will start on 30 April.

Melbourne bishops set to swap episcopate care roles

■ Jenan Taylor

Two Melbourne diocese bishops will swap responsibilities, one taking on episcopal care and the other theological formation and training.

Archbishop Philip Freier has announced a change of episcopal care roles for the bishops in charge of several growth areas of Greater Melbourne and Geelong, and the

area focused on theological formation and training.

In a recent statement, Archbishop Freier said Bishop Kate Prowd who has been area bishop of the Oodthenong episcopate would take up the care of the Monomeeth area.

Bishop Prowd's responsibilities will include the discernment, selection, training and formation of clergy as well as their wellbeing.

The archbishop also said Bishop Bradley Billings who has overseen the Monomeeth episcopate would be taking up the area bishop role for Oodthenong, and would also assume the church planting portfolio.

Dr Freier said the change followed "a process of prayerful reflection and discernment."

The change is expected to take place from 1 May.

Interfaith groups struggle for funds

■ Jenan Taylor

Efforts to promote multifaith and multicultural cohesion may be flatlining due to lack of funding and the effects of the pandemic the umbrella body of the Victorian interfaith community has warned.

Faith Communities Council of Victoria said some interfaith networks were set to resume pre-COVID activities such as places of worship tours, but for those not supported by their local councils, it was difficult to continue.

It comes as several interfaith networks across Melbourne and regional Victoria say they face challenges planning community activities.

FCCV Chairperson the Reverend Albert Lange said councils had a responsibility to help the local interfaith networks with financial and in-kind support.

Mr Lange said interfaith networks were valuable agents of social harmony.

"It's not just presenting a religion or having discussions about religious topics. It's also social welfare, it's family violence, it's child protection. It's youth unemployment, and making sure people have got the right facilities to access government departments," Mr Lange said.

The Knox Interfaith Network said it had not yet been able to consider running its places of worship tours in 2023 because there was no local council funding for it.

Network president Mark Herrmann said the group had been funded to run its last set of Interfaith tours by the Victorian government, but COVID had hit and the group had finally used up the grant in June 2022. He said the network had yet to meet to reassess the situation.

Mr Herrmann said the group had been funded to conduct tours for schools, and had delivered successful excursions for several Christian schools before COVID.

He said the tours, some of which included spending the day at the Islamic Museum in Thornbury or the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, were aimed at broadening the students' understanding of Melbourne's many faiths and multicultural communities.

He said the group hoped to build on that record with young people, but had been unsuccessful in its recent submissions to Knox City Council for a grant.

The only council grant his network had been able to obtain in the last few years enabled participation in an Indigenous

"An interfaith network brings about social harmony ... It's also social welfare, it's family violence, it's child protection. It's youth unemployment, and making sure people have got the right facilities to access government departments."

Albert Lange

cultural event, Mr Herrmann said.

Knox City Council said it had provided financial and in-kind support to the Knox Interfaith Network, including meeting spaces, and grants through various council funding streams.

It also said the council had supported the network to participate in local events such as Carols by Candlelight and Cultural Diversity Week.

Mr Herrmann said his group had hoped its places of worship tours would do as well as those of the Interfaith Network of Greater Dandenong, but as a smaller body it was very dependent on council support.

But the Dandenong network said its places of worship tours had been curtailed considerably because of the pandemic.

Executive officer Helen Heath said prior to COVID the group conducted up to 50 tours a year. In 2022 it managed to run a few special group tours and only three excursions for the general public.

Although the stop-start nature of COVID restrictions had made it hard to make definitive plans, she was optimistic that 2023 would be much better.

Ms Heath said the tours, run since 1991, were a major initiative for the Dandenong-based network and regularly took members of the general public, schools, and special interest groups such as rotary, council staff, teachers and police bodies, who wanted professional development or sensitivity training to a variety of places of worship.

The group also gave refugees and asylum seekers the chance to participate by making sure there were free places for them on the public tours pre-COVID, however things had changed since then.

Ms Heath said the network had always been well-supported by the local council but that it was trying to be more self-sustaining. She said organising interfaith tours took time, careful design and experienced and empathetic tour facilitators.

She said the network also tended to get interest from groups in regional areas who were prepared to travel for the chance to take the tours, because the interfaith networks near them were so under resourced.

"It's often down to the volunteers. And [what they do] is not recognised as a viable path. Yet, so many local governments will only act when there's a crisis and tend to go 'Oh, gosh, the mosque's being attacked, We better talk to the interfaith network'. It's about preventing harm, building relationships, having that connection, to begin with," Ms Heath said.

Mr Lange said he agreed with that view and that he wanted councils to see how interfaith activities could help prevent social isolation and radicalisation.

He said councils in areas such as Geelong, where there was a growth of immigrants and a variety of faith traditions, had a responsibility to provide more aid.

Mr Lange said he was set to negotiate in late January with the City of Greater Geelong to that end, to give financial assistance to the Geelong Interfaith Network.

"It's about preventing harm, building relationships, having that connection, to begin with."

Helen Heath

The group's activities include organising an annual multicultural festival and a monthly radio show on community radio.

But network secretary Randall Apps said that funding from the local council had been minimal for years, compared to other councils.

City of Greater Geelong said that in 2020-21 it had provided a community grant to help the Geelong Interfaith Network purchase a laptop and a Zoom licence fee, and that it had also provided \$3900 to help the group publish a booklet and flyer.

Acting chief executive officer Bryce Posser said the council had not received any applications from the network for the last two funding rounds.



The youth group at St John's Highton washed cars to raise money for earthquake relief. Picture: supplied

Geelong teens help earthquake victims

■ **Maya Pilbrow**

Teens at a Geelong church have shown their support for victims of devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, through a car wash fundraiser for UNICEF's disaster appeal.

The group washed and vacuumed cars, charging between \$10 and \$15 for their services.

The Reverend Mike Kicevski, who runs the youth group, said members raised more than \$800 in two hours.

Mr Kicevski said there was a great need to help the people impacted by the earthquakes.

"We thought, why not do our part the best we can and organise some kind of fundraiser?" he said.

Speaking from Aleppo in the country's north-west, Open Doors Australia Syrian partner Leyla said

the Syrian community was already dealing with the effects of a decade of civil war coupled with a serious economic crisis before the earthquakes hit.

"It's very difficult for them to survive here. They are in survival mode constantly," she said.

Leyla said international aid organisations with established mechanisms in the country were providing crucial support.

She said it was important Australians wanting to contribute to earthquake relief recognised that resources were available at a local level in Syria.

"This is not about sending in trucks and tents and whatnot. This is really about supporting international organisations that already have a presence in this country," she said.

Period drive to empower women and communities

■ **Kirralee Nicolle**

A Melbourne obstetrician and gynaecologist is seeking to offer a longer-term solution to alleviate the effects of period poverty on women in Tanzania.

St Thomas' Anglican Church Burwood parishioner Dr Amanda Ward has launched the Wezesha Project with Medical Mission Aid, to provide education on reproductive health, pregnancy and family planning, and offer mentorship and leadership training in public health education to Tanzanian health professionals.

With the help of donations, Dr Ward also hopes to provide individual Tanzanian women with packs of reusable menstrual pads, allowing women to continue engaging in important activities such as school. Dr Ward said women being empowered to remain in

school was an important part of breaking cycles of poverty.

"At the moment when they get their periods they miss school or work for four to five days a month, which is a lot," she said.

Dr Ward said the project leaders had teamed up with an Australian company called Femme Organic to provide the products at a discounted cost. She said the more money that was raised, the more products would be provided to Tanzanian women.

Dr Ward said the drive would continue until she left for Tanzania on 27 April, and they were hoping to raise \$47,500 to fund the products.

If you would like to donate to the Wezesha Project, visit bit.ly/WezeshaProject. To find out more about Medical Mission Aid and the Wezesha Project's history, visit bit.ly/MMAWezesha.

Worldwide refugee crisis looms over Walk for Justice

■ **Kirralee Nicolle**

This year's Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees is a time to be grateful for policy changes recently introduced by the Labor government, a refugee advocate says.

Former Melbourne assistant bishop Philip Huggins said the walk began more than 20 years ago to call for a greater government focus on international nuclear disarmament, now relevant again with the war in Ukraine. Bishop Huggins said both peace building and caring for refugees continued to be a good Palm Sunday focus.

"We understand peace to be both God's gift and our task to be peacebuilders," he said. "Palm Sunday leads to Easter, and the risen Jesus' first gift after resurrection was peace – 'my peace I give you,' he said to anxious people."

Bishop Huggins said this

year the walk's focus was on gratefulness for the federal government's commitment to helping those who have long held temporary protection visas to reach permanent residency. He said the walk was also to be about urging an increase in refugee intake numbers, given instability across the globe.

United Nations High Commission for Refugees statistics from May 2022 showed that 100 million people were forced to leave their homes in 2022. UN high commissioner for refugees Filippo Grandi said this was a wake-up call to resolve and prevent destructive conflicts, end persecution, and address the underlying causes that force innocent people to flee their homes.

The Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees will take place on Sunday 2 April, at 1.30pm. More information is available at bit.ly/3Lr30c0.

Women still face challenges in church

■ Kirralee Nicolle

This International Women's Day, The Melbourne Anglican wanted to put equality and women's church involvement in the church under the spotlight.

We spoke to two experts in women's church engagement and asked them where they believed the status of women in churches stood, and what might need to change – and asked women in Anglican churches what they thought.

Christians for Biblical Equality chair Deborah Upton said full equality for women was still a journey for the church. She said women's involvement in churches was widely accepted on certain levels, but the nature of their involvement varied depending on which theological views were popular.

Whitley College lecturer and Baptist minister the Reverend Carolyn Francis said that women's equal participation in the life of the church was a matter of church wellbeing. Ms Francis said failing to fully involve women could also become a stumbling block for those who were looking to participate in a church community.

"If I think of a biblical metaphor like the body, the implication is that if there are parts which are not fully functioning, that we are collectively less than we would otherwise be," Ms Francis said. "Women as individuals are incredibly gifted in many cases and we can ill afford to turn away a gifted, willing participant in the church."

"As people look at the church, whether from outside or within it, the vision of something which is not inclusive [and] seems outdated in all other parts of society is actually extremely detrimental to encour-

aging their belonging and participation."

The Melbourne Anglican also surveyed women in churches, asking how the church could improve its approach to the involvement of women and handling of issues specific to women.

Many highlighted issues of accessibility for those working in ministry roles and a continuing sense that women were not treated as having the same level of capability as men in similar roles. Some also flagged complementarian theology or a lack of inclusivity in theological teaching as issues women were facing. But, some said they noticed the church engaging in greater support of vulnerable members of the community and said some parts of the Anglican church were doing well to engage women and address issues specific to women. A selection of responses is below.

Women's involvement in leadership

I actually think that the Melbourne and Adelaide dioceses are doing really well in this area already – Michele de Courcy.

Acknowledging the different styles of working - having meetings at different times, having more women in visible leadership roles - especially at Synod – The Reverend Christine Croft.

The church needs to be more hospitable towards women in ministry with children and towards gay women – The Reverend Canon Professor Dorothy Lee FAHA.

Appoint women priests when they are available and suitable without regard to gender, but instead with regard to vocation. Currently some vicar/lead pastor/priest in charge roles appear to be firmly closed to women priests because their gender – Michele Duggan.

The church is unable to change its approach to involving women. It remains a male dominated hierarchy, despite the support of women in many roles, they do not have an effective role in church decision-making – Anonymous.

I notice that in some parts of the Church the derivative nature of women and their subordination to men is still taught and practiced. At its worst this enables abuse of women, and at least inhibits women from fully valuing themselves as equally made in God's image and equally called to leadership in God's church – The Reverend Canon Dr Colleen O'Reilly AM.

Women are a sideline issue – the needs of women and proactively encouraging them into ministry. At times there feels as if there is a complementarian approach to women – Fiona Dunn.

Keeping this issue on the agenda that women in the church are still, in some areas, not offered equality in positions of leadership. For those in decision making positions to be actively promoting the inclusion and consideration of women into leadership roles – Melanie Moore.

Most of the sexism and misogyny we face now is not at a structural level; but it is at the level of vicars who don't support us discerning vocation; or college academics who have inflexible and rigid views about ministry and family life; or clergy who refuse to employ us for, or bully us out of, lay roles that would be valuable experience; or parishioners who engage in sexual harassment or bullying, or the like. We need to find appropriate – and safe – ways to name and talk about these experiences and expose them to scrutiny; and think about how to foster cultural change so that these are no longer things we all have to navigate – Anonymous.



Reaching the Territory for Christ



Hear from Greg Anderson, Bishop of the Northern Territory together with BCA Field Staff Jacob & Sarah Kelly (Kyabram) at the BCA Victoria Annual General Meeting and Dinner

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The Surf Coast ecumenical congregation on the Surf Coast Church Camino Trail.

Picture: supplied

Step after step, travellers seek God

■ Jenan Taylor

An ecumenical throng guided by tidal movements, and the sun's angle across beaches and wind-worn headlands walked from the Aireys Inlet lighthouse to Urquhart Bluff on the Great Ocean Road one Sunday in January.

Every few hours ministers, including Surf Coast Anglican vicar the Reverend Sharon Valentino, recited prayer devotions and psalms to the travellers, and a flautist and ukele player, roused them with hymns.

Uniting church lay minister Wynona Johnson planned the walk to simulate a Camino in Spain, a path or network of paths along which pilgrims take a religious journey.

"We'd been talking about doing awe walks through nature, and of doing something spiritual and we wanted to put them together," Ms Johnson said. "A few of our members had walked the Camino and we thought it would be a good idea if we could do something like that."

The positive response to their first mini-Camino cemented Aireys Inlet Uniting church leaders' decision to consider making spiritual walks part of their outreach.

Traditionally pilgrims walked holy roads and visited shrines and places of worship seeking salvation, solace or healing. Today they do the same, for a variety of reasons. Many walk to commune with God in natural surrounds, to slow down, to complete a

physical challenge. Some want clarity, or simply to connect with others.

According to several multinational studies, pilgrimages with their low impact, rural-focused approach became very attractive to travellers because of the COVID crisis. The studies suggested the pandemic might have played a huge role in the boom in spiritual travel.

El Camino de Santiago statistics show more than 430,000 certificates of completion were issued in 2022, the highest number recorded. The regional government of Galicia, Spain, estimated more than 700,000 people walked the area's sacred routes in the past year.

Raw Travel an Australian operator that organises European and local Camino trips said post-pandemic restrictions, more people wanted to experience pilgrimages together.

Camino manager Sue Chater said people did still seek solo travel, but often larger parties wanted to meet up. Many wanted to reconnect with old friends and family, or form new, meaningful relationships with a wider range of people.

"Everyone's come from all around the world with so many different motivations. But everybody's going the same way, and in a sense, doing the same kind of thing. It's a unique experience, which is really attractive to people and really gets under people's skin," Ms Chater said,

International pilgrim routes from

various religions have also experienced high interest from visitors in recent years, including Japan's Kumano trail and Sri Lanka's Adam's Peak.

But Australians don't have to go far for spiritual travel. Domestic routes include a walk in Western Australia from Subiaco to New Norcia, and the Aussie Camino trail from Portland, Victoria, to Penola, South Australia.

The idea of pilgrimage is so attractive that the Aussie Friends of the Camino conference in February was sold out.

AFOTC chairman Janet Leitch said that what made a pilgrimage life changing for many people might be related to the distance of the walk and the increased chances for transformation, as a result.

"For many people, walking a Camino might start as an adventure, but it changes and becomes a spiritual journey. For those who walk further, it's more likely to become a pilgrimage," Ms Leitch said.

Ms Johnson believes members of the Surf Coast churches would be interested in a longer walk, but future Caminos would be clearer about the slow, purposeful nature of the sacred walk so that more people would feel able to join.

She said there might not be a heavy emphasis on religion if they aimed to attract the wider community – but they would hope to show that spending time in nature in a meaningful way gave connection to God.



The Anchorage sign being set up at Mornington and Mount Martha Church.

Picture: supplied

Ministry anchored in solitary prayer

■ Jenan Taylor

A Mornington Peninsula church has embraced prayer ministry after parishioners converted their former op shop into a house of prayer.

Mornington and Mount Martha Anglican Church assistant vicar the Reverend Elizabeth Rankin said that a long time parishioner who felt a growing call to a life of prayer had proposed that the former op shop be used for prayerful devotion.

She said the parishioner was discerning whether or not to take up the vocation of being an anchorite, a recluse who lives in a structure attached to the place of worship in a life of quiet prayer.

Historically, the structure was known as an anchorage and anchorites were walled in so that they could commit to solitary observance.

Ms Rankin said although their church's

devotee lived alone and followed a prayer routine every day, he did participate in the community by conducting Bible studies and prayer groups. She said a prayer box was set up in the church for parishioners and members of the public to drop anonymous, confidential prayer requests into it so that they could be prayed over in the anchorage for a period.

Ms Rankin said it was a ministry that was well patronised by the church and community.

"When we first introduced it there would be a bit of queue of people who were placing their prayers in the box. Now, it's a steady flow and a normal part of our worship service," Ms Rankin said.

Parish warden Christine Manktelow said the parish council had been very keen to support the proposal when it was first put to them.

"There were conversations with the clergy and parish council, and the idea

seemed to sit right with us that we should be using the building for something that would feel right as far as the church and the parish as a whole goes," Ms Manktelow said.

"We didn't want it to be sitting unused, empty. But we also didn't particularly just want to use it as a commercial income generating thing. It needed to be more than that."

Ms Manktelow said vicar the Reverend Helen Phillips was the person who suggested the prayer house be called The Anchorage and told them its definition.

"There is that historic sense that goes with it, but also that sense of anchorage as a safe harbor. That was very attractive to us too because the logo for the parish is St Peter in the boat on the water at the foot of the cliffs," Ms Manktelow said.

"That's very apt because that is the scenery practically adjacent to where the church is located."

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More than 1600 refugees and asylum seekers receive supplies from the ASRC foodbank each fortnight.

Photo: supplied

Parish puts money where its mouth is

■ Maya Pilbrow

Cost-of-living increases affecting refugee and asylum seeker communities have spurred one Melbourne parish to expand its food collection and donation program.

St John's Bentleigh has begun its second month as one of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre's food security champions.

Food security champions are community groups who commit to collecting single high-demand food items for the ASRC foodbank.

St John's collected canned tomatoes during February and will collect cooking oil throughout March.

The Reverend Santa Packianathan said

many donations came from parishioners, but that some items had been given by community members unaffiliated with the parish. He said the St John's community was used to donating food and other supplies through an ongoing relationship with local neighbourhood centre Dixon House.

Mr Packianathan said there was initial concern over whether the parish could manage donations to Dixon House and ASRC.

"We decided we can do both, and that's what we're doing," he said.

Parishioner Beatrice McDonald, who spearheaded St John's involvement with the ASRC, said she first became aware of the food collection project following an email

from ASRC chief executive and founder Kon Karapanagiotidis seeking community organisations to participate.

"[He] explained that the ASRC is responsible for feeding more than 1600 people each fortnight and in recent times it had become very difficult to keep the foodbank shelves filled," she said.

Ms McDonald said she suggested St John's could collect and provide essential items in high demand, a move which has been supported enthusiastically by parish leadership and by parishioners.

Ms McDonald said the food security program was an effective and practical way to make an impact on the lives of refugees and asylum seekers.

Healing services provide sanctuary for those in need

■ Maya Pilbrow

Special healing services are providing vital opportunities for those facing hardships to feel heard at St Stephen's Belmont.

The church has run weeknight evening services aimed at offering healing prayer to those in need since December 2021.

Parish priest the Reverend Shirley Lettras said the services originally began in response to the pandemic, as people in the church community struggled with mental health issues. Mrs Lettras said the services were frequently attended by those dealing with mental health issues, as well as addiction and physical illness.

Mrs Lettras said healing could come in a

variety of ways and that it was important for people to be able to feel God's love.

Mrs Lettras said the parish planned to continue the services and to further open the church up to the community as a sanctuary for meditation and reflection.

It comes as record numbers of Australians are trying to access mental health care.

Recently released data from mental health support service Lifeline showed 26,000 Australians had searched for assistance and support from the organisation in January, the highest number to date.

Lifeline Australia chief executive Colin Seery said in March that the significant increase in demand for support was triggered by rising cost-of-living pressures

affecting a wider number of people.

The healing services at St Stephen's, held on the second Monday of each month, are open to anyone in the community.

Healing ministries coordinator the Reverend Liz Bufton said it was not just prayer, but the love and care offered by the community that was beneficial to those in need. She said it was important to hold healing ministries separately to traditional Sunday services.

"It opens it up for more people that maybe wouldn't be comfortable coming to a Sunday service," she said. "It's giving people who wouldn't normally come to church an opportunity to come forward for prayer."

Worry less about the finances: focus on the mission

In a time of rising interest rates and increased inflation, it feels great to say that your parish will be financially sustainable into the next decade.

John Chenoweth, Treasurer of St Andrew's Anglican Church, Aberfeldie, feels confident in St Andrew's financial health. The parish recently sold its tennis courts and memorial hall, and invested the proceeds with Anglican Funds, providing an income stream that would sustain the parish going forward.

"We needed an investment vehicle that was professionally managed and that would preserve the capital value of our investment into the future," John said.

Anglican Funds worked with St Andrew's to meet these needs.

"It helped to bring back into balance our outreach and mission work for our parish," John said.

As any Treasurer or parish council member knows, raising funds for a church project can be difficult.

"We understand that parish wardens and Treasurers have a lot of responsibilities on their hands managing the day-to-day operations of the parish," said Peter Munns, the Head of Anglican Funds and the Anglican Development Fund (ADF).

He added that "Parishes can rest assured that their funds are in safe hands and focus their efforts on serving their communities."

The ADF, a separate body from Anglican Funds, offers parishes a suite of loan accounts to help fund capital works and manage monthly cash flows. They also provide a range of transactional products and services to parishes within the Diocese.

St Mary's Anglican Church, Sunbury,

recently completed a massive building project which was partly serviced by a loan from the ADF.

Narelle Riley, the Manager of Operational Ministries, explained that the loan allowed the parish to extend its existing hall area, including a 360-seat auditorium, activity room and café.

"We build relationships with our parishes and offer them a personalised service.

You just can't get that at a bank or building society."

She says, "without the loan from the ADF, we would have had significant difficulty raising the funds to complete the work."

St Mary's also uses the ADF's transactional services to support its day-to-day financial operations.

"The benefits of using the ADF are wonderful," said Narelle. "For instance, onboarding a new account signatory is a lot easier than it generally is if we did the same with one of the major banks."



Narelle Riley outside St Mary, Sunbury.

And dealing regularly with the same people at the ADF builds trust.

"Staff are there for the long-term and they go out of their way to help you," said Narelle. "To simplify your parish's finances, transacting through the ADF makes everything so much easier and seamless."

The sense of trust with the ADF has also been experienced by Dawn Sullivan, Parish Administrator at St John's Anglican Church, Camberwell.

The parish relies exclusively on the ADF for all its transactional requirements.

For Dawn, the customer service received from the ADF is second to none.

"They have the same ethos; they understand church finances," Dawn explained. "And I know that whatever I need, they will be able to meet it. If they can't meet it immediately, I know they will get back to me. They aim to please!"

Operating in the Diocese of Melbourne since 1967, the ADF exists to raise investment funds from parishes and other members of the Anglican community, and then lend them to parishes to finance capital developments in the Diocese.

But investing for the future is not just about finances. Julie Sizer, the ADF's Client Service Manager, thinks it's much more relational.

"The personal touch is key to ADF and Anglican Funds' identity," she said. "It's what makes them so attractive to investors."

"We build relationships with our parishes and offer them a personalised service.

You just can't get that at a bank or building society."

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Jesus as every Melburnian on show

■ Jenan Taylor

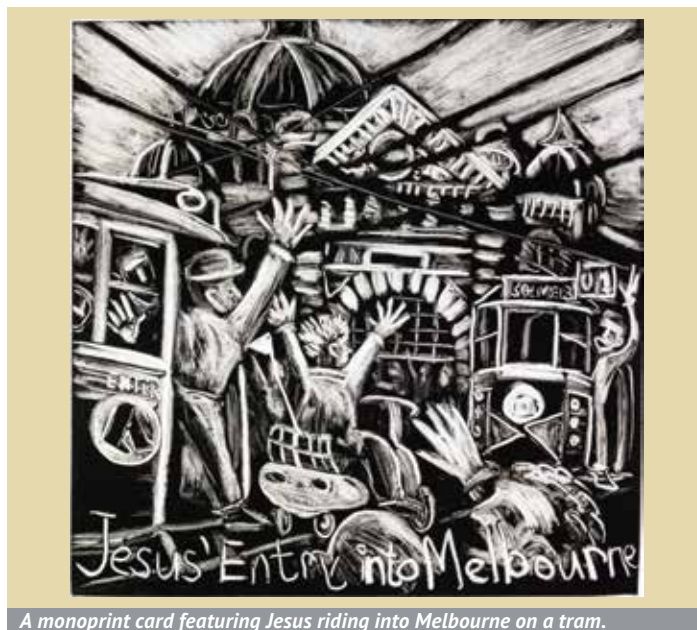
If Jesus was in Melbourne, He might be a streetwise larrikin with a knack for pavement art, according to Melbourne artist Michael Donnelly.

Mr Donnelly's *Jesus in Melbourne* monoprint series was conceived in the 1990s and imagines Christ in our city.

Twelve of the illustrations are on display at St Paul's Cathedral, and invite people to think about Jesus, and of the last week of His life with popular Melbourne spots as the backdrop.

The black and white prints range from depicting Him entering the city on a tram, and sharing fish and chips at Elwood Beach, to being crucified at Chadstone shopping centre.

For Mr Donnelly, the point of drawing contemporary Jesus in present day Melbourne was to showcase him as every person.



A monoprint card featuring Jesus riding into Melbourne on a tram.

"I was really trying to get across the idea of Christ being in a real place and time that people can relate to," he said.

"I struggled a bit with who Jesus might be in the current day, but settled on a larrikin personality, possibly someone

of Irish descent, who was confident walking down the streets of St Kilda, maybe, without the airs and graces that we might perhaps usually envisage Him having in terms of being the son of God."

The artist said his black

and white portrayals showed that Jesus could be any culture or ethnicity whether African, Chinese, Indigenous or Jewish person who hailed from the Middle East.

But Mr Donnelly also acknowledged there were areas of Christ's ministry and light, including His many miracles and healings that his depictions had not touched on yet.

He said he was toying around with ideas for illustrations based on parts of the Gospel of John that further looked at other events leading up to the Passion of Christ.

"As John said himself, the world couldn't contain all that could have been written about Jesus, so it's something that I keep coming back to, which is a nice thing to do," Mr Donnelly said.

Members of the community can view the exhibition at St Paul's Cathedral until 10 April.

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Debra Saffrey-Collins (Rev'd)
Head of Chaplaincy and
Diocesan Partnerships
Brotherhood of St. Laurence

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wouldn't be possible. We have been blessed by the kindness of parishes and individuals supporting people in our community and empowering them to create better lives. Through your prayers and your generous gift to BSL, you are helping ensure that all families have access to the support they need to build better lives for themselves. **Thank you.**

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Dawne Hedges says her volunteering has given her a new purpose. Picture: supplied

Dawne's dedication to housing hope

■ Jenan Taylor

A Boronia parishioner has recently been recognised for 10 years' service with a Christian housing provider Habitat for Humanity.

St Paul's Boronia member Dawne Hedges said her faith had compelled her to give back to the community.

Ms Hedges said after coming to terms with her husband's passing, she reflected on what God had blessed her with, and felt drawn to helping out in the social housing sector.

Ms Hedges does a weekly shift in the organisation's Kilsyth repair, recycle and resell op shop where she interacts with customers and with the people the organisation builds or improves houses for.

She said the work cemented for her the desperation around the need for housing and the need to help people experiencing those situations.

"As someone who's always lived in a secure home, and whose children have a secure home and loving upbringing, it's hard to understand how they could be in such circumstances," Ms Hedges said.

The University of NSW reported in November 2022 that more than half a million Australian households were experiencing unmet housing needs. They were either homeless, living in overcrowded homes or were spending more than 30 per cent of their income on rent.

According to the analysis, families were over represented among people having housing stress.



Members of Holy Trinity Coburg with Archbishop Philip Freier.

Picture: supplied

God at work in Arabic communities

■ Farag Hanna

Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved", is our testimony at Holy Trinity Coburg. We see God is working daily to save and lead people to our church.

Last December we were blessed with the confirmation of 40 people who joined us early in 2022. The service was led by the Archbishop Philip Freier.

Some of our members shared with us their feelings during the service.

Mr Fouad said he had looked for a suitable church for 20 years, and once he found the Holy Trinity, he and his family were so happy.

Another lady said that her husband had never been with her in a church except the Holy Trinity, and that she was so thankful.

One young person said she felt that she had finally found a wonderful family.

Thanks be to God that the church is spiritually building the Arabic community who come from seven different nationalities in the Middle East.

We also are so blessed to build new relationships with supporters from other churches and community.

We have faith that our church is a "purpose driven church". We establish our faith on biblical doctrine, so the purpose of the church is to be God's hands, mouth, and feet in this world—the body of Christ. We see this reflected in 1 Corinthians 12:12 "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ."

We are here to do the things that Jesus Christ would do if He were here physically on the earth.

The Reverend Canon Farag Hanna is vicar of Arabic and English-speaking Holy Trinity Anglican Coburg.

From the editor



The Reverend Robyn Davis wasn't sure whether her cover image needed interpretation, to her its meaning was self-apparent. But as Ms Davis explained it to me the depth of meaning in the image became clearer. Red, Christ's blood, black, the word's darkness, and the wondrous star – a light shining over a chain of communities below. An outsider to Ms Davis' symbolic world, I needed her guidance to see it properly.

In contrast, Michael Donnelly's *Jesus in Melbourne* (P11) series is part of a startlingly familiar world. For me, the lens of my own setting – my neutral – helped me to see the story's power afresh.

This Easter, whether through familiarity or differentness, I hope the same for you.

Elsbeth Kernebone

Initiative to educate

■ Kirralee Nicolle

An Anglican priest will lead an initiative for education and advocacy on the Uluru Statement from the Heart, after being commissioned by the Diocese of Melbourne.

Chair of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council the Reverend Canon Glenn Loughrey is set to offer the diocese information on Australian history and the proposed Indigenous Voice to Parliament, as well as provide an opportunity to ask questions about the Voice.

Mr Loughrey said different demographics tended to require varying kinds

An unconventional path of spirituality

■ **Kirralee Nicolle**

An eastern suburbs parish is providing women in the community a chance to talk about broader issues of spirituality and concepts of faith in a non-judgmental setting.

The Faithfull Women group at St Margaret's Anglican Church in Eltham was initiated by parishioner Mandy Stevens, who said the group began as a response to a need within the community.

"We had friends and acquaintances who sought something spiritual but weren't churchied," she said.

"There were a number of women on the peripheral of the church who sometimes dipped their toe in."

Ms Stevens said this was a more creative way to meet needs for spiritual exploration than a Sunday service.

Faithfull Women attendee and social worker Amanda Jenkins said she had

found attending the group to be a form of mental and spiritual self-care. She said the group focused on different mediums – art, meditation, music and nature being some.

"I meet with a group of women who are non-judgmental and open minded to get back in touch with concepts around spirituality that speak to me," she said.

Ms Jenkins said she often arrived at the gatherings tired and overwhelmed by her list of tasks to do, but left feeling rejuvenated.

"After a little while, you just enjoy the peacefulness of the church," she said. "And you just have an opportunity to reflect with the other women. It brings you back to your centre."

Ms Jenkins said the group also offered a chance to explore faith in unconventional ways.

"It's not limited to preconceived ideas about what spirituality should be," she said. "I like that flexibility."



Faithfull Women attendees exploring the labyrinth at St Margaret's Anglican Church. Picture: supplied



Emilius Kyrrou has been honoured in the Australia Day Honours Lists. Picture: supplied

Recognition for life of service

■ **Jenan Taylor**

A judge of the Court of Appeal in the Supreme Court of Victoria was among the Anglicans from the Melbourne diocese named in the 2023 Australia Day Honours List.

The Honourable Emilius Kyrrou was made an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia for his distinguished service to the judiciary and to the law, to professional associations, and to the community.

Mr Kyrrou who is a member of St John's East Malvern, also served as an inaugural member on the Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity from 2014 to 2017, and was partner at King and Wood Mallesons from 1990 to 2008.

A patron of the Greek Welfare Society, he was the recipient of the President of Greece's Gold Cross of the Order of Honour in 2015, and the Greek-Australian Association's Hellenic Distinction Award in 1982 and 1989.

Mr Kyrrou said he considered his services to the community to be foremost among his contributions, as assisting the community was important.

He said coming from a disadvantaged background drove his spirit for community service, and that he drew inspiration particularly from the schoolteachers who had been his role models.

"If I can inspire just a few students and young people to persevere with their studies and pursue their careers, when otherwise perhaps they may have had self-doubts and not pursued their goals, that's extremely rewarding for me," he said.

te ahead of Voice to Parliament vote

of information about the Statement from the Heart and the proposed Voice. He said his initiative would seek to offer tailored forums to address individual concerns.

"Research has shown that the older generations within Christian communities [tend to] have more questions about this issue than younger generations," Mr Loughrey said. "Therefore, this is something that is needed in order to help them work through those questions [and] concerns and to make a more considered opinion about what they need to do."

Mr Loughrey said there was also a need for education on Indigenous history among multicultural communities within the diocese. He said many had not been given

an opportunity to learn Australian history, but if they were informed may be willing to support the process of establishing an Indigenous Voice.

Mr Loughrey said he would begin by working with bishops, then deaneries, clergy and finally parishes, where he hoped to roll out cluster meetings and roundtable discussions.

He said while the work was currently being done by him alone, he would be seeking a team of First Nations volunteers and supporters to assist him in delivering this initiative.

If you would like to volunteer, contact Uncle Glenn Loughrey at gloughrey@melbourneanglican.org.au.

Rethinking our approach to God's word

I have a nagging unease about patterns of church life and Christian formation.

Sermons, (Latin – “conversation”, “discourse”, “discussion”) for example, offer no opportunity to respond, like other forms of communication. They don't account for the differences of interest, knowledge, skills and intellectual abilities of largely passive congregants, nor provide for long-term recall of content, or immediate feedback about their effectiveness. They foster the authoritarian role of instruction and minimise the importance of curiosity and critical inquiry.

My theological training focused on scripture and a theology from medieval times, still dominant today (dogmatic, historical and biblical). Little room is made in an already crowded curriculum for studying “all things in relation to God” – the sciences and humanities, economics and



Picture: iStock

politics, film, music, theatre and media, food, health and recreation. Consequently, devout and well-meaning clergy stick to 20-minute monologues, resulting in the calamitous separation of Sunday (church) from Monday (world).

There needs to be a more prophetic, dialogical and critical approach to the forms of communication within our churches. The two-edged sword of God's word that divides “joints from marrow” (Heb. 4:12), or the gospel's unrelenting call for repentance and faith, is often replaced by sermons that tickle the ears instead of shaking us out of comfort zones and secure lifestyles, and that make little connection with everyday life.

Neville Carr
Nunawading

ON SOCIAL MEDIA

On the outer edges, finding a new priest is a challenge

While the article may pinpoint a genuine issue, the reality is that the factors that go into the decision about whether or not to seek or accept a call to a particular parish are more complex than just geography. They also vary from person to person and family to family. As we can't change the suburb a church is located in, there may be other things that can be done to make it attractive or interesting to potential leaders, things which are within our power to control, and it would be helpful for incumbency committees to discern those.

Andrew Bowles

As a Church we need to be concerned about pastoral care for both those who lead, in any position, as well as expecting such care from those persons. This must include concern for all members of a family, so the relocation issue is very much a lively issue. Where I feel there is a glaring gap is the issue of talking about, encouraging, nurturing of vocations, and I am not necessarily referring only to ordained. I note recently the Episcopal Church had a Sunday focussed on religious life. I guess that wouldn't go down well in some quarters though. Vocations need to be nurtured – by all. Some are called, and we need to make that possible if we expect good leadership.

Beverley Phillips

Clergy Moves

Vacant Appointments as of 22 March 2023:

St Eanswythe Altona/St Clement Altona Meadows; Bellarine Gateway; St Martin, Belgrave Heights; Parish of Box Hill; Brimbank; St John Chrysostom, Brunswick West; St Faith, Burwood; St Mark, Camberwell; St Catharine, Caulfield South; St Philip, Collingwood; St John the Divine, Croydon; St Margaret, Eltham; Holy Trinity, Hampton; St Peter & St James, Kilsyth/Montreose; Christ Church, Melton; St Augustine, Mentone; St George Monbulk; St Peter's Murrumbidgee with Holy Nativity Hughesdale; St Aidan Noble Park; St Aidan, Parkdale; Pascoe Vale-Oak Park; St Matthew, Panton Hill; St Mark, Reservoir; St Mary, Sunbury [from May 2023]; Christ Church, South Yarra; Christ Church, St Kilda; St Luke, Sydenham; Parish of Upwey/Belgrave; St Thomas, Werribee; St John, Wantirna South; St Matthew, Wheelers Hill; Christ Church, Whittlesea with St Peter, Kinglake; St Thomas, Winchelsea with Holy Trinity, Barrabool and St Paul's, Deans Marsh

Appointments:

CHAINTRIER, The Revd Jonathan Jean Christophe, appointed Assistant Curate, St James, Dandenong, effective 1 March 2023

CLAYTON, The Revd Colleen Ruth, appointed Vicar (from Priest-in-Charge) St Matthew, Cheltenham, effective 28 April 2023

HITCHCOCK, The Revd Jordan Roy, appointed Vicar (from Priest-in-Charge) St Matthew, Prahran, effective 22 April 2023

MAURACHER, The Revd Claudia, appointed Extension as Vicar (Priest-in-Charge) St Paul, Frankston, effective 7 June 2023

SMITH, The Revd Jonathan Baden, appointed Vicar (from Priest-in-Charge) Caroline Springs, effective 14 March 2023

TAYLOR, The Revd Neil William, appointed Vicar, (from Priest-in-Charge) Christ Church, Melton, effective 24 March 2023

WELIWATTE, The Revd Isuru, appointed Assistant Priest, All Saints, East St Kilda, effective 20 February 2023

WINSEMIUS, The Revd Karen Elizabeth, appointed Parish Minister, St Mary, Caulfield with St Clement, Elsternwick, effective 7 March 2023

Permission to Officiate:

BROWN, The Revd Barry Ronald, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 7 March 2023

CAROLANE, The Revd Canon Christopher John Robert, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 7 March 2023

DORNING, The Revd Wayne, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 1 March 2023

EMMANUEL, The Revd Joseph, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 1 March 2023

EMMANUEL, The Revd Valentina, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 1 March 2023

STREET, The Revd Robert Bruce, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 7 March 2023

THOMPSON, The Revd David Kenneth, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 7 March 2023

Resignations:

TAYLOR, The Revd Neil William, Vicar, Christ Church, Melton, effective 23 April 2023

WEBSTER, The Revd John Kelsey, Vicar, St John the Divine, Croydon, effective 12 April 2023

Retirements:

CAROLANE, The Revd Canon Christopher John Robert, Associate Priest, St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, effective 15 January 2023

Obituaries:

HAGANS, The Revd Margaret, 11 March 2023

LUCAS, The Revd Robert Keith, 5 February 2023



For Vacant Parishes listing: registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au; Tributes: www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au
Clergy Moves is compiled by the Registry Office and all correspondence should go to registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au

THE Melbourne Anglican

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We must talk more about vocations

■ Fergus King, Rhys Bezzant

Many of you have encountered the old saw which explains why nothing much ever happens:

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have.

If you haven't – congratulations. If you have – you will be aware of how it often surfaces in church life. The issue of raising up the next generation of vocational ministers is no exception. We have a pressing need to communicate the gospel to the next generation around Australia, and an alarming number of vacant parishes in Melbourne. We are at a crisis point.

When we talk about vocations and ministry education, let's start with a simple, but challenging, fact made beautifully clear by the Orthodox bishop John Zizioulas: "Baptism is the ordination of the laity". By that he meant that we are all baptised for the work of mission and evangelism, none of us has been baptised purely and simply for our own sake or salvation. Once we start from this realisation, the question then becomes, "What is my vocation – what is God calling me to do?" Pause for a second. Have you ever asked yourself that ... or have we been too busy praying for others to be sent? Important though that is, it can be a way of dodging our own call. "Here am I, send him or her".

Now that the idea is in front of you, I would ask you, what have you done to foster that vocation, by thinking about how the gifts which God has given have been identified and developed, or ignored and squandered? Please, remember, as Christians our gifting is a given. We can spend an awful lot of time waiting for God, when the real question is: "What am I doing with gifts given to me since baptism?", not "O Lord, when are you going to...?" This is a great delaying excuse, there is nothing quite like being able to blame the Almighty for our inactivity. After all, isn't being a scapegoat what Jesus is all about?

Now, let's ask ourselves about all those



Picture: iStock

wonderful programmes for ministry and Christian education the parish provides, and whether we have ever used them. And ask ourselves how often as a Christian community, we talk about ministry, evangelism and the part we might play.

Once we have registered the demand that baptism places upon all of us, we then must turn our attention to discerning whether we have a vocation for a specific ministry, such as the diaconate or the priesthood. It is important that such conversations are part of the fabric of our church life. Everyone needs to take part, lay people, lay ministers, theology lecturers, priests and bishops. Without these conversations, those gentle nudges and prompts of the Holy Spirit, which bring people into the places where discernment is tested, may never take place. How, to put it brutally, will folk know they are called, if they have no clue what the call sounds like?

Openness to talk about vocation and the encouragement to consider vocation are crucial within the church. We would do well to be less reticent in our discussions, set aside our more softly-softly approach. Many of us who have come to ordination are able to look back and see how the gentle but persistent encouragement, listening and conversations, with peers and elders helped us come to a sense of a calling to a specific ministry.

However, sometimes a reluctance, modesty, fear or sense of unworthiness may creep in. So maybe a few more pro-active steps should follow. If you think you may be called to vocational ministry, talk to your minister or priest. Ask parish clergy to assist in liturgy, worship, outreach or pastoral

tasks. There is nothing like "taste and see" to explore whether there is more to be done. Or, you could even talk to faculty at either Ridley or Trinity colleges. Both of us are used to talking vocation and ministry. It's what we are here to do. You might even read look at some of the recent books on ministry, like Stephen Cottrell's *On Priesthood*, or Michael Bennett's *Do you feel called by God?*, or biographies of ministers, priests, or missionaries. See how you react – do they inspire, challenge, encourage, or ward away?

Once a call has been discerned, ministry education looms large. This can take many forms, but whatever the form, students should leave with a deeper appreciation of them, a greater sense of awe and wonder about God and His love for creation, and a bit of fire in their belly.

Of course, specialised ministry is not necessarily academic: not all academics make good ministers, and not all ministers are academic. History gives us an example. St Jean Vianney (1786-1859), the Curé d'Ars, was never a great theologian, but was canonised for his pastoral gifts. Anyone who has been involved in ministry formation has encountered candidates who struggled with formal training, and are still ordained. Any prudent understanding of ministry education needs to recognise that hearts are every bit as important as heads.

If heads and hearts are both important, so, too, are knees. The late Eric Mascall, who taught for many years at King's College, London, pointed out on several occasions that theology is done both in the study and at the *prie-dieu*, or prayer desk. His remarks providing a fitting conclusion for this piece: both ministry vocation and education ultimately are grounded in prayer, in the business of speaking, listening and engaging with God, allowing ourselves to be led into ministry by Him.

When prayer shapes vocational discernment and ministry formation we reach the point where we say with Isaiah, "Here am I, send me", not "Here am I, send him or her", and that holds good for every baptised Christian.

The Reverend Dr Fergus King is the Farnham Maynard Lecturer in Ministry at Trinity College Theological School, University of Melbourne, and Director of the Ministry Education Centre.

The Reverend Canon Dr Rhys Bezzant is Senior Lecturer in Christian Thought at Ridley College, Dean of the Anglican Institute, and Canon of St Paul's Cathedral. Adapted from a piece originally written by Fergus King for St James' Connections, August-September 2020.

Wicked problems, a faithful perspective:

This month we hear from ISCAST fellow Dr Michael Smith. Michael has worked in engineering, marine ecology, climate change research, and computer programming. These days, he builds systems models to improve emergency services. Michael's PhD was in ecological modelling.

This piece is drawn from an "Integrating science and faith in the workplace" panel discussion at a recent conference run by ISCAST—Christians in Science and Technology. A panel of established scientists, who are also practising Christians, shared their experience. ISCAST fellow Dr Ian Harper, Dean of the Melbourne Business School, facilitated the panel and Q&A.

IAN: Michael, on this theme of integrating faith and science in the workplace, over to you.

MICHAEL: I'll begin with some science to build context. I started my career in fisheries management, where my expertise is in an area called "management strategy evaluation" or "adaptive management". It emerged from trying to tackle "wicked problems" in managing the environment.

Fisheries management is an example of a wicked problem. It's got social, economic, cultural, environmental, even aesthetic priorities, which tend to be in conflict. And it also has that "fun" thing: knotty data. In other words, relevant data is often hard to come by across a lot of things. And yet, we have to make public policy, and government policy, and industrial and ecological policy, for how we're going to try and manage these systems, not knowing everything we want to know.

These days, I work for the state govern-

ment looking at demand modelling for emergency services. So, in the case of fire outbreaks, I'm asking, "When fires happen, what systems do we need? What sort of resources do we need? How much funding do we need?" "More" is the simple answer!

However – thank you economists – money is limited. So, the fundamental challenge is how do you determine an optimal, or even an acceptable, allocation of resources when there isn't enough to go around? For Jesus, a couple of fish and a couple of loaves to feed five thousand people, no problem. For us, more of a challenge! And, despite claiming miracles, a government is not actually able to produce miracles.

So, these wicked problems have no optimal solution. Decisions will make some areas better while other areas worse. I can leave decisions to the politicians. But my academic work, in fisheries and now government, has really been using modelling and decision theory to highlight the trade-offs, the costs, when you make one choice instead of another.

If we're looking at health or emergency services, these wicked problems are becoming more and more problematic. Increasing interconnectedness of people is going to make pandemics more likely and the impact larger. Likewise for natural disasters: two years ago we had catastrophic fires then catastrophic floods. It's not a policy statement to say that natural disasters are getting worse, that's just scientific inevitability.

So, with all that background, the question is, "Should I care theologically?"

Simply as a job, sure – I can do the job and enjoy it. But theologically, should



Dr Michael Smith.

I actually care about any of the decisions? As Christians we may focus so much on a future perfect existence that we neglect the problems of this world in which we actually live. And that's something I've had to reflect on a lot over the last decade: what ultimately is the everlasting value in redeeming a fallen world or working towards its good?

The political power of the institutional church is not something you see in the New Testament. Rather, the New Testament frequently refers to God's people as living in exile. Peter begins his first letter, for instance, "Peter, an apostle of Christ, to God's elect, exiles scattered through the provinces." And later, "Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, live such good lives among the pagans ... that they may see your good deeds and glorify God." And in Daniel and Jeremiah in the Old Testament you see the same sort of thing. Jeremiah tells Israel, "Seek the peace



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Michael Smith

and the prosperity of the city to which I have carried you in exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

Now, in our 21st century Australia, despite a long history of Christian cultural influence, it may seem appropriate to think of the church as being in exile, where institutional support for the church, and public openness to biblical teaching, for instance, are greatly reduced.

So, while these problems that I work on are secular problems, from a theological perspective it's critical to continue working on them so that I can continue to seek the peace and prosperity of the city into which we have been carried.

IAN: That's a really thoughtful reflection, Michael. Thank you. Questions have come in from the audience. Let's ask this one: "Have you been able to effectively share the gospel with work colleagues?"

MICHAEL: There can be a surprisingly long lag-time before we see the results of a conversation. Only a couple of weeks ago, I met with a non-Christian colleague who I've known for many years and with whom I've had many theological discussions. He was grieving for a friend who had recently died in their thirties from cancer. As we walked back to his office, he says, "Ok, Smithy, hit me with it. What would Chesterton say?" Which was his way of saying, "Where is the meaning in this? I'm asking you for some profundity because I'm looking elsewhere and I'm not finding it." I'm not sure that he got anything particularly profound from me, but the point is things emerge in people's lives when they need to.

IAN: Let's go to another question: "Should Christians proactively disclose at work what some see as controversial beliefs?" How open are we about our beliefs on euthanasia, same-sex marriage, etcetera, that we know are very contrary to the spirit of the times?"

MICHAEL: If it's relevant to your work position, sure. If it's not relevant to your work, then who cares? In the case of leading an entire organisation, there's an expectation that the values of organisation and leader align. But for the work I do, it's the scientific objectivity that's important. Similarly for a doctor treating me – I don't need my doctor's political views; what I need is appropriate treatment.

IAN: Finally, Michael, "What advice would you give to Christian leaders facing a situation where all options available are bad or very disappointing at best? What are we going to do now?"

MICHAEL: Go for the least bad. This is like those "wicked problems." The way I approach this is trying to understand what I'm actually trying to achieve and which of my options is going to get me closest to it.

There isn't a good way, for instance, to provide optimal or even adequate medical care to everyone in Victoria. There just isn't. So essentially, we have to ask: "Which strategy gets us closest?" Go with that, but if possible, try for a better option along the way.

IAN: Thank you, Michael. I'm sure your experience and reflections can encourage our own work journeys.

This is the second in a series with established Christian scientists and science educators. Further conversations, some with younger Christian scientists, can be found at ISCAST at bit.ly/ISCAST-TMA.

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We see a portrait of Jesus in the Psalms

■ Jill Firth

When we think of Jesus as the suffering servant around Easter, our minds usually go to Isaiah, especially the familiar words for Isaiah 53:3, "He was despised and rejected by others, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Surprisingly, however, the gospels draw many of their quotes about the suffering servant from the Psalter, as New Testament scholar, Joshua Jipp explains in *Luke's Scriptural Suffering Messiah*:

"It is David, not the Isaianic Servant, upon whom Luke consistently draws in order to describe Jesus' persecution, death, resurrection, and exaltation ... Luke found in the Davidic psalms something of a portrait of the Messiah's career; and thus a precedent for the Messiah's sufferings and subsequent exaltation."

The New Testament does not just rely on quoting or alluding to specific psalms to convey the idea of a suffering servant, but on the background imagery of a royal but persecuted servant. In psalms with the heading "of David" (The Hebrew *ledavid* may mean "of David", "for David", or "to David"), "your

servant" asks for help in times of danger from enemies who seek to trap him (Psalms 27:9; 31:5) and who offer him shame, insults, and dishonour (Psalms 31:16-17; 69:17-19).

In the ancient Near East, the term "servant" could be used as an honorific. David is described as "the Servant of the Lord" in the headings of Psalms 18 and 36, like Moses and Joshua, and God's "servant" in Psalm 89:3, like Abraham.

"Servant" was also a term of deference and dependence in the ancient world, as seen in a prayer to the Babylonian god Marduk, cited by Anna Elise Zerneck in *The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms*, which also uses "servant" as a deferential term, "Do not destroy the servant who is your handiwork." The self-designation "your servant" is used in the Old Testament in military negotiations by kings such as Ahaz in 2 Kings 16:7, and in prayer by prophets such as Elijah in 1 Kings 18:36.

In the beginning of Psalm 89, David is honoured as "my servant David" (verses 3 and 20), and "my chosen one" (verse 3), and God crowns him and anoints him to signify his covenant and favour, seen in verses 19-20. Later in the psalm, tragedy strikes the king



Statue of King David.

Picture: iStock

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Thurs 6 Apr	6.00pm	Choral Eucharist & Vigil
<i>Maundy Thursday</i>		Preacher: The Precentor
Fri 7 Apr	9.00am	Good Friday Choral Liturgy
<i>Good Friday</i>		Preacher: The Precentor
	3.00pm	<i>The Crucifixion</i> – John Stainer
		Address: The Dean
Sun 9 Apr	6.00am	Easter Vigil & First Eucharist of the Resurrection
<i>Easter Day</i>		Preacher: The Dean
	10.00am	Easter Day Choral Eucharist
		Preacher: The Archbishop
	4.00pm	Festive Choral Evensong
		Preacher: The Canon Missioner
Sun 23 Apr	4.00pm	Choral Evensong & ANZAC Commemoration
		Preacher: The Revd Canon John Sanderson
Tues 25 Apr	11.00am	ANZAC Day Ecumenical Service
Fri 28 Apr	2.00pm	Seniors Group Gathering –
		Speaker: Prof. Maureen Griffiths 'Religious Tourism'
Sun 7 May	4.00pm	Choral Evensong marking the Coronation of King Charles III

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Sundays	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.00am	Choral Eucharist
	4.00pm	Choral Evensong
Weekdays	12.15pm	Holy Eucharist
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suffering, servanthood and kingship

“The way David grapples with God in the midst of suffering ... allows the Gospel writers to tell the story of Jesus in such richly human ways.”

Stephen Ahearne-Kroll

who is shamed when his royal crown is in the dust (verses 38-45), yet he is still called “your anointed” (verse 38) and “your servant” (verse 39). He asks, “Where is your steadfast love of old, which by your faithfulness you swore to David?” (verse 49) as he recalls the taunts offered to “your servant ... your anointed one” (verses 50-51).

David’s hardships and David’s honoured status are found together in Psalm 132, which reminds God of his covenant with David (verse 10) and links “your servant David” with God’s promises of a throne and a crown (verses 10-18).

At the end of the Psalter, Psalm 143 describes the suffering of “your servant,” being “crushed to the ground” and numbed with horror from being pursued by his

enemies (verses 2-4). David reaches out to God for help, recalling God’s past faithfulness (verses 5-6) and affirming his trust, loyalty, and submission (verses 7-12).

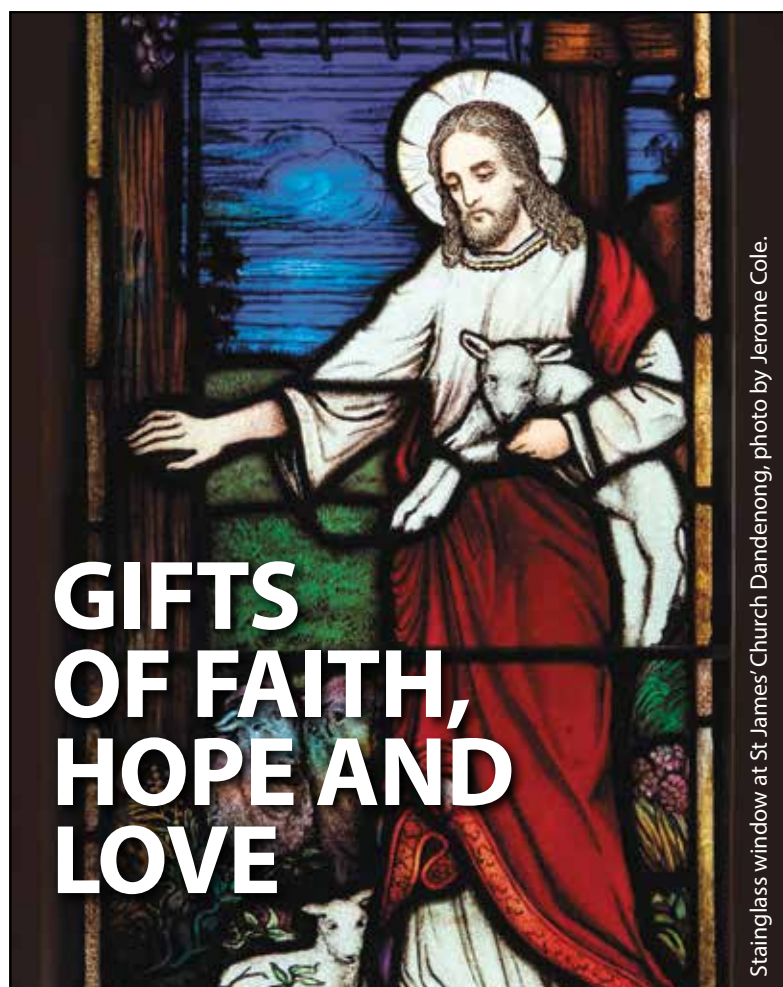
The Psalter’s final reference to a servant is in Psalm 144, where David is in danger from “mighty waters” and enemies, as in Psalm 18, and he asks God to once again “reach down from on high” to rescue him (Psalms 18:16-17 and 144:7-8). David praises God “who rescues his servant David” and “gives victory to kings,” (Psalm 144:10) in wording similar to Psalm 18:50’s “great triumphs he gives to his king.” In Psalm 144, David is not only concerned for his own safety, but he prays for the safety and flourishing of his people, and the wellbeing of young women and young men in the community (verses 12-15).

David’s conflict with his enemies creates “a symbolic world ... within which the death of Jesus is retold and received,” writes Richard Hays in *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, where Jesus is “inhabiting and reshaping ... the role of the Davidic king.” In Luke’s account of the crucifixion (Luke 23:34-46), psalm references include mocking Jesus and casting lots for his clothing (Psalm

22:7-8, 18) and offering him sour wine (Psalm 69:21). In this passage, Jesus directly quotes “into your hands I commit my spirit” from a Davidic lament which describes danger from enemies (Psalm 31:5). In the early chapters of Acts, the resurrection is proclaimed with psalm references including “you will not let your Holy One experience corruption” (Psalm 16:8-11 in Acts 2:25-28, 31), “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool” (Psalm 110:1 in Acts 2:34-35), and “Why did the Gentiles rage?” (Psalm 2:1-2 in Acts 5:25-26).

Kingship, servanthood, and suffering are held together in the Psalms, as in the portrait of Jesus in the New Testament. “The way David grapples with God in the midst of suffering ... allows the Gospel writers to tell the story of Jesus in such richly human ways,” says Stephen Ahearne-Kroll in *The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms*, “The Psalms hold in tension kingship ... and shameful suffering, neither one cancelling the other out.”

The Reverend Dr Jill Firth is Lecturer in Hebrew and Old Testament at Ridley College. Scripture references are quoted and sometimes adapted from NRSV.



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'People want to feel like they belong': A

■ Kirralee Nicolle

It's a Tuesday night at City on a Hill Church in Whittington, a suburb of Geelong. The hall is alive with cigarette smoke wafting in and the scent of food builds with each dish that arrives on the long table. A table tennis game is kicking off. Conversations are happening in corners.

Many people here look exhausted. Their lives contain complications which are hard to quantify. A taxi driver tells of his 12-hour shift driving in the clammy, unforgiving heat. He works this job because his refugee background offers him little choice. A woman tells of her aim to quit smoking a packet of cigarettes a day.

"I just need to go cold turkey," she says. "It doesn't work otherwise."

Someone else has just accepted Jesus at the afternoon Alpha course gathering. As people arrive bearing plates of food, she gets swept into a gentle huddle of hugs and prayers. Tears are wiped away, mugs of International Roast placed in hands.

There is a kind of teamwork here, a collaborative effort to provide food, encouragement and friendship.

Three women who have helped the church to flourish in the community are Kristi Bernardson, Deanne Cornwill and Helen Steinbock. They are Christian grandmothers who have each battled with drug addiction, mental illness or physical illness.

Ms Steinbock's transformational encounter with God happened during a manic episode in 2021.

"I just felt the presence of God and then this peace came over me amongst this craziness," she said. "I'm an ex-heroin addict, and I've never had any drugs like that."

So, Ms Steinbock contacted a friend. She and Ms Cornwill had met in a drug

rehab several years earlier.

"I reached out to Deanne and asked her if she was going to church anywhere," she said. "How I came to belong here was through Deanne."

Ms Steinbock said her life had changed significantly since attending the church. Her addiction to cannabis was over, with no need for rehab. She also temporarily stopped smoking.

"It was like I was delivered from them because I had no craving or anything really," she said.

"There are people who come and go because of their addictions and when they're not here, we pray for them."

Kristi Bernardson

City on a Hill Whittington began in February 2021 as a response to a need within the community for more connection during COVID-19. The growth was steep.

Pastor Peter Steven said though numbers varied on the day, the community consisted of about 50 people joining for Sunday services, Tuesday night potluck dinners or free bread on Fridays.

"We've not really had a strategy apart from loving people and welcoming people," Mr Steven said. "We're just relaxed, we're open and we're loving."

For Ms Cornwill, a former sex worker, faith came through an unexpected, traumatic route. Nineteen years ago, someone who took advantage of her sexually convinced her to try going to church. After attending church for a few years, she fell



into a spiritual depression. Later, her faith in God returned.

Ms Cornwill, who suffers from debilitating Lyme disease, spends her time organising a weekly bread distribution and supporting her children, who spent time in foster care when she was a young mother struggling with addictions. She has a heart for those in the Whittington homeless

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THE Melbourne Anglican

love for struggling helps church flourish



Deanne Cornwall, Kristi Bernardson and Helen Steinbock from City on a Hill Whittington.
Picture: Kirralee Nicolle

"No one's judged. People want to feel like they belong somewhere."

Deanne Cornwall

community. Alongside Ms Bernardson and Ms Steinbock, she also cares for those battling addictions.

"Sometimes you want it to all happen now," she said.

Ms Bernardson said that when those battling addiction aren't present at church, there is still work to be done.

"There are people who come and go

because of their addictions and when they're not here, we pray for them," she said.

Besides addiction, mental illness is a struggle for the community. Depression, psychosis, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and post-natal depression are some of the conditions which present at City on a Hill Whittington. The women were all seeing the same counsellor, but she recently died. They said there is little professional help readily available in the area.

Ms Bernardson suffers from schizoaffective disorder, a condition marked by schizophrenia symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions, as well as rapid mood changes such as mania and depression. Her illness has coincided with varying degrees of drug addiction.

She tells how Ms Cornwall and Ms Steinbock have been there to support her when times were tough.

"I had one night where I'd used and you came over to my house to see me," she said to the women. "People [at City on a Hill] have just been there for me, praying for me, encouraging me and giving me wisdom."

For Ms Bernardson, this care is a far cry from the abusive environment she grew up in with a violent church minister as a father. She said though her upbringing turned her off faith at the time, she has learned to trust Christian community again.

"I know he wasn't your average man," she said. "I know there's not many like him. I've been involved in five churches, and you know, you don't come across that very often."

All three of these women have overcome battles, and also share battles that are still ongoing. Their church community has provided them with a place to find care, and also offer it to those around them.

"It's a welcoming atmosphere," Ms Cornwall said. "No one's judged. People want to feel like they belong somewhere."



Everyday Saints.

As a teacher, lay minister, mission worker, ESL teacher and mum, Jan Shattock's faith has sustained her through some unexpected trials, including a sudden and frightening diagnosis.

She is a member of St Thomas' Burwood, and has served the Melbourne diocese and the non-English speaking community in a variety of ways. Journalist Kirralee Nicolle recently heard a little about what keeps Jan going through the ups and downs of life.

For Jan's story and more, listen to our podcast via tma.melbourneanglican.org.au



So ... what is a 'resourcing church'?

■ John Sanderson

As a child I visited Speakers' Corner in London's Hyde Park, located close to the spot where tens of thousands went to their death on the infamous Tyburn Gallows. Crowds gather on Sunday mornings to hear people from around the world exercise their right to free speech. Historic figures such as Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin and George Orwell often used the area to demonstrate free speech, according to the Royal Parks Website.

One of speakers who caught my childish attention, and to whom I returned to listen on Sundays as a young adult, was Lord Soper.

Donald Soper was a Methodist minister, pacifist and socialist who took to open air preaching in the form of the early leaders of Methodism. Soper drew huge crowds, speaking passionately on a range of subjects, famously stating that "the policies of Margaret Thatcher were inherently incompatible with Christianity." I admired Soper's knowledge, passion and the depth of his knowledge as he brought Christianity and the mission of the church to the masses.

Obviously, Soper was not the first Christian to step out in faith and with confidence to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. In Anglo-Saxon Europe monks stepped out in faith and confidence from

their monastery and set out to evangelise, baptise and disciple a designated area with the intention of growing the church, "the minster model". Those who have travelled around Great Britain and Ireland, and Europe may have come across free-standing decorative stone crosses where it is thought that "preaching", or sharing of the stories of Jesus Christ by these early evangelists, may have taken place.

"Resourcing churches will embrace fresh expressions of church, as well as models for revitalising and renewing churches."

Resource churches are the contemporary model for mission of the minster church. The working and evolving definition of a resource (minster) church – drawn from Alan Bing's *Reimagining Resourcing Churches* – is "a church which is designated a resource church by the diocesan bishop as part of a diocesan strategy to evangelise a city or town and transform society." Bing writes, "it is also intentionally resourced to plant and revitalize churches, develops a pipeline of leaders for further planting, and provides

other resources for mission across a city or town."

A minster or resource church may be found in an urban area, a large regional hub-suburb, or in a country setting. These churches have at their heart a desire to give out of their abundance in resources to churches around them, so that they might be to their communities what God is calling them to be. It is important to note that minster churches are part of an intentional diocesan strategy to evangelise and transform society just as our forebears did. These churches have a clear vision and purpose, adaptive leadership, and governance to accommodate growth and change while releasing leaders who can lead new congregations and ministry initiatives.

Resourcing churches will embrace fresh expressions of church, as well as models for revitalising and renewing churches, including planting new congregations in new and expanding areas, just as the Anglo-Saxon church did. Could you be a resourcing church? At your heart of your church is there a confidence in the gospel that enables you to give out of your abundance so that Christ may be made fully known?

John Sanderson is a canon of church planting and of renewal and revitalisation in the Diocese of Melbourne, and vicar of George's East Ivanhoe and St Paul's East Kew.



If we discovered life on other planets, what would that mean for Christianity?

Picture: iStock

■ Jon Clarke

Few people, as they look up into the clear night sky and see thousands of stars, some of them suns with orbit planets, can avoid wondering if there are other beings on those worlds. For those who are Christians comes the additional question: “if there are beings on those worlds, what does it mean for our faith?”

These are not new issues that we ponder. Among the earliest writings on the possibility of life away from Earth are those of the Hellenistic Syrian Lucian of Samosata in the second century. Lucien used the vehicle of an imaginary voyage to the moon and sun to describe not only interplanetary travel and life on other worlds, but interplanetary war and space colonisation. The aim of this work however was not philosophic, scientific, or theological, but comic satire.

Nicholas of Cusa in the 15th century was possibly the first to think seriously about intelligent life on other planets, and to explore the possible theological implications. He wrote about the possibility of these beings being sinless, but concluded that if they were not, the death of Christ would also have redeemed them. Much more recently Alice Meynell (1847-1922) wrote in her poem *Christ in the Universe* that, just as God revealed Himself as man,

“Curly Questions” is a monthly column written by experts dealing with tricky conversations that touch on faith, in a compassionate, practical and biblical way.

Jesus, so on other worlds God might reveal Himself in different forms. CS Lewis, in his 1943 novel *Voyage to Venus* (also published as *Perelandra*), explored the possibly to both unfallen worlds and separate redemptions of those that had fallen. And as theoretical physicist and priest John Polkinghorne put it, God could well take on little green flesh to redeem little green men. But, as Lewis cautioned in his 1958 essay *Religion and Rocketry*, could sinful humans be trusted to act rightly toward such beings, regardless of their status? Novelist Michael Flynn in

his 1986 story of alien visitation to 14th century Germany, posed the question of what would happen if aliens wanted to become Christians.

These writers focussed on the spiritual status of intelligent life beyond Earth because it is on these topics that the greatest interest and perhaps curliest questions lie. Barring the sudden reception of an extra-terrestrial broadcast or starships uncloaking above Beijing or Delhi, our first encounter with extra-terrestrial life is likely to be far more humble. It might be fossils on Mars perhaps, or microbes in hospitable microenvironments on that planet, or creatures living in subsurface oceans beneath the icy surface of Jupiter’s moon Europa or Saturn’s moon Enceladus. Despite predictions (perhaps driven by wishful thinking) in the popular press that such discoveries would destroy religion, they are unlikely to raise any ripples for Christians. Past or present life on Mars, Enceladus, Europa, or anywhere else for that matter would still be living in God’s universe, and being part of God’s creation. I, for one, as a Christian planetary scientist and astrobiologist, look forward to such discoveries.

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Dr Jon Clarke is an astrobiologist and geologist, and president of the Australian Mars Society. He worships at St Matthew’s Anglican Church Wanniansa, in Canberra.

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St James Dandenong. Photo: Janine Eastgate

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