



Aid, justice hopes high post-election

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Vale to faithful pastor, teacher

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St John's children and families' minister Kylie Pilkington gets ready with Sam, Abi and Emily.

Picture: Kirralee Nicolle

Children find true anchor

by Kirralee Nicolle

PRIMARY-AGED CHILDREN are set to descend on St John's Diamond Creek for its Going Bananas program for the first time since COVID-19 hit.

St John's children and families minister Kylie Pilkington said that the program was focused on fun, but its goal was to reach those who were approaching a critical point in their Christian journey.

Ms Pilkington said this year the theme would be Anchors Aweigh, a seafaring adventure which focused on the truth of Jesus as an anchor through the storms of life.

"We are mentoring those we hope will be the church leaders of the future," she said.

Ms Pilkington said that 144 children attended the program in 2019, including those from both church and non-church backgrounds.

She said that the children ranged in age from prep to grade six, and upon graduation, were invited to return as volunteers.

She said that as a result, volunteers ranged in age from 12 to over 70 years old.

"Our vision is to be an inter-generational community who loves Jesus and loves sharing Jesus," Ms Pilkington said.

"[Through the program], we can tap into the energy of our youth and young adults while also drawing on the wisdom of our older leaders."

Ms Pilkington said the school holiday program ran each year for 20 years from its inception in 2000.

In 2020 and 2021, the team was forced to take a break due to COVID-19.

Unions split synod

Same-sex marriage issue may be left to individual dioceses: Leaders

by Kirralee Nicolle

INDIVIDUAL DIOCESES MAY BE left to discern the way forward on same-sex marriage within the church after motions both for and against such unions were voted down at General Synod, leaders have predicted.

Leaders differed as to whether same-sex marriage was "a moral good and a gift to be celebrated" within the Anglican Church. But they agreed that listening to one another was a key aspect of moving forward.

Two motions regarding same-sex marriage failed to pass at General Synod.

The first was a statement by Sydney Archbishop Kanishka

Raffel, which sought to define marriage in the Anglican Church as "the exclusive union of one man and one woman". This was seconded by Melbourne's Reverend Natalie Rosner.

The motion was supported in the houses of clergy and laity, but failed 10-12 in the House of Bishops.

The second motion sought to affirm same-sex marriage within the Church. This motion was presented by Associate Professor Reverend Matthew Anstey from Adelaide, and seconded by Melbourne lay representative Professor Peter Sherlock.

Professor Sherlock said he was interested to see how many delegates at General Synod sup-

"With the best of intentions, those on both sides [were] trying to understand what the Bible does or does not allow."

The Reverend Peter MacPherson

ported the motion put forward by Associate Professor Anstey. He said he was curious as to what it would take for someone to change their mind on the topic.

A total 95 synod delegates voted in favour of this second motion, 145 against it.

Professor Sherlock said it was imperative members of the Diocese of Melbourne find time to discuss the issue further and that he believed those on both sides were open to this.

At synod he spoke to delegates of his personal experience as an

Anglican living in a same-sex relationship.

Fellow Melbourne lay representative Fiona McLean said that for her, being unified meant coming to one mind on how the Anglican Church regarded marriage and sexuality.

Mrs McLean said she believed the opinion that marriage was the exclusive union of one man and one woman was widespread in the Church, rather than largely a focus of the Sydney Diocese as some said.

She said while about 28 per cent of General Synod delegates were from Sydney, approximately 60 per cent of all the attendees voted "in a conservative way".

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Powerful life rule is an invitation to empathy



“Do to others as you would have them do to you” is an invitation to develop empathy in all our interactions with other people.”



by Archbishop Philip Freier

JESUS' TEACHING IN LUKE 6 to “love your enemies, do good to them who hate you” is profoundly challenging to many aspects of human behaviour. It is clear as we read through his teaching that it engages every aspect of life. His conclusion to this teaching is plain, “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful”. I'm sure that he isn't just talking about a gritty determination to behave in an acceptable way but that our commitment to be merciful is deeply set as a moral principle. “Do to others as you would have them do to you” is an invitation to develop empathy in all our interactions with other people.

The modern world presents such an overwhelming and unrelenting stream of human suffering before us, across all media platforms, that it becomes a risk that our empathy is not animated by these events. We can readily become overwhelmed and desensitised. I'm impressed how many of our schools have “service learning” programs in place that expose students to the lives and circumstances of others in Australia or overseas whom they might not otherwise encounter. I have personally taken part in programs of this type and am impressed by how much impact they have. One was with Brighton Grammar School in the work they have led at the Martyrs' Memorial School in Popondetta, Papua New

Guinea, over many years; another was the Urban Camp led by the Brotherhood of St Laurence here in Melbourne. Not just awareness but empathy itself is nurtured through these experiences.

The modern world knows the transformative power of empathy. We mainly see that, negatively, in the techniques of dehumanisation and misinformation that are readily evident in the conflicts around the world. We don't need to look further than the Russian invasion of Ukraine to see this happening in real time around us. News services in Russia are increasingly under the control of the Russian government, independent journalism has been suppressed and narratives about a “Special Operation” to “denazify”

Ukraine are treated as plausible by many of the Russian people. This serves to desensitise the natural aptitude we all have for empathy. Even the prophetic voice of the Russian Church appears to have been captured by this process. It is reported that Pope Francis has confronted Patriarch Kiril of Moscow on this very matter, saying, “Brother, we are not state clerics, we cannot use the language of politics but that of Jesus. We are pastors of the same holy people of God. Because of this, we must seek avenues of peace, to put an end to the firing of weapons.”

Empathy is the greatest subverter of these narratives. Empathy is best nurtured through knowledge, awareness and relationships. The community

support for the “Biloela family” of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka is a good example of this. This particular family, known personally by the local community of a country town has survived various adverse treatments through the emphatic advocacy of people around the country, starting with the community of Biloela.

“Do to others as you would have them do to you” is a powerful life rule. It is powered by empathy and depends on the character of God's mercy commending itself to be written in our hearts, deeply embedded in our character.

Philip Melbourne

Clergy Moves

Vacant Appointments as of 17 May 2022:

Holy Trinity, Bacchus Marsh with Christ Church, Myrniong and St George's Balliang; St Martin, Belgrave Heights; Christ Church, Berwick; St Edward, Blackburn South; St Peter, Bundoora; St John Chrysostom, Brunswick West; St Faith, Burwood; St Mark, Camberwell (from December 2022); St Catharine, Caulfield South; St Alban, Coburg West; St Philip, Collingwood; St Michael's & St Luke's, North Dandenong; Darebin South; St Mark, Dromana; St Margaret, Eltham; Christ Church, Geelong; St Stephen, Greythorn; Holy Trinity, Hampton; St Martin, Hawksburn; St James, Ivanhoe; St Matthias, Mernda; Christ Church, Newport; Pascoe Vale-Oak Park; St Matthew, Panton Hill; St George the Martyr Queenscliff and St James Point Lonsdale; St Mark, Reservoir; St Andrew, Somerville; St Aidan, Strathmore; Christ Church, South Yarra; St Luke, Sydenham; St Thomas, Upper Ferntree Gully; All Saints' Carlotta Tye Memorial, Selby; St Thomas, Winchelsea with Holy Trinity, Barrabool and St Paul's, Deans Marsh; St Paul, Westmeadows; St Matthew, Wheeler's Hill (from November 2022); Christ Church, Whittlesea with St Peter's, Kinglake

Appointments:

BEER, The Revd Kathryn Elizabeth, appointed Assistant Priest, Parish of St Hilary, Kew/ North Balwyn / Mont Albert North effective 20 July 2022
BEER, The Revd Tavis Michael, appointed Assistant Priest, Parish of St Hilary, Kew/ North Balwyn / Mont Albert North effective 16 May 2022
DUNCAN, The Revd Ross Lachlan, appointed Priest-in-Charge, Parish of Wandin Seville & Mt Evelyn, effective 5 July 2022
ELLIOTT, The Revd Simon, appointed Extension of Priest-in-Charge, St George, Monbulk, effective 4 June 2022
PETERS, The Revd Graeme John, appointed Area Dean, Deanery of Monash & Kingston, effective 27 April 2022 and Incumbent from Priest-in-Charge, St James Dandenong, effective 9 October 2022

Permission to Officiate:

GRANT, The Revd Warwick Alexander, appointed Renewal of Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 27 April 2022
PALAPATHWALA, The Revd Ruwan, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 15 May 2022

Resignations:

ALLINSON, The Venerable Gregory, Incumbent, St Mark, Camberwell effective 12 December 2022 and Archdeacon of the Archdeaconry of Kew, effective 1 August 2022
D'Alton, The Revd Craig, Incumbent, Christ Church, South Yarra, effective 15 July 2022
RAIKE, The Revd John Alan, Priest-in-Charge, St Philip, Collingwood, effective 13 June 2022
PALAPATHWALA, The Revd Ruwan, Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, Whittlesea with St Peter's, Kinglake, effective 15 May 2022

Obituaries:

MCCALL, The Revd Anthea, 28 April 2022
BANFIELD, The Revd Thomas Harry, 3 May 2022

For Vacant Parishes listing contact registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au

See Tributes at www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au

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



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Apr 2022 – 10 July 2022		Luke Jerram's <i>Gaia</i> at the Cathedral www.cathedral.org.au/Gaia
Wednesdays	1pm	Lunchtime Concert Series (see website for upcoming concerts)
Thurs 2 June	5.10pm	Choral Evensong & Thanksgiving for the life of Henry Speagle OAM
Sun 5 June	4pm	Diocesan Thy Kingdom Come Beacon Event
Sun 12 June	10am	Trinity Sunday Preacher: Canon Dr Bob Derrenbacker
Thurs 16 June	5.10pm	Collation of the Revd Guy Mason as Archdeacon
Sat 25 June	7pm	Concert – Polyphonic Voices
Sun 26 June	10am	Patronal Festival Eucharist followed by AGM
	4pm	175th Anniversary Provincial Evensong
Sat 16 July	10am	First Nations Cultural Awareness Session with Canon Glenn Loughrey

REGULAR SERVICES

Sundays	8am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10am	Choral Eucharist
	1pm	Bilingual Eucharist 華語崇拜
	4pm	Choral Evensong
Weekdays	12.15pm	Holy Eucharist
	5.10pm	Choral Evensong
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Kicking goals for community, church links

by Jenan Taylor

ADANDENONG CHURCH IS growing its community connections with a revamped, newly opened sports facility.

The overhaul of an old tennis court at St James' Dandenong was the first in a number of renovations the church has planned.

Once paved with a crumbling asphalt surface, the court now has new fences, a new synthetic pitch marked with zones that allow it to be used for a variety of ball sports, and new equipment to match.

But St James' assistant curate Reverend Michael Kicevski said the multipurpose court was also the first step towards opening to the neighbourhood.

Mr Kicevski said it was about demonstrating that the St. James' parish wanted to collapse boundaries and be there for the local population, not just itself.

He said Dandenong's large multicultural community had an affinity with sports such as basketball and soccer or futsal, so the facility was a way for St James' to show their support of those preferences.

Another goal, Mr Kicevski said, was to help people in the area who might feel disengaged to connect in with the St James' community.

"It's not just to provide a court, but to actually be here and provide soccer balls and basket balls, and to have people from the parish connect with them as well. So that's the plan, and the hope and prayer," he said.

User group, community recreation organisation Reclink Australia, said people they engaged with in the area found the refreshed court a real drawcard. Reclink sport coordinator David Marsh said it had run a program in the space for almost four years but the court's resurfaced synthetic turf and being able to use it for a sport like basketball or futsal



Bishop Paul Barker, St Albans Saints player Hakeem al-Araibi and participants enjoy the new facility. Picture: supplied

was particularly appealing.

Mr Marsh said Reclink's participants included marginalised and disadvantaged members of the community, who often had difficult stories, and that being able to participate in a sports program gave them a brief window to not think about their circumstances.

"It's just very casual, lets them have a bit of fun and lets them be a bit more active than they would usually be," he said.

Mr Marsh said the group's participants usually played a round of basketball or soccer, or whatever ball sport they preferred at the premises just prior to St James' weekly community meal in a bid to help keep community members active.

He had noted that they particularly loved the new equipment

"It allows us to run more programs ... and breaks down the barriers for those disadvantaged and disengaged in the community."

David Marsh, Reclink

including the basketball hoop, which was adjustable and easy to use. He said being able to use sports venues like the one at St James' free of charge meant Reclink could avoid exorbitant venue hire fees.

"It allows us to run more programs. It just means it can remain free and longer lasting for those participants and breaks down the barriers for those disadvantaged and disengaged in the community,"

Mr Marsh said.

Mr Kicevski said members of St James' South Sudanese youth group also liked to shoot a few hoops and kick some goals when they gathered at the church. He said other users included members of the public who simply needed a space for a bat of cricket or to play basketball, and a futsal coach who was also keen to use the facility to help his group get in some extra training.

A futsal enthusiast himself, Mr Kicevski was particularly pleased with the inclusion of futsal nets in the space.

He said that as futsal was about skill rather than physical ability, it was a game that was accessible to people of all ages. "So, the great thing about being able to have both basketball and futsal here is that everyone can get involved, get connected and have some fun and stay out of trouble," Mr Kicevski said.

He said there were other sport venues in the area, but they were all almost always being used, especially when the weather was good or during summer holidays.

Since the court had re-opened people had gradually become aware of it, he said. Those who wanted to use it simply dropped by the parish office and asked for the key.

"We'd open it up for them and then just hang around with them, and get to know them a bit," Mr Kicevski said.

He said the church hoped to make more connections with the users once there was more consistency, and then perhaps invite them along to Bible studies or to a monthly outreach focused service.

"It's a more laid back, contemporary service. It's open to everyone and doesn't assume that they're going to know about this or that or why are we doing all these fancy things that happen in the morning service," he said. "It's about us just saying, 'Hey, we want you to know Jesus', and inviting them along to that."

The overhaul has been supported by grants from the Melbourne Anglican Foundation and the Rotary Club of Greater Dandenong and Endeavour Hills, among others. Plans for the multipurpose sports court include landscaping, amphitheatre style seating for spectators and a car park.

Fliers 'inappropriate' or 'not necessarily unethical'?

by Kirralee Nicolle

ANGLICAN LEADERS have offered differing views on recent actions by the Australian Christian Lobby towards federal MPs who sought amendments to the proposed *Religious Discrimination Bill*.

The Australian Christian Lobby took aim at five federal MPs ahead of the recent election by distributing advertising materials in their electorates criticising their recent actions in Parliament.

The pamphlets and billboards featured graphics depicting the MPs driving wrecking balls into churches and Christian schools.

In their advertising campaign, the ACL labelled the MPs as having engaged in "attacks on Christianity and other faiths".

Trinity College lecturer in Public Theology Reverend Canon Dr Ray Cleary called the actions of the ACL towards the MPs "totally wrong and inappropriate".

A report published in the *Guardian* said the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit

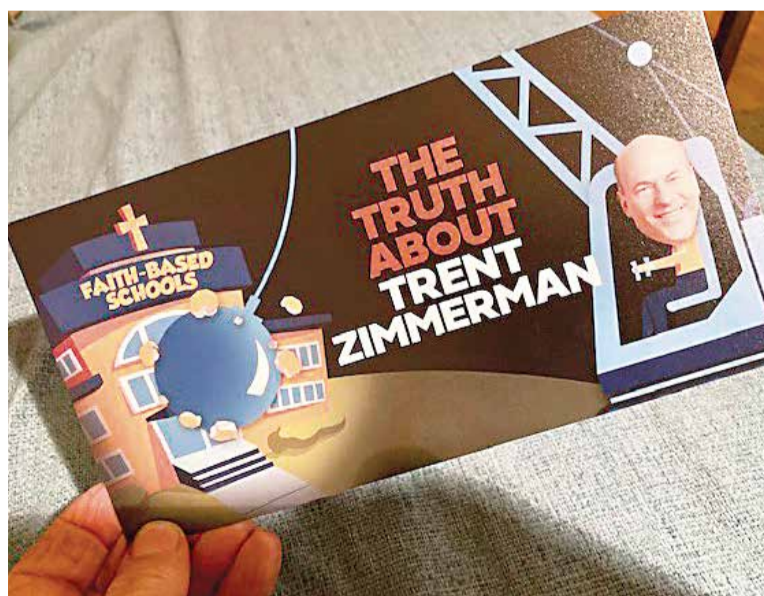
Commission had received complaints regarding the advertising materials, as the charitable status of the ACL precluded them from publicly opposing or supporting political parties and candidates.

The MPs, who were then campaigning to retain their seats in the 21 May election, were Moderate Liberal Party ministers Trent Zimmerman, Bridget Archer, Fiona Martin and Dave Sharma, as well as Independent member Rebekha Sharkie.

The MPs were part of a group who in February voted for amendments to the proposed *Religious Discrimination Bill* which would allow for greater protection of LGBTIQ students attending Christian schools.

Dr Cleary said the Christian church should not demonstrate alignment with a particular political group and ought to resist those who assert their stance by targeting others.

Dr Cleary said that a particularly concerning element was the focus by the ACL on individuals.



The Australian Christian Lobby has chosen a controversial approach to their election response. Picture: Facebook

The ACL had announced their intention to "focus on people, not parties" during the election campaign.

Melbourne Anglican Social Responsibilities Committee chair Dr Gordon Preece said that the

issue lay with the over-emphasis by the ACL on culture and identity politics.

But he said their highlighting candidates' voting record materials already on the public record was not necessarily unethical in itself, and

used also by Independent "Teal" candidates against the Liberal moderates not acting against climate change.

Dr Cleary said that he believed the purpose of a Christian charity should be contributing to the common good of society, rather than targeting political candidates.

Dr Cleary said that this did not mean that the church could not have a voice in politics.

"Jesus challenged the political leaders of the day," Dr Cleary said.

"He called on them to be committed to the principles of justice [by caring for] the orphaned and widowed and ensuring that the earth's resources were available to everyone."

An Australian Christian Lobby spokesperson said voting against the *Religious Discrimination Bill* and to repeal section 38 or 38(3) of the *Sex Discrimination Act* would have adverse impact on people of religion and religious schools.

The spokesperson said the ACL was seeking to visually display that truth.

Language work vital to bridging gap

by Kirralee Nicolle

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS ARE undergoing medical treatments without fully understanding the nature of their condition, a Darwin-based linguist has warned.

Wycliffe Bible Translators worker Anglican Kathy Dadd said that expecting Australians with Indigenous first languages to use English during medical appointments led to reduced comprehension.

Ms Dadd said that enabling the use of first languages while accessing medical services was an issue of ethics.

"If people were having surgery, and they hadn't [fully] given consent, then that would be a problem," Ms Dadd said.

She told of a woman who had mentioned to Ms Dadd that she was to have surgery the following week.

When Ms Dadd asked her about the nature of the surgery, the woman replied that she was not sure.

Ms Dadd said that while many speakers of non-Indigenous languages were able to access interpreting services in their first language, many Indigenous Australians would be hard-pressed to find an interpreter who understood them.



Kathy Dadd working as a Bible translator in the Northern Territory.

Picture: supplied

Ms Dadd also said that there was a gap between cultural understandings of health among Australians who spoke English as a first language and those who spoke Indigenous languages.

Ms Dadd said that signals such as nodding or being able to repeat information did not necessarily inform the medical staff that information relayed in English had been understood.

She said that a feature of

Indigenous Australian cultures was a high respect for ownership of information.

If a doctor omitted details when informing an Indigenous patient of a treatment course, the patient may not feel it appropriate to request further information, Ms Dadd said.

Ms Dadd said that the best way to address these issues was firstly to increase awareness.

Ms Dadd said that this aware-

ness was key to policy change.

"If all of Australia understood the situation [for Indigenous Australians] better, we would have different policies," Ms Dadd said.

"[Indigenous languages] would be more of a priority."

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies lists the number of Indigenous Australian languages at greater than 250, with 800 recognised dialects.

God was on both sides of the beach

by Kirralee Nicolle

A PROMINENT Anglican church Torres Strait voice has countered the belief that early missionary involvement in the islands was an example of colonialist oppression.

Addressing St John's East Malvern Aunty Dr Rose Elu spoke of the true significance of the Coming of the Light, a yearly July celebration commemorating the arrival of missionaries to the Torres Strait, saying missionaries were merely bringing the gospel of Christ. A National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council executive member, Dr Elu refuted the idea that missionaries had "brought Jesus" to the islands, saying "God was on both sides of the beach".

"It is important for all Anglicans to appreciate that Jesus was present in my people before the Bible – before the Light of the Gospel – came to the Torres Strait Islands on that special day in 1871.

"Our spirituality lies in the land, sea and sky, and since time immemorial our people have believed in a Creator – we just did not know yet that the Creator was the Christian God."

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New hope for action: Aid advocates

SOME CHRISTIAN LEADERS are hoping for “a new era” with the election of a new government, after a landslide federal election which saw Labor leader Anthony Albanese become Prime Minister.

Anglican Overseas Aid chief executive Jo Knight said she felt as if the changed government meant there were new possibilities, and hopefully the start of a new era. She said she hoped for vision and leadership from the Labor government, particularly in the areas of climate and foreign aid.

Ms Knight said that since the last election, Christian volunteers across the country had been praying for their representatives, and that positive changes from this election proved that many prayers had been answered. She said she felt emotional seeing the new Prime Minister commit to the Uluru Statement from the Heart and commit to climate action. Ms Knight also encouraged people to hold their representatives to account on the promises they made prior to the election.



Leaders have urged Anglicans to help political leaders remember their commitments.

Picture: alp.org.au

“Help them remember the poor and the need for action on climate justice,” Ms Knight said.

Aboriginal Christian leader Brooke Prentis was also hopeful that the embrace of the Uluru Statement meant that Indigenous Australians would be better

prioritised.

“We have waited 250 years for the healing that comes from truth and justice, and that finally seems possible,” Ms Prentis said.

Micah Australia executive director Reverend Tim Costello said that the key issues for him

in this election were integrity of leadership, climate change, refugees and stronger regulation around sports betting advertising. He said he was encouraged to see that the newly-elected “Teal independents shared these values.

Call for greater state, Church engagement

by Muriel Porter

COULD CLERGY and other church workers be required to have their fitness to work with children appraised under a government registration regime, as lawyers and health professionals do? Currently religious institutions conduct their own checks. Government registration could be avoided by religious institutions being proactive in this area, according to prominent Anglican lawyer Michael Shand QC. Delivering the annual Sharwood Lecture at Trinity College, Mr Shand said the more churches were proactive, the more likely they would successfully resist moves for a state regime of registration.

Mr Shand called for greater engagement, co-operation and collaboration between state and church. This would also mean a better prospect of reconciling the conflicts in moral values that arose, he said. Mr Shand outlined circumstances that have triggered state interventions into churches. In particular, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse had led to a great deal of legislation impacting churches, at Commonwealth and state level. He said given states and territories had moved differently this had created difficulties for religious institutions that operated in more than one state. Marriage equality and anti-discrimination legislation was another area affecting the churches, he said. Mr Shand said on one hand, certain discriminatory conduct in employment against, for example, a person in a same sex marriage was unlawful and contrary to community moral values. But he said some religious institutions or sections of them said their religious faith could not countenance employment of such persons.

Christian collaborations bear much fruit

by Jenan Taylor

CROSS DENOMINATIONAL collaborations are helping Anglicans feel less alone in their life and witness, according to a rural vicar.

St Matthew’s Panton Hill locum Reverend Rob Culhane said sharing services and initiatives made Christians aware there were other active Christians in the district who they could meet with.

St Matthew’s had a tradition of sharing a Passover meal on Maundy Thursday with Hurstbridge Uniting Church, motivated by their friendship connections, Mr Culhane said.

He said the country setting meant that people in the community co-operated a great deal because of power outages, and a lot of other day to day dependences.

“In country life everyone works together, and denominational differences are pretty secondary,” he said.

Mr Culhane could also understand how it would be very effective for remote and regional communities affected by floods, droughts and other setbacks. He said there were fruitful collaborative projects in the provision of aged care services and with youth groups shared across different parishes. He said

cross denominational efforts also made different understandings of churchmanship possible, and gave people the chance to focus beyond the life of their own congregation.

Centre for Ecumenical Studies director Bishop Philip Huggins said Anglicans were sharing in a large number of ecumenical activities.

Bishop Huggins cited the ecumenical prayer and meditation groups organised to pray, according to their traditions, for the outcome of the COP 26 climate change conference in Glasgow.

He said the idea behind sharing was that people shouldn’t do

apart what they could together with integrity, and with doctrinal integrity to their own tradition.

It exemplified capturing and sharing the insights of different ecumenical traditions in the Christian context, enhancing ways of being a disciple of Jesus.

That principle had led to stronger cooperation between Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Lutherans, Bishop Huggins said. It also then led to other denominations cooperating on advocacy for policies around climate change, asylum-seeker and refugees, as well as gambling and on combating child abuse.

Help all people feel connected and supported in Australia.

Your donation will help us continue our work supporting people seeking asylum, refugees and people from migrant backgrounds.

All over the world families, communities and entire groups of people are being forced to leave their homes. From Afghanistan to Ukraine, people are fleeing their homes knowing they may never be able to feel home there again.

When people are resettled in a new country 'settled' is often far from how they're feeling.

We know newly arrived people can face multiple challenges as they settle into a new country.



Here at the Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL) our teams work to support people seeking asylum, refugees and people from migrant backgrounds, to include them in Australia's economic and social life.

Our work in helping families and children to understand the school and education system - and providing extra school and homework support so they aren't left behind, has never been more important.

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 the BSL you are helping people in your community to feel settled and connected. **Thank you.**



Every Blessing

Debra Saffrey-Collins

Debra Saffrey-Collins (Rev'd)

Head of Chaplaincy and Diocesan Partnerships
Brotherhood of St. Laurence

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Sadie Rathbone with her great-granddaughter, also named Sadie.
Picture: supplied

Sad goodbye to Sadie Rathbone

by Christine Silvester

ST ALBAN'S Coburg West members have paid tribute to a long-term member, who died shortly after celebrating her 100th birthday.

Sadie Rathbone was an active member of the parish for more than 78 years, joining after she married her beloved husband Dennis.

An early beneficiary of Legacy, Sadie used every opportunity to share the valuable life lessons she learnt through the programme.

With Dennis, Sadie served St. Alban's Parish and the local community in many ways, including running Sunday school and youth groups, having leadership roles in Scouting, and through the Mother's Union and the World Day of Prayer. Sadie's contributions to the lives of young people were formally acknowledged in 2007, when she was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for her work as an Honorary Juvenile Probationary Officer.

Sadie led a remarkable Christian life and although her health made attending church an occasional event, she continued to receive Communion at home up until her death on 17 May.

The Reverend Christine Silvester is locum priest at St Alban's Coburg West – Pascoe Vale.



Beth and Alan Gibbs.

Using phones to connect with all

by Kirralee Nicolle

AN ELDERLY couple is conducting a Bible study for those who are unwell or lack access to Zoom and other web-based technologies.

Beth and Alan Gibbs arranged a Bible study roster and materials for members of their parish during a period of lockdown last year.

The roster consisted of members of St Edwards Blackburn South who called one another weekly on their landlines.

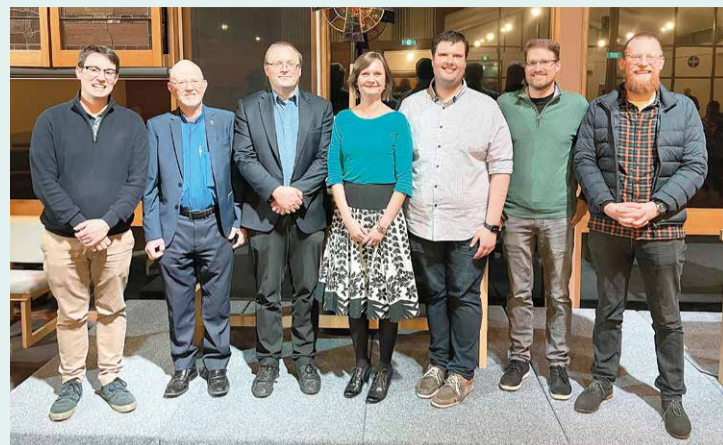
Ms Gibbs said that while many participants used the time on the phone to work through the study, others used it as an opportunity to check in on each other's wellbeing.

Ms Gibbs said she had arranged the roster so that members took turns contacting a different group member each week. She then chose a simple study for the group to cover each week from a devotional magazine.

Ms Gibbs said she encouraged the group members to use the time however they thought best, as fellowship was the main purpose of the group.

She said that when the group began, they had just 10 members, but this number had now increased to 30. The ages of participants ranged from those in their 50s to those in their 90s, Ms Gibbs said.

She also said that another benefit of the initiative was that those who tended not to engage with a standard Bible study had enjoyed the phone study format.



Assistant minister Sam Creek, seniors' minister Hugh Prentice, Wayne Schuller, parish administrator Veronika Warren, locum minister Reece Kelly, former assistant minister Hilton Jordan and former assistant curate Ben Soderlund.
Picture: supplied

Fond farewell as Wayne Schuller departs Berwick Anglican

by Hugh Prentice

ON SUNDAY 1 May, Berwick Anglican Church said goodbye to our vicar Reverend Wayne Schuller as he concluded his ministry among us over the last nearly 12 years. He preached from Ephesians 4:31 - 5:2 at each of the three services, urging us to heed God's call to us His people to be kind and compassionate to one another, and to forgive one another, just as in Christ God has forgiven each of us. He praised God for the great privilege of being a minister of the gospel of His grace to us in Christ in the context of this thriving parish. He expressed his great confidence in God's revealed Word in the Bible for our life and faith, and in the Godly and competent lay and ordained leadership in the parish. He said how grateful he was to all in the Berwick parish who had supported and encouraged him, especially during times of his illness when he needed to take time to recover.

There were two gatherings for speeches and food, one at noon after the second morning service, and one after the 5pm service. Several people told how Wayne had been a means of grace in their lives, and in the life of the wider community. Bob Flavell described Wayne as a great lover of the Lord Jesus, of the Bible, of the Church, of his family, and so on. Wayne paid tribute to his wife Helen, for how she has stood by him when demands of ministry took him out of the family circle at times. Reece Kelly, now Berwick's locum minister, spoke warmly and praised Wayne for his leadership of the ministry team.

We all wished Wayne well for his time of refreshment ahead, and for his new role on the ministry team at St James' Pakenham, and we pray for our Bishop Paul Barker and all in the Incumbency Committee as they seek a new shepherd for this part of Christ's flock.

The Reverend Canon Hugh Prentice is seniors' minister at Berwick Anglican Church.

From the editor's desk



THERE'S SO much going on! "Anglicans in action" is how one team member summed up this edition. And they have certainly been in action this month, in Melbourne and nationally. We've got everything from food drives, to kids' programs, and refreshed sports courts for

community outreach.

We also have General Synod. For most of *The Melbourne Anglican* team, it was a completely new experience. The action might have been dry at times, but it was a fascinating insight for us into the governing of the church.

Dozens of St Hilary's Hope food drive helpers spark Boroondara community's generosity

by Jenan Taylor

HARD WORK has paid off for scores of Anglican volunteers after thousands of grocery items were donated as part of an annual food drive in Boroondara.

Up to 120 church members collected more than 2000 bags of non-perishable goods for the St Hilary's Hope Food Drive. Aiming to secure donations for community agencies supporting the area's disadvantaged people, the volunteers engaged with shoppers outside 11 participating supermarkets across the day.

St Hilary's volunteer coordinator Michael Fitzgerald said that the initiative often resulted in enough goods being collected to fill the pantries of service providers, including Camcare and Doncare, for up to a year.

He said that in the past the collection bags would stand three and four deep in the hall where they were taken after the drive, sometimes taking up to a week and half to be sorted through by the volunteers.

Mr Fitzgerald, who is a volunteer himself, said some agencies usually had to roster on more people to just to be able to



Op Shop volunteers Norma and Lois try out the new premises.

Picture: supplied

cope with it all. "For the agencies it is the biggest day of donations, and it fuels them for the year so that they can continue to give out food over that time," he said.

But the food initiative, which has been happening for more than 30 years, was the result of months of planning and hard work, Mr Fitzgerald said. This started in

October. By March the volunteers would be meeting twice a week, engaging with supermarket managers, and letter-dropping thousands of residences.

In previous years volunteers would door knock up to 7000 homes and leave residents a blue bag to fill with non-perishable donations.

This year because of COVID considerations, they letter-dropped houses informing residents that the collections would take place outside the actual supermarkets. Mr Fitzgerald said it was also less confrontational for the volunteers to talk with people at the supermarket than at their front doors.

"Saturday morning shoppers see us, recognise us from the leaflets and there are good conversations to be had with them, just as there are always good conversations across 120 volunteers."

Mr Fitzgerald said just trying to help out was what drove many of the volunteers.

"We live in Boroondara, but even in places like that we're acutely aware that there are people suffering and disadvantaged. With COVID that has been so much more pronounced. It's rewarding to be able to see the generosity of people and we're just amazed that so many people donate on that day. It restores faith in humanity that people do care for those less fortunate than themselves."

This year, Archbishop Philip Freier joined the volunteers outside a supermarket in Kew.

Church bouncing back after \$940,000 damage

by Stephen Cauchi

A MELBOURNE CHURCH has been hit by a near \$1 million repair bill after it discovered massive water damage to the floor of its main building.

St Hilary's Kew is now facing fundraising about \$200,000 annually for the next four years to pay for the estimated \$940,000 cost of repairs.

The damage has meant removing the entire church floor, to allow for restumping and replacement of the subfloor, as well as rewiring the entire building.

In the meantime, St Hilary's congregations met in a marquee in the carpark to meet COVIDSafe density limits, then in the church hall.

Lead minister the Reverend Adam Cetrangolo said the church discovered the extensive floor damage while undertaking



A simple repair job turned into major works at St Hilary's Kew.

Picture: supplied

modest repairs to the ceiling in May 2021.

He said while the church was repairing the ceiling, it decided to paint and recarpet parts of the building.

They discovered problems with the floor, caused by large amounts of water getting in under the building from multiple sources. Here it was affecting the subfloor and cabling.

For Mr Cetrangolo, it was an unfortunate way to begin his tenure at St Hilary's. He joined the church in July, just before the damage was discovered. As the church kept looking, it just kept finding more problems.

"We started looking a bit more closely and then it was 'How long is a piece of string?'" Mr Cetrangolo said.

"This was the job that just kept on getting bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger."

Mr Cetrangolo said he was

confident all the drainage issues had now been identified, and civil engineers were now mapping out a structural plan for the building. He said the damage had meant making a lot of quick decisions with the church wardens about what works the church would do, and how far it would go. He said the one silver lining was the removal of the floor had made it a good time to install a new, high-quality underfloor heating and cooling system.

Mr Cetrangolo said he hoped to be ready to reuse the building by term four at the latest. He said the congregation had been very understanding about both the inconvenience and the fundraising required.

Mr Cetrangolo said St Hilary's had so far raised \$400,000 and borrowed another \$500,000 to cover repair costs. It was now aiming to raise \$200,000 a year for the next four years.

Rental shortage dire: Anglicare

by Jenan Taylor

FAMILIES AND single parents are struggling to find a place to live because of a shortage of suitable and affordable houses to rent, according to a recent report from Anglicare Victoria.

The 2022 Rental Affordability Snapshot found that the number of available properties had fallen more than 40 per cent since March 2021 and that families and single parents on income benefits were among the worst affected.

It found that for families or single parents who relied on JobSeeker, fewer than 0.1 per cent of properties were affordable.

Anglicare Victoria Homes for Families program manager Lucinda Bray said several families were facing homelessness because of family violence.

Homes for Families has been helping 250 families who were placed temporarily in hotels during the COVID pandemic find suitable private rental accommodation.

Ms Bray said single mothers fleeing



Housing shortage. Picture: iStock

family violence had been among the largest number of people supported by the program.

Having to be in temporary accommodation meant that larger families and those with school children of different age groups were having a particularly difficult time, she said.

"The children might be placed far away from their school, so they have to travel distances. Other families with older children who might be trying to do their VCE, have to be split up a little just so that the children can concentrate on their schoolwork," she said.

"It's also hard to get temporary accommodation when there are up to eight children. There aren't cooking facilities and they may have to spend

money on takeaway foods."

Ms Bray said that families who were able to be placed in private accommodation had reported that they felt far less isolated and that their children were making better connections with other children in the community and at schools.

Jubilee Housing, a joint Anglican and Baptist housing provider in Melbourne's eastern suburbs, also has a large number of tenants who are single, and people who have escaped family violence.

Housing Manager Carol Hand said that Jubilee Housing catered to people who urgently needed help and that they were seeing many older singles, both male and female.

She said that because the provider was not widely known and only had a limited number of properties, however, there had not been a high increase in new applicants, but when vacancies did arise, they were very quickly filled.

"Within a week there's someone on the urgent list who desperately needs housing and we just put them straight in," Ms Hand said.

High house prices causing more inequality: BSL

by Stephen Cauchi

INEQUALITY IS increasing due to soaring housing costs which are causing more young adults to rely on family support, according to a new study by the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Many 30-year-olds remain dependent on family assistance due to the rising cost of housing, the Life Chances study found.

Owning a home of one's own was a distant dream for many because of the soaring price of homes and rentals, the report concluded.

Researchers Ursula Harrison and Dina Bowman said the study had observed a trend of 30-year-olds needing to rely on family resources, particularly because of insecure employment and unaffordable housing.

The report noted 30-year-

olds' reliance on family support was a "quantum change" from what their own parents experienced when they were the same age. It said this reliance on family safety nets increased inequality and injustice, as 30-year-olds with better-resourced families could "lean on their privilege" in touch times, unlike those with less-affluent families.

The report said providing more affordable housing for home buyers and renters was vital to addressing the housing crisis. This included making sure there was enough social housing, offering more secure occupancy for private renters, expanding schemes allowing lower deposits for first home buyers, and slowing house prices by clawing back tax incentives that perpetuated investors' domination of the housing market.



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**BETTER
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Ministry, society, sustainability

Ministry wellbeing

Professional standards policy for ministry wellbeing have been endorsed by the 18th General Synod of the Australian Anglican church.

Gippsland representative the Reverend Tracy Lauersen moved that the synod note several recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse calling for national mandatory standards for professional development, professional-pastoral supervision and performance appraisals.

Ms Lauersen moved that the synod endorse a *Ministry Wellbeing and Development: Policy, Guidelines and Resources* document by the standing committee.

Melbourne lay representative Jenny George said professional supervision was pervasive in the business industry, commending the motion to the synod. Ms George said burnout was a known risk for ministers, but putting the right practices in place could reduce risk, and help ensure long, fruitful ministries.

Society

General Synod called for an immediate raise to the rate of JobSeeker to put it above the poverty line.

Delegates voted in favour of a motion calling for this step, as well as an independent Social Security Commission to set government payments, to make sure they never fall below the poverty line.

It called for a redesign of the Jobactive System to encourage more effective participation in job search and training. It also called for recognition of the legitimate contributions made by people receiving JobSeeker benefits who volunteered, or provided unpaid care.

Sustainability

Dioceses and agencies were urged to work to reduce their emissions by General Synod.

The synod also called on the Australian government to support Pacific and Torres Strait Islander communities in their call for urgent reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases.

The synod passed a motion calling on the church to recognise the global climate emergency as a crisis for God's creation, and encourage dioceses and agencies to reduce their carbon emissions.

The motion was moved by the Very Reverend Dr Peter Catt, a Brisbane representative.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council representative Aunty Rose Elu spoke in favour of addressing climate change, saying God's creation was for all – and warning of the consequences for young people. She said it was inevitable Torres Strait islands would go under water.

Women in ministry

Women in ordained leadership's contribution to worship, ministry and leadership in the Anglican Church of Australia was acknowledged by General Synod.

A proposed amendment affirming that women priests and bishops exercised full spiritual authority as teachers and leaders was narrowly lost, 111 people voting for it, 117 against.

The motion noted that 2022 marked the 30th anniversary of the ordination of women as priests in Australia.

It was put to synod by Bishop of North Queensland Keith Joseph, and seconded by Brisbane representative Justice Debra Mullins.



Family Violence Working Group convenor Tracey Lauersen addresses the synod.

Picture: supplied

Marriage outcome unclear

• From – Page 1

At synod, Mrs McLean seconded the putting forward of a petition that expressed regret at the vote by the House of Bishops to reject the statement put forward by Mr Raffel which sought to define marriage as “the exclusive union of one man and one woman”.

Mr Raffel said that failing to affirm the statement left the Anglican church in a “perilous position”.

Mrs McLean said that she believed it would be difficult for Anglicans who did not support the affirming of same-sex marriage in those dioceses where the predominant view was that same-sex unions were to be affirmed.

St Alfred's in Blackburn North senior minister Reverend Peter MacPherson said that he believed it would be difficult for those on both sides of the conversation who found themselves holding the minority view within their diocese.

Mr MacPherson said that he believed that the outcome of General Synod discussions had not been clear, and that those on both sides were trying to uphold what they believed to be true, but that attempting to reach a consensus was very hard.

“With the best of intentions, those on both sides [were] trying to understand what the Bible does or does not allow,” Mr MacPherson said.

Mr MacPherson said that he believed that the sanctioning of such unions within the Church was inconsistent with Scripture, along with those others who voted against the motion affirming same-sex marriage.

Wangaratta delegate Associate Professor Jane Freemantle said that the discussions last week set a precedent for further conversations on the topic of same-sex marriage.

“We need to acknowledge that there are deeply held beliefs in this area, and we need to consider the role of the [individual] diocese in this matter,” Associate Professor Freemantle said.

Associate Professor Freemantle also said that due to other “advances in scientific knowledge and biblical scholarship” within Anglican belief, this issue was not anything other than what had already been experienced in Australia.

She said that while General Synod discussions highlighted the differing views within the Church on same-sex marriage, she agreed

with the comment by Reverend Professor Canon Dorothy Lee that the Anglican Church of Australia were united on “95 per cent” of their theological views.

Both Associate Professor Freemantle and Mrs McLean agreed that to move forward on the issue of same-sex marriage within the church, people needed to listen to everyone, including those they disagreed with.

But Mrs McLean said the Church also needed to listen to God and recognise that His ways were good and life-affirming.

Associate Professor Freemantle said that she was committed to holding the sense of Anglican community together.

“We need to find that space where there is a generosity of spirit, and I think we as an Anglican church can do it,” Associate Professor Freemantle said.

Professor Sherlock also said that in light of the Safe Churches apology presented to Synod by Sydney Bishop Peter Lin, he would like to see the Church implement a way to remember the apology, such as a yearly “Rainbow Sunday”.

This motion apologised to any lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex person the Church had treated disrespectfully or abusively.

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Synod delegates voted on several changes to Anglican church legislation relating to Royal Commission recommendations. Picture: supplied

Endorsement for family violence prevention

Staff writers

New standards for prevention and response to family violence within the Anglican church are in place, after the Ten Commitments were adopted by the recent General Synod.

The commitments include an acknowledgement of violence suffered by members, a commitment from Church leaders to ensure conditions that support the prevention of violence, as well as a commitment to train leaders, pastoral staff and parish councils.

This decision was among many General Synod made, despite the dominance of the issue of same-sex marriage at its May meeting.

The 2022 synod was the first in which delegates could participate remotely, which required representatives present in person to pass legislation allowing this.

On the family violence issue, the synod voted to lament the violence suffered by Anglicans, repent the part Anglicans have played in creating an environment where family violence went unaddressed, and request dioceses respond to the project and develop appropriate prevention strategies and pastoral responses.

Anglican Church of Australia Family Violence Working Group convenor Tracy Lauersen said the results of the research project into family shocked researchers, saying it was scandalous some clergy minimised violence.

The synod also ratified a new Families and Culture Commission to examine questions relating to family violence affecting members of the church, the drivers of violence, and the well-being of families and women referred to it by the Primate, the Standing Committee or the General Synod. Funding for the body will come from the 2022, 2023 and 2024 General Synod statutory assessment budget.

Synod requested the Families and Culture Commission work with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council, First Nations leaders and relevant diocesan teams to assist them to develop family violence prevention resources appropriate to their context.

New Church laws aim to protect

by Stephen Cauchi

NEW ANGLICAN LEGISLATION aims to better protect children in churches by reflecting recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

General synod passed several bills relating to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, which put out its final report in December 2017, as well as motions about safe ministry practices.

Synod passed the *Safe Ministry Legislation Amendments Canon 2022*, amending prior canons passed in 2017, 2001, 2001 and 1962. This was to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, to update legislation to better reflect developments in technology, and to make technical amendments.

According to its explanatory memorandum, the bill as it was put to synod addressed recommendations of the Royal Commission including: management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest, accountability of religious leaders, complaint handling policies, and discipline.

The memorandum also stated that the bill addressed recent developments in the area of online safety, highlighting issues

that might arise in the context for safe ministry, and address issues relating to social media and cyber abuse.

Sydney barrister Garth Blake spoke in favour of the bill, saying it aimed to improve child safety in the national church. The bill was moved by Audrey Mills and seconded by Dianne Shay.

“The bill addressed recent developments in the area of online safety ... and address issues relating to social media and cyber abuse.”

Synod also passed the *Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2022*, which provided to the mandatory suspension of a bishop against whom a plausible complaint involving a sexual offence relating to a child was made.

This legislation superseded 2017 legislation. The bill was moved by Mr Blake and seconded by Audrey Mills.

Synod also passed the *Constitution Amendment (Mandatory Suspension) Canon 2022*, another part of implementing the same Royal Commission

Recommendation – relating to the mandatory suspension of persons in ministry subject to a plausible complaint of child sexual abuse.

This bill began the process of amending the constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia to implement this recommendation. Its main provision was that

where a charge involving a sexual offence relating to a child has been promoted against a bishop of a diocese, or a bishop assistant to the primate, that bishop should be suspended until the charge has been determined. It was moved by Mr Blake and seconded by Mrs Mills.

The synod also passed a *Constitution Amendment (Mandatory Deposition) Canon*. This allowed for an amendment to the constitution to provide that where a diocesan tribunal or provincial tribunal hearing a charge was satisfied that a member of the

clergy had been convicted of a sexual offence relating to a child, while a member of the clergy, the tribunal must recommend a sentence of deposition from orders. It provided the same for a Special Tribunal hearing a charge against a bishop. Mr Blake moved the bill, which was seconded by Mrs Mills.

General Synod also passed a motion requesting that it establish a group to review compliance, audit and reporting obligations of the diocese under the *Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017*, in light of the child safety requirements imposed on diocese by laws of states and territories.

It also requested the establishment of a Safe Ministry Commission to measure and review the Church’s progress towards being a child safe institution, in light of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Synod also passed motions endorsing a guide to providing pastoral support to people affected by sexual abuse, and commended the National Council of Churches in Australia for organising the Safe Churches Conference, and welcomed guidelines to enhance the safety of all persons – especially children, young people and vulnerable adults – within the provinces of the Anglican Communion.



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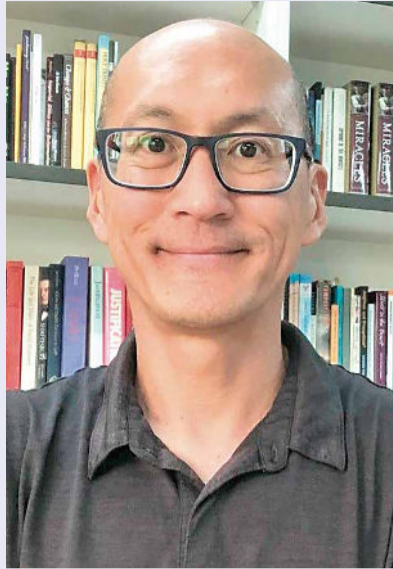
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by Wei-Han Kuan



us to shape now



“We have people who have been completely heroic in their commitment to building the church.”

Archbishop Philip Freier

through the Reimagining the Future instrument that we have been generously given by the Diocese of Brisbane. We want to more specifically help some places that are

going to find that they're not the same place now as they were before COVID. We want to strengthen them as well as we can by helping engage in that process.

Same-sex marriage has been a contentious issue for the Anglican Church in Australia for the last few years. Given the recent General Synod, how do you see the Melbourne diocese beginning to try to forge a way forward on this issue?

I think after the General Synod many people's emotions are a bit raw, so we do need a time of some healing, and especially in the church, nationally. We initially need some work with the house of Bishops. We need to take some leadership to increase confidence in dialogue amongst the bishops.

I'll certainly be talking to the Victorian bishops about where we might contribute to that. But I think, for many people in different ways, it was a reasonably heavy week. How the same sex marriage decisions are received, I think will take some time to work out. But I've been seeing really interesting ideas and proposals, as people reflect on it.

What do you give thanks for in terms of what the diocese has achieved in the past 175 years?

We give thanks for the faithfulness of the people upon whose shoulders we stand. We don't do much that's just down to us. We have people who have been completely heroic in their commitment to building the church. They've found institutions, like the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Anglicare and Benetas, that are heroic and that we easily take for granted. They've been done by people with vision.

Most of our parishes weren't the gifts of wealthy people. They were often from poor people who were migrants themselves, who gave the little that they had to build up a ministry in the local community. I treat those as a great trust we've been given and as encouragement for us and our generation to be also equal to the heroism and the vision and the sacrifice we need for our mission to prosper in our present day.

A Chinese-Australian vision for the Melbourne diocese in 2197

by Jessica Cheung

EVERY PERSPECTIVE risks distortion without a context. Retracing the history of Chinese Anglicanism in Melbourne as a missionary endeavour is thus necessary to develop any vision for its future.

In 1851, four years after the creation of the Diocese of Melbourne, gold was first discovered in Ballarat, triggering off the gold rush by thousands of Chinese. The new nation Australia quickly passed the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* to bar further Chinese arrivals.

The Chinese Mission Church was established in Chinatown as the first Chinese church in Victoria 120 years ago. It was later associated with the Diocese as the autonomous Anglican Mission of the Epiphany (ACME).

The lifting of the White Australia policy in 1973 opened the nation to increasing ethnic Chinese migrations from many countries. However, without suitable Chinese-speaking priests, Anglicanism's clergy-centred model severely hampered any evangelistic outreach to these communities. In 1987, Archbishop David Penman boldly ordained my husband Rick, making him possibly at one time the only Chinese-speaking clergy in Victoria. As ACME's Missioner, he planted the first Cantonese-speaking Anglican congregation in Burwood in 1995. Working with Bible College of Victoria, the first nationally accredited Chinese theological program began there one year later. That program has been strategically chaired for a decade by the Reverend Professor Victor Yu.

In late 1990s, David Ruan, a graduate once taught by Rick, was confirmed in our parish together with his wife Esther. Assisted by ACME, the couple planted the Diocese's first Mandarin-speaking congregation in Doncaster. The Ruans were later ordained.

There are now 23 Chinese clergy ministering in 15 Chinese congregations in this Diocese. Most were previously non-Anglicans like us. Many of them were graduates from our Chinese program now headed by the Reverend Dr Theresa Lau in Melbourne School of Theology.

God's Spirit has indeed brought numerous Chinese persons to faith through their ministries in the past three decades, with a large number baptised and confirmed as



The Reverends Rick and Jessica Cheung.

Anglicans. Yet former Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey rightly warned, “the Church is always one generation away from extinction”. So, apart from divine mercy, what can I envisage for our Diocese in the next seven generations till 2197?

Our Diocesan Mission Statement is to *make the Word of God fully known*. Thus my vision for our growth lies in the centrality of God's Word as empowered by God's Spirit. Based on the conviction that the Bible is the Word of God written, it is a vision to use the Bible more prayerfully in all our ministries, both lay and ordained. It is to generate spiritual growth by sowing God's seeds, through preaching, teaching and learning the Bible.

It is also a vision of deep commitment to faithful intercessory prayers, trusting in the Spirit's power to create genuine faith in people, while changing their recalcitrant hearts to obey Jesus Christ as Lord.

To ensure a viable future, Melbourne Anglicans must obey the Lord Jesus' Great Commission to make disciples of all nations, starting with their baptised children and confirmed teenagers, training them by example in God's Word, and pray for their transformation by God's Spirit to become faithful followers of our Messiah.

Yes, I long to see Melbourne Anglicans faithfully witnessing to their multicultural neighbours that Jesus is Lord, while taking the Bible and prayer at heart seriously, serving one another in love, and living for our Father's glory in the power of the Holy Spirit!

The Reverend Jessica Cheung is in charge of the Mandarin congregation planted by her at St James, Ivanhoe. Jessica and her husband Rick have over 57 years of ordained ministries between them.

unfailing love as we look to another 175 years

words of healing and forgiveness, in the final resurrection of the body and in the renewal of the whole creation.

Reclaiming our centre in worship of the blessed Trinity empowers and enthuses us for mission and evangelism. It shapes our understanding of mission, so well captured in the five marks of mission of the Anglican communion: proclaiming the good news of God's reign (Mark 1:14-15), teaching and baptizing (Matthew 28:19-20), serving the needy (James 2:14-16),

working for God's justice in our social structures (Amos 5:15, 24) and calling for the renewal of creation crying out against its many forms of abuse (Romans 8:19-23).

Secondly, with that vision held always before us, we need to work hard to reclaim a sense of our rich tradition as Anglican Christians and the diversity on secondary matters that it creates. We need to learn to disagree with one another decently, with respect and charity and with openness of mind and heart. We need to

become a more welcoming and comprehensive community that allows for difference of opinion, for different ways of interpreting the same Scriptures we all hold and cherish.

At the same time, we need to resist narrow-minded interpretations that reduce the wealth of Scripture to singular, dogmatic statements that exclude many and marginalise whole groups in our church. We need to resist attitudes that accord women secondary status within the ministry of the church, ignoring the New Testament witness to

Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Phoebe, Priscilla, Junia and many others, seen in passages such as Luke 8:1-3, John 20:18 and Romans 16:1-7.

Thirdly, we need to become so enraptured by the vision of God revealed in Jesus Christ that we become truly courageous as persons, as parishes, as agencies – in our worship, in our common life, in our mission and service. Such courage will embolden us to speak and act truth to a needy world, in the face of its loneliness and longing, its violence and prejudice,

its indifference to the needy and its relentless abuse of creation.

The vision we need for our future in this diocese is to rediscover what it means, in our current context, to worship and to proclaim a trinitarian God whose love for us and all creation is utterly faithful, forgiving, freeing and unfailing.

The Reverend Professor Dorothy Lee is Stewart Research Professor of New Testament at Trinity College Theological School and an associate priest at St Mary's Anglican Church, North Melbourne.

Hard moment to be proud of Church: Minister

GENERAL SYNOD heralded to those outside the church our angst over human sexuality. What we are known for now is our disunity and inability to honour the face of God in all of God's people.

Wouldn't we rather be known for grace-filled contributions to society showing the love of God?

As an Anglican, I want to be proud of who we are as a church. At the moment this is not so easy.

The earth is heating up and falling apart. General Synod responded to this, but did anyone outside the meeting hear about that?

General Synod faced the terrible reality of people running for their lives from persecuting tyrants, domestic violence destroying the lives of so many and our teenagers committing suicide at alarming rates, but again, did anyone outside the meeting hear about that?

All people outside the meeting heard about was the condemnation of same-sex relationships.

What on earth would Jesus have to say to us?

As an ordained representative, people ask me what I think. I find myself having to explain the complexities of the Anglican church, name our differences and apologetically name the pain that we are causing to so many.

We have a choice to be better. The world has moved on and we are stuck. Sadly, what we're known for is a Puritan obsession with sex. Jesus came so that all may have life and have it abundantly. Let us get



Delegates participate in the recent General Synod.

Picture: supplied

back to participating in God's life-giving movement.

Reverend Sophie Watkins
Albert Park

Sydney's strength lies in committed lay people

Clergy and lay representation at General Synod is proportionate to the number of full-time clergy serving in a diocese. Is this fair? It all depends upon whether you place more weight on church attendances or census figures. At the time of the 2011 census the Sydney diocese had more clergy per census Anglicans than any other Australian diocese. However if you go by attendance, it is just the opposite. Sydney has the lowest number of clergy compared to church attendance, with about one cleric for every 100 weekly worshippers. The norm across other Australian Anglican dioceses is double this: about two clergy for every 100 worshippers. It is not Sydney, but other dioceses which have chosen to invest in high clergy-parishioner ratios.

The reality is that a "census Anglican" in Sydney is five times as

likely to be in church on a Sunday morning as a "census Anglican" in Brisbane, and two and a half times as likely as a census Anglican in Melbourne. The key to understanding Sydney Diocese's strength at General Synod is not to be found in its wealth, but in its committed lay people, who turn out for church week by week.

My figures are taken from the 2014 *Viability and Structures Task Force Report* to the Anglican General Synod.

Reverend Dr Mark Durie
Batemans Bay

Time to follow other leadership

In the lead-up to the recent General Synod meeting, the Primate Archbishop of Adelaide Geoffrey Smith asked dioceses not to proceed

with same-sex marriage blessings until the synod could express its mind. Well, it did express its mind. It refused to condemn the blessing of same-sex marriages. And in fact, General Synod went further. Astonishingly, almost 40 per cent of the membership declared that same-sex marriage – *marriage*, not just blessings – was "a moral good and a gift to be celebrated". This from a General Synod dominated by the conservative Diocese of Sydney, which now has nearly 30 per cent of the membership, after decades of creeping "branch-stacking".

Archbishop Smith has warned that some bishops might stay away from bishops' meetings if any dioceses move ahead with blessings, weakening unity. I well recall some people counselling against the ordination of women 30 years ago in case it upset the veneer of unity. It did not.

Unity is a sham when it is maintained simply to forestall threats and tantrums. Now is the time for the Anglican Church of Australia at long last to face its deep, intrinsic divisions honestly. The national church's constitution gives dioceses great autonomy. The Diocese of Sydney capitalises on

that autonomy to use its own prayer book, and marriage services where in one version, brides promise to "submit" to their husbands. Neither the prayer book nor the marriage services have been authorised by General Synod. By a resolution of its 2010 Synod, it refused to accept the decision of the Appellate Tribunal that allowing deacons to preside at Holy Communion was unconstitutional. Other bishops have not stayed away from bishops' meetings in an attempt to shame them.

It is time other dioceses followed the leading of the Holy Spirit instead of the Diocese of Sydney when it comes to blessing same-sex marriages.

Dr Muriel Porter
Camberwell



Over to You is a forum for respectful dialogue about material published in *The Melbourne Anglican*, or issues affecting the church or society more broadly.

Please email letters to editor@melbourneanglican.org.au. They must be less than 250 words, and include your full name, address and phone number for identity verification. Letters may be edited for clarity, length and grammar.

Letter of the Month

Considering writing in? Just in case you needed extra reason, *The Melbourne Anglican* is introducing a Letter of the Month award. Each edition the submission judged best will receive a \$30 bookshop voucher.

The transformation our planet needs, and we need

by Andreas Loewe

"**THAT'S THE** biggest earth that I've ever seen", a boy visiting the exhibit of Luke Jerram's Gaia told me. The stunning replica of the planet suspended from the crossing in St Paul's Cathedral is seven metres in diameter. Based on detailed NASA photography, every centimetre on the globe is 18 kilometres in real life. The planet slowly revolves, each "day" lasting four minutes. When we look at Jerram's artwork we may see earth as God sees it (as well as a few very privileged astronauts): a beautiful blue globe of continents and oceans, crisscrossed by cloud-patterns that extend for thousands of miles. A planet that has no near neighbour that we have yet discovered, which offers the same beauty and perfect conditions for humans, animals and plants to flourish.

During the past four weeks, the cathedral has welcomed more than 40,000 people. Outside worship times most of them have come specially to see Jerram's artwork. There is a great reverence among the many visitors to the cathedral. Most spend time to sit in the pews and reflect, as they quietly look on the turning earth. Many visit our prayer stations and spend time in prayer and to light a candle. Children are particularly fasci-



Our leaders must ensure no one gets left behind, write Andreas Loewe.

nated by the globe in the cathedral. On being told the artwork was named Gaia – the "mother earth" in Greek mythology – one girl exclaimed: "That's what I am called!", and proudly pocketed a handful of postcards of the globe with her name on it to show to all her friends. Older kids told me that the climate emergency is what most worries them about the future, and how vital it is that we take action to make sure our planet

remains a liveable home in years to come.

At a climate forum held in the cathedral at the launch of our exhibition, scientists told us that we needed to take urgent action to save the planet. Failure to act decisively and quickly will see an even greater increase in the kinds of extreme weather events, like the droughts, bushfires, and floods that we have experienced in past years. Sitting beneath the beautiful

globe in St Paul's it is easy to see how events taking place here in Australia affect other parts of the world. When we see the earth as a whole, we see how everything on our planet is intricately interconnected. We can understand how if climatic patterns change permanently, that will lead to catastrophic weather events the world over. We can understand that we need to take urgent action to avoid such irreversible damage.

In order to save our planet for our children and grandchildren, we need to take individual and corporate action. Here at St Paul's we have been leading by example. We have replaced high-energy consuming lights and other devices with energy-saving ones, which has already cut our carbon footprint significantly. We have divested from extractive industries and now derive all our electricity from renewable sources. Other churches have done the same, as have individual congregants. But if our positive action is not matched by government action in shaping climate policies that enable the transition from extractive fossil fuel consumption to renewable energy creation, then our chance of success is much diminished.

Because in planning for this economic transformation from fossil fuel generation to renewable energy consumption, our political

leaders need to ensure that no one gets left behind. Neither the Torres Strait Islander traditional owners who may lose their low-lying ancestral lands due to increased sea levels, nor the workers in the mining or coal-fired power generating industries who may lose their livelihoods, can be left behind. We need better policies that outline better plans to attain a better climate future for all.

As a Christian, I would describe the transformational change that we all – individuals and leaders – need to adopt in terms of *metanoia* or repentance. A radical, life changing turn away from service of self to God. Repentance of our past wrongs and a real change of life. Seeking God's forgiveness and alignment with God's will. It's that call to change our lives and align our personal behaviours, planning, policy making, and advocacy with God's vision for this world, that has motivated us at St Paul's to bring the planet into our cathedral. It is a visible sign for all to see the world as God sees it: made very good when God called it into being, so loved by God that he gave his own Son for its life, so in need of God's justice and saving grace – physically and spiritually.

The Very Reverend Dr Andreas Loewe is Dean of St Paul's Cathedral.



CEO MESSAGE

Winter is particularly hard for those who are struggling. During the colder months, staff at our emergency relief centres see many people seeking support that haven't needed to before. The cost of living continues to rise, forcing people on the lowest incomes to make hard choices, such as whether to feed their family or put petrol in the car.

In the past two years alone, the number of people seeking Anglicare Victoria's help has tripled – and I worry we may see this trend continue.

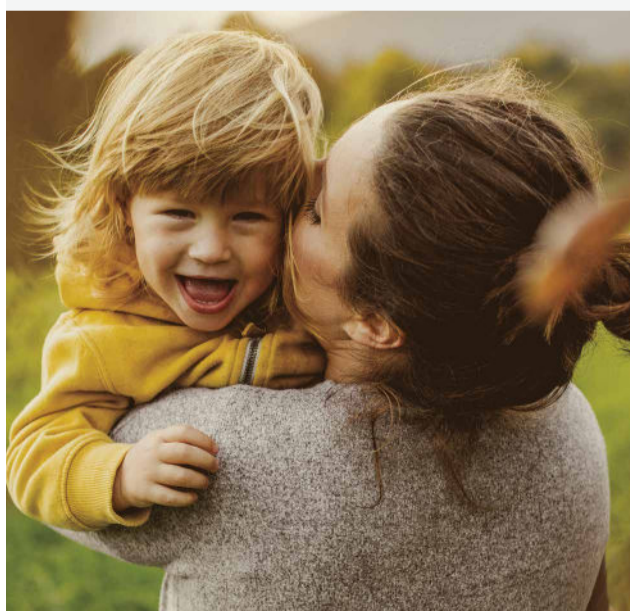
In this year's Winter Appeal we meet families who have received support from one of our emergency relief centres. Eva needed to find safe housing for herself and her one-year-old daughter. AV staff helped Eva with food parcels, nappies and baby wipes, as well as a referral to housing services. I'm pleased to report that Eva and her little girl have now moved into a permanent home, which is a fantastic outcome. We'd really appreciate your donation to help more people like Eva. More information about the appeal can be found in this supplement. If you have already donated, thank you, I am grateful for your generosity.

In this edition of TMA you will read about our Buldau Yioohgen (Big Dreams) Leadership Academy's first all-Aboriginal Mentorship Hike on Maria Island, off the East Coast of Tasmania. What an incredible place to re-engage with First Nations culture!

We'll also explore the results of Anglicare Victoria's 2022 Rental Affordability Snapshot. Housing stress is widespread this year – only two per cent of the rental properties listed in Victoria on March 19 were affordable for any type of household on income support.

Finally, we'll introduce you to the future of foster caring. Our foster carers in Bendigo were the first in the state to benefit from a ready-made social support system that creates a 'care community' around children that have been placed in their care. I think this pilot will be pivotal to improving the way we look after kids in alternative care.

Paul McDonald
CEO ANGLICARE VICTORIA



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF ANGLICARE VICTORIA

The 1st of July marks 25 years since Anglicare Victoria was launched to improve care and everyday life for vulnerable children, young people and families across the state.

On this date 25 years ago, AV was formed by the amalgamation of several Anglican missions: Mission to the Streets and Lanes of Melbourne (established 1886); Mission of St James and St John (1919); and St John's Homes for Boys and Girls (1921). The amalgamation pooled together 260 years of care for children and families facing hardship and disadvantage.

Reflecting on our progress, innovation, and achievements over the first 25 years plays an important part in our work to deliver better care in the future. We welcome our friends, supporters and partners to reflect on our major milestone and achievements of our first 25 years.



1800 809 722 | anglicarevic.org.au

A photograph showing a family of three in a kitchen. A young man with dark hair and a red plaid shirt stands on the left, looking down at papers on a wooden table. A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a dark sweater, sits at the table, holding and looking at a piece of paper. A man with a shaved head and a blue plaid shirt stands in the background, leaning against the counter with his hand on his head, looking on with a concerned expression. The kitchen has dark cabinets and a window in the background.

Vulnerable people are grappling with rental affordability and the rising cost of living

Anglicare Victoria's 2022 Rental Affordability Snapshot analysed 18,934 Victorian private rental listings from 19 March 2022, a fall of more than 40 per cent compared to the year before. Regional Victoria is facing a critical shortage of properties. Two thirds of regional areas did not have a single rental listing on the day of the survey, and regional rents have risen 6.7 per cent, faster than the pace of inflation.

Only 2 per cent of the listed rental properties were suitable for any type of household on income support without putting them into housing stress.

For families or single parents relying on JobSeeker to get by, less than 0.1 per cent of properties were affordable.

2022 is the 12th time the Rental Affordability Snapshot has been conducted.

"Our agency is seeing dozens of single mums who have had to flee domestic violence situations – often with just the bare essentials – and are finding it hard to get rentals they can afford. This year there were just seven properties out of almost 19,000 which were affordable for single parents on income support," Anglicare Victoria CEO Paul McDonald said.

"Petrol, utilities and groceries make up a huge proportion of the expenses for people on minimum wage or income support. With all of them rising in cost recently and rents going the same way, vulnerable people will need to make choices that no-one should have to make to keep a roof over their heads. We know from experience that this can include regularly skipping meals and turning off heating in winter."

Some policy solutions for the Commonwealth to assist vulnerable people in rental stress include: reforming Commonwealth Rent Assistance; increasing the rate of JobSeeker; building more social housing; better targeted tax incentives; and the expansion of 'head leasing programs' which are set up to help specific categories of vulnerable people.





Victoria’s first foster care support ‘constellation’ in Bendigo “a real game changer”

Foster carers in central Victoria will be the first in the state to benefit from a ready-made social support system that creates a ‘care community’ around around children in the foster system.

MOCKINGBIRD FAMILY™ is an evidence-informed model, which has had great success in New South Wales, South Australia and internationally. It creates a ‘constellation’ of six to ten local foster carer households that work together and support one another like a traditional extended family would. Research has shown that this approach increases placement stability and foster carer retention.

Anglicare Victoria, in partnership with Life Without Barriers, is trialling the innovative approach to caring in Bendigo, where there is already a strong sense of community among existing foster carers.

Michael Oerlemans, Regional Director of Anglicare Victoria North Central, said he hopes the Mockingbird Family model will see an increase in the stability and longevity of foster care placements, as carers have a network they can rely on to help share the load.

“High numbers of children have entered care over the past two years, but worryingly, the number of foster carers we have available to take on these kids is declining. As an organisation, we need to shake up the way we’re looking after both the children and carers, and we’re excited to see the impact Mockingbird Family will have in our region.”

Merryn Wilson, a newly accredited foster carer at Anglicare Victoria, said that when Mockingbird Family was offered to her and partner Jade she “got goose bumps”, as this

level of additional support would make a big difference to carers and foster children alike.

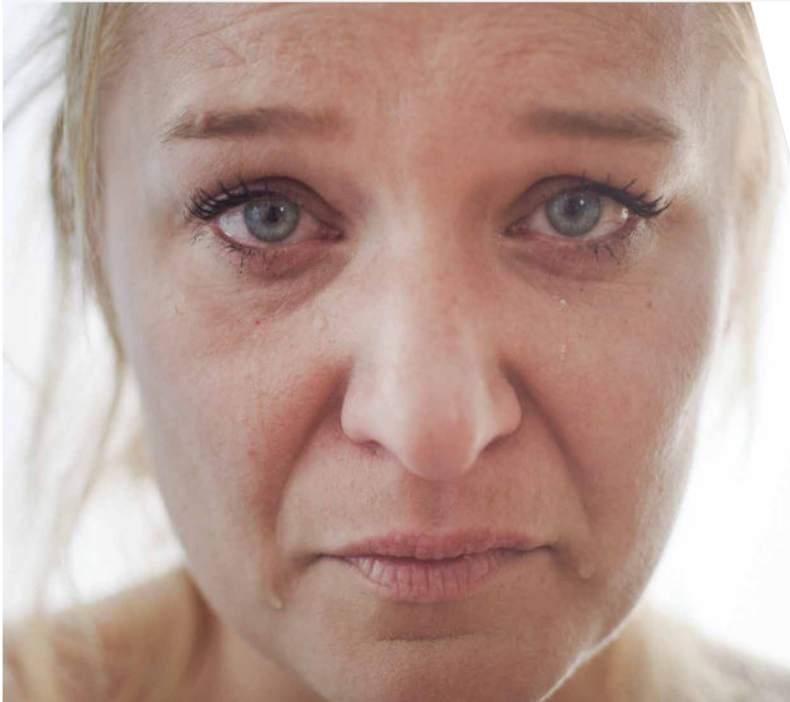
“We’re going to be welcoming a foster care child into our home very soon – It’s fantastic to have access to other local carers who we can rely on during the transition. We’ve just recently done a weekend respite placement with another foster child in our constellation, which went really well,” Merryn said.

“My mind has exploded with the possibilities that Mockingbird Family could bring to kids and families if it becomes available in more regions across Victoria, it is a real game changer.”

Evaluations of Mockingbird Family in the United Kingdom found that:

- More than 90 per cent of foster carers felt well supported
- 89 per cent of young people felt they had a safe adult they could go to for help
- Without Mockingbird Family, one in five placements may have broken down
- Carer satisfaction increased: non-judgemental peer support was highly valued by carer families involved
- Constellation families increased the use of respite care between carer households.

There is an urgent need for foster carers in Victoria. If you are interested in becoming a foster carer, please call **1800 809 722** or visit **anglicarevic.org.au/fostering**



Please donate to help vulnerable families this winter

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1800 809 722 PO Box 45 Abbotsford VIC 3067

AV'S FIRST ALL ABORIGINAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

25th Hike to Higher Education a voyage of discovery

"I've grown up with not much culture in my life. I've started to come in and learn all about it, and it's special," said 15-year-old Rhys. Rhys was one of the all-First Nations mob of young people who went on the 25th Hike to Higher Education with Buldau Yioohgen in March.

The group travelled to beautiful Maria Island off the east coast of Tasmania with AV staff and mentors from places like SBS, RMIT, the University of Melbourne and Victoria Police.

There they hiked, climbed and yarned with local Aboriginal Elder Uncle Linton Burgess from the Tassie Parks and Wildlife Service, who welcomed them to Country with a Smoking Ceremony. And for the first time the group travelled to an ochre site on the island, where they broke up into men's and women's business.

Like Rhys, most of the young people hadn't had much connection to their culture growing up. So they were excited to discover their heritage, as well as being inspired towards further education after they finish school.

"There is no shame in coming along and not knowing who your mob is or what your totem is or anything like that. This is where you can start learning and becoming

confident and empowered in who you are as an Aboriginal person," said Aunty Kellie, AV's Senior Cultural Operations Lead.

"It's an amazing place here and it's nice when it comes around dark and you just sit down, listen to the waves, look at the stars – beautiful," Rhys said.

"During the trip I heard Aunty Kellie say that, "Culture will find us" and I can say undoubtedly that I witnessed everyone allowing Culture to find them and that they embraced these moments as they came." —David G, Aboriginal mentor, University of Melbourne

"The weight off my shoulders was lifted when the medicinal smoke of the palawa gums touched my face. I've come from a place of stress and anxiety at large, but the smoke reminds me of a warm compress from my ancestors, and the Palawa ancestors welcoming me into sovereign land." – Jasper, AV Intern, Media team.

"This trip was an unbelievable experience, I've learned so much and met some amazing people. This has been an experience that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. I loved the heavily cultural aspect and the opportunity to meet new mob and make new friendships." – Participant



Bringing forward better tomorrows

When Eva* first came into our Emergency Relief (ER) centre, she was squatting with her one-year-old daughter in an unoccupied apartment. She had been living in an apartment in the same building but after a neighbour physically assaulted her she became fearful of seeing him whenever leaving or returning home. She told the ER team, **"I'd preferred to live on a different floor in an apartment without power and utilities than see him again"**.

Initially the team supported Eva with food parcels, material aid (specifically nappies and baby wipes) as well as a Christmas present for her daughter thanks to the Toy Appeal.

Through a series of conversations with our team over three months it became clear that Eva's living situation was quite unstable. AV staff supported her to understand that help was available that could improve her situation. The team supported Eva with referral pathways and she made use of all the services that were available. Eva has made significant progress in short time and has moved into permanent housing.

Your donation can help us to support more families like Eva's.

Please contact 1800 809 722 or anglicarevic.org.au/donation

What's behind a rise in far-right sentiment?

by Kirralee Nicolle

WITHIN AUSTRALIA, there has been a marked rise in the number of incidents of far-right extremism toward members of the Jewish community over the period of COVID-19.

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry reported a 35 per cent increase in anti-Semitic attacks between October 2020 and September 2021.

In their 2021 report, ECAJ reported 447 anti-Semitic incidents, including 272 attacks and 175 threats, up from a total of 331 the previous year.

According to a *Guardian* report from last Wednesday, the percentage has increased to 37 per cent this year compared to last year.

Jewish Community Council of Victoria president Daniel Aghion said that he believed that many recent anti-Semitic attacks were the actions of people who felt frustrated, angry and cooped up during COVID-19 lockdowns, who then took their frustrations out on their keyboard.

Mr Aghion said that a recent feature of anti-Semitic sentiment was a focus on the occupation of Palestinian territory by Israeli forces.

He said that the view underpinning this sentiment seemed to be that the actions of the Israeli government reflected on all Jewish people.

Mr Aghion said that many attacks were still "garden-variety anti-Semitism" or neo-Nazi sentiment. He said this common type of neo-Nazism accused the Jewish people of trying to take over the world.

Besides anti-Semitic attacks, Australia has seen the circulation of far-right conspiracy theories and anti-vaccination ideologies.

Sometimes these elements are tied in together.

According to Ridley College theology lecturer Reverend Dr Michael Bird far-right thinking tended to manifest among those who held a view that a particular country or people group was more important than another.



Over the period of COVID-19, far-right beliefs have taken new shape.

Picture: iStock.

- **March 2020:** Australia begins its first lockdowns to combat the rising threat from COVID-19.
- **June 2020:** A Star of David and the slogan "4th Reich" are found spray-painted on the wall of a kindergarten in Albert Park, Victoria (*The Jerusalem Post*).
- **January 2021:** *The Age* publishes a report about a neo-Nazi group camping in the Grampians over the Australia Day weekend.
- **July 2021:** The first anti-lockdown protests are staged in Melbourne. Protests continue for months and become focused on vaccination mandates.
- **August 2021:** Stickers are found placed across Melbourne which feature the Star of David, the numbers 911 and a QR code, which leads to a website blaming the events of 11 September, 2001 on the Jewish people (*The Conversation*).
- **17 May 2022:** Two Jewish men are assaulted outside a Coles supermarket in Elsternwick (*The Age*).

Dr Bird is a biblical scholar and Anglican priest who writes about theology and contemporary issues at his blog, *Word from the Bird*.

He said that those with far-right motivations tended to see themselves as the last and only defenders of their country.

Dr Bird used the example of North America, saying that the desire to defend a particular way of life was a key feature of far-right sentiment in the United States.

He said this included the view

that liberty was paramount, as well as a narrow view of what it meant to be human.

Dr Bird said this kind of thinking tended to be more obvious in places where there was an influx of migrants, such as the United States and across Western Europe.

He said there was a danger in replicating these elements of nationalism in American culture, and that Christians should instead uphold a Christ-centred view, or one which resisted alignment with

"Those with far-right motivations tended to see themselves as the last and only defenders of their country."

The Reverend Dr Michael Bird

either left or right-wing ideology.

Dr Bird said that combining Christian beliefs and nationalist sentiment always ended badly.

"[It causes us to] lose the integrity of our faith, and we lose the very fabric of our testimony in the Gospel," he said.

Macquarie University Honorary Professor of Politics Dr Marion Maddox concurred that a belief in an "inherent natural hierarchy" was a feature of far-right extremism, but added that another feature was the desire to overthrow democracy.

Dr Maddox authored the 2005

book *God Under Howard: The Rise of The Religious Right in Australian Politics* and has taught Australian politics and religious studies in universities in Australia and New Zealand.

Dr Maddox also said that increasingly there was a view among Australian Christians that evangelicals and Pentecostals were the "true Christians".

She said that American puritan history was imbued with the idea that government is the enemy.

Dr Maddox said that close ties to this history meant both evangelicals and Pentecostals in Australia were at risk of adopting a similar notion that government was a threat.

Lobbying agency the Australian Christian Lobby has been critical of government responses to COVID-19.

The agency, which describes itself as "non-partisan", saw an increase of more than 60 per cent in donations over the 2020-2021 financial year as compared to the previous year.

Dr Maddox said she saw the Australian Christian Lobby as a right-wing extremist group.

She referenced the example of Kimberley Hone, a federal National Party candidate for the NSW seat of Richmond, who stated to a Pentecostal church congregation in her electorate that her "ultimate goal" in entering politics was to "bring God's kingdom to the political arena", as reported in the *Guardian*.

In a YouTube video, Hone told the congregation that she was "so glad" that they no longer trusted the government.

Dr Maddox said that she believed the desire by Hone to bring her faith so clearly into the political realm signified that the understanding of democracy was unclear in Australia.

She said that were Scott Morrison to be re-elected this election, she would be concerned that the religious right were becoming a threat to democracy.

The Australian Christian Lobby was approached for comment on this piece.



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FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

The Reverend Professor Mark Lindsay is Joan F.W. Munro Professor of Historical Theology and Deputy Dean of Trinity College Theological School.



Unity starts in one place, and one place alone

by Mark Lindsay

EIGHTY-SIX YEARS AGO, IN preparation for the 1937 Faith and Order Conference in Edinburgh, Karl Barth wrote a short but profound treatise on the topic “The Church and the Churches”. The substance of the text was to address how Christians might listen together to the voice of Jesus Christ, and to seek in him the one ground for the one universal Church, in the context of a variety of ecclesial and theological traditions. What, he wanted to ask, is the relationship between the one Church – the holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity of which we confess week after week – and the multiplicity of churches – in which the confession, worship, and following of Jesus takes place severally, differently, and sometimes even contradictorily?

As I sat on the floor of our national Church’s General Synod in early May, I had cause to ask myself the same question. At times during our deliberations, I wondered if we Anglicans do not also face the same issue. What is the relationship between the one Anglican Church of Australia, and the multiplicity of theological and ecclesial perspectives within it, that sit so frequently uncomfortably alongside each other?

When a Church seeks not only to worship Jesus in a multiplicity of ways, but also defines discipleship in equally as many ways, are we still the one Church? No more sharply was this question put than when, on the final day of the synod, the delegates voted to *not* vote on a motion on “Being the Body of Christ”. Why did we not even vote? Because as synod representatives we could not even decide whether to start with a statement of inclusion, or begin instead with a statement of exceptionality.

The truth is, despite us having more in common than in difference, the things on which we differ tend to be felt more viscerally. Tragically, there is often more fervour among us Australian Anglicans for the matters about which we disagree, than there is for those many other matters on which we find ready consensus.

One response to this state of



Jesus Christ sits at the Church’s centre, writes the Reverend Professor Mark Lindsay.

Picture: iStock

affairs is often to recite to ourselves and to each other the truism, “unity in diversity” – that we remain one, even in our difference. There is, of course, much to affirm in what that says, and more than a handful of Scriptural justifications for it. Ephesians 2, Galatians 3, 1 Corinthians 12 all leap to mind, as does the motley collection of Jesus’ disciples – fishermen, tax collectors, political revolutionaries – who formed a single community around him. I cherish this truth, and rejoice in a gospel that joins the most unlikely of people together, radically relativizing their differences yet not removing them. Yet our debates at General Synod demonstrated that even that noble principle of “unity in diversity” can be contested, notwithstanding the synod’s respectful tone. Perhaps the saddest thing has been to encounter disagreement over the *ground* of our unity. How can we fully flourish in our diversity, if we don’t even agree on the basis of our oneness?

That the various “sides” believe firmly in their own fidelity, and thus in the others’ infidelity, underscores Karl Barth’s point

“I ... rejoice in a gospel that joins the most unlikely of people together, radically relativizing their differences yet not removing them.”

The Reverend Professor Mark Lindsay

about the missional tragedy that is the consequence of our disunity: that “the comparison of faith with faith [is] a menace to faith itself”.

So where to from here? Can we move forward together as one Church, even if we are a Church that is – in the words of one Metropolitan – in a “perilous” condition? Can we move forward together as one Church, when the prophetic woes of Isaiah 5 have been publicly proclaimed on the Synod floor against fellow members? Perhaps we can – but if we are to do so, then we will need to take with far more gravity what Anglicanism’s much-vaunted and much-loved “middle way” actually says.

It seems to me that, far too frequently, we understand this middle way incorrectly. We treat it as though it was a second-best compromise position between two warring extremes.

Thinking in these terms, taking this *via media* is thus reluctantly accepting a concessional space that neither side actually wants. The inevitable result is resentment, and a renewed emphasis on the extremes that have been foregone.

But in fact, that is not what our middle way represents. Taken initially from Aristotelian ethics, the *via media* in fact refers to the “golden mean” – that space which is a more perfect expression of truth, between the weaknesses of

the extremes. Properly understood the *via media* acknowledges the better truth which is to be found in the centre, without denying that there is always truth to be found at the edges (for where else did Jesus himself inhabit?).

In other words, an authentic adoption of Anglicanism’s *via media* is not a grim-faced and unwilling adoption of a compromise, but rather a joyful embrace of the better truth that more perfectly embodies what our own preferences only imperfectly express.

What, then, might this *via media* be? What might we, in all our diversity cling to, not as a concession but as a genuine ground of unity in the midst of our differences?

The answer is both simple and striking. It is a person, not a thing or an idea. Jesus Christ.

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer put it in the summer of 1933, “Christ is the centre that I have regained”. By being the sole mediator between ourselves and God – and between our old and new selves – he is thus the centre of all things, and all people. To paraphrase St Paul, Jesus stands where the dividing wall once stood, and so becomes the bridging unifier between previous antitheses – Jew and gentile, male and female, slave and free. As Anglicans, we might then rightly say that Jesus Christ is our *via media* – not as a concessional or compromise space, but as reconciling mediator who is in himself the perfect truth towards which our extreme positions can only imperfectly point.

To return then to Barth’s question, which is also ours: what is the relationship between the Church and the churches? What is the relationship between the one Anglican Church of Australia, and the multiplicity of often angry contradictions within it? The relationship is – can only be Jesus Christ – our *via media*, our centre. To acknowledge this – to acknowledge him – will not, of course, end our disagreements and debates. To acknowledge this will not, and ought not, end our dialogue. But this is the only place to start, if we have any hope of moving forward together as one.

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Farewell to a much-loved ministry trailblazer

by Peter Carolane

Anthea McCall, 1 June 1961
- 28 April 2022.

ANTHEA MCCALL WILL BE remembered for her humility and joy, and for her love for Jesus and His Church as expressed in her ministry roles as mentor, pastor and teacher.

From an early age, Anthea's capacity for leadership and scholarship was evident. She was the child of medical doctors Thomas and Roda McCall, who emigrated from Scotland to NSW in 1960 with their daughter Belinda. They established a GP practice in Narooma, and Anthea was born the following year. The family soon moved to Cootamundra in the Riverina. Here the children, now including younger brother Geoff, attended the EA Southee Public School. Anthea excelled as a popular student becoming vice-captain and dux of school. Growing up in the Riverina meant for an idyllic rural existence. Children roamed about, playing outdoors with the neighbours, making cubby houses outside the wheat silos.

In 1974, the McCalls exchanged rural life for the Sydney beaches at Lilli Pilli. Anthea attended Endeavour High School where she demonstrated a gift for languages, played basketball and embraced Sydney beach culture. In 1980 she enrolled at Sydney University and majored in German, French and Italian, obtaining a Diploma of Education. She first taught at her former school Endeavour High, and then at the Sutherland Shire Christian School.

Anthea faced one of her first major life crises at the age of 21 when her father died. While this was a time of terrible grief it led to her coming to faith in Jesus. The funeral was at St Philip's Caringbah and the rector, Reverend Tony Lamb, followed Anthea and her mother up. He shared the gospel with them, and they both converted. Anthea became a regular member at St Philip's. She loved Bible study and ministry so much that in 1989 she enrolled at Moore Theological College. There she formed lasting friendships with other future Melbourne clergy such as Reverend Denise Nicholls, Bishop Genieve Blackwell, Archdeacon Vanessa Bennet,



Friends farewelled Anthea McCall at St Silas' Balwyn North after her death in April.

Picture: supplied

Reverend Di Nicolios, Reverend Lyn Pearson, and other close friends who remained in Sydney. In Anthea's final year at Moore, she was appointed Senior Student at Anglican Deaconess House.

Anthea's first ministry job in 1992 was with the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students at the Australian National University in Canberra. She ran Bible studies, camps, and mentored students under the coaching and supervision of David McDonald. This experience served as a valuable preparation for her move to St Hilary's Kew in 1997. Melbourne become her permanent home, but she faithfully visited Sydney to see her brother and sister and their children for Christmas holidays.

When Reverend Peter Corney invited her to join the staff at St Hilary's, evangelical churches tended towards recruiting charismatic alpha male pastors in their 30s with two or three kids and an attractive wife. As a single woman, Anthea contradicted that trend. She first had responsibility for the 5pm congregation, which reached young workers, and grew it to

"Anthea had assurance of her salvation, never letting her sickness dampen her joy and hope for eternity."

The Reverend Dr Peter Carolane

over 200 members. As Anthea's ministry flourished she realised her calling to ordination which occurred in 2001. In her 13 years at St Hilary's she also oversaw the large network of small groups, and eventually became the senior associate minister under the vicar Reverend Paul Perini. Through these years, she became an outstanding model of pastoral and preaching ministry for evangelical Anglican women in Australia.

It was also at St Hilary's where Anthea met her lifelong best friend and housemate Andrea Davy. Peter Corney asked Andrea to have Anthea stay for a few weeks until she found accommodation. In Andrea's words, "Anthea never

left". They remained living together for the next 25 years, moving from Balwyn to Fitzroy North until Anthea's death.

Anthea and Andrea joined the church plant team at Merri Creek Anglican in 2013. It was around their dining table that the leadership team held their weekly breakfast prayer and strategy meetings. Anthea loved Merri Creek, serving wherever the need was. She loved the congregation and, even in the midst of her health struggles, could be relied upon for showing up with an attentive and encouraging spirit.

Perhaps her greatest ministry legacy was through her work at Ridley College. When she joined

the faculty in 2007, Anthea experienced what leadership consultants call "convergence" – the happy alignment of your skills, experience and passions leading to an enjoyable season of work where you thrive. She brought together her love for teaching, discipling young adults, and languages, with lectureships in Greek and New Testament studies. She also had significant leadership roles in the college as Dean of Students and Assistant Dean of the Anglican Institute working alongside Reverend Richard Trist. Anthea was known for her fun and humour in class and was loved by both the faculty and students.

She became a significant mentor to many of the female students, who were navigating the joys and struggles of mission and ministry in male dominated settings. Anthea's involvement in the establishment of the popular Women's Preaching Network, and Evangelical Women in Academia encouraged a generation. Due to her declining health, she resigned from Ridley at the end of 2020.

God clearly looked after Anthea. In her final years with stage four ovarian cancer, he surrounded her with care and incredible support. Andrea, a palliative care nurse, became her full-time carer. Surgeon and church friend Dr Rebekah Young also regularly stayed in the spare room on weekends while on rural placements. Dr Young was able to assist Andrea in making sure Anthea had the best health care possible. In her street she had two other church families, including her minister, myself. The Taplin street gang will miss Anthea, especially the Carolane and Rottmann children who loved her like an aunt.

Anthea had assurance of her salvation, never letting her sickness dampen her joy and hope for eternity. Her funeral at St Hilary's Balwyn North (St Silas) on 6 May, was packed with over 350 people and had a remarkable sense of joy and celebration for an extraordinary life lived. As the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8, "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us".

The Reverend Dr Peter Carolane is senior minister at Merri Creek Anglican.

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How Hoda Ameri found God in the darkness

by Jenan Taylor

THE REVEREND HODA AMERI was once a devout Muslim who would never have believed that she would make a difference in the lives of Iranian refugees and asylum seekers.

Life changed, however, when Ms Ameri four months pregnant, found herself starving, terrified and adrift at sea in a crowd of other asylum seekers. But then a light blazed in the dark and the Australian navy pulled up alongside their vessel.

For Ms Ameri, it was a sign that the Christian God, whom she and her husband had come to learn about during their flight from Iran, was the one true God.

They had travelled thousands of kilometres, but Ms Ameri believes that her journey really began the moment she had accepted Christ as her saviour.

Ordained as a deacon in February last year, Ms Ameri leads the Emmanuel Iranian Church in Dandenong and Keilor, along with her husband, the Reverend Kaveh Hassanzadeh.

There she has committed herself to helping other refugees and asylum seekers find courage in even the darkest times through placing their faith in God, as she had.

It was a road Ms Ameri could never have anticipated.

She had once been deeply knowledgeable of the Qur'an, was often able to recite from it, and had been observant of occasions such as Ramadan.

Indeed, in the Iran she had grown up in, people had little option to think about, talk about, or follow anything but Islam, Ms Ameri said.

"I came from a community where most of the people were struggling with pain, suffering, broken life, sadness and anger," she said. "Although they have a good heart for God, and for each other, they suffer because they have lost the truth and the way, as I had."

Attaining a degree in engineering, a feat for a woman in Iran, Ms Ameri had already gone against convention.

But when she married Mr



The Reverend Hoda Ameri found her call to ministry at Emmanuel Iranian Church.

Picture: Jenan Taylor

Hassanzadeh, whose beliefs differed greatly from many others, it became clear that if they were ever to have a peaceful life together, they would have to leave.

While enroute to Australia the couple met an Iranian Christian family in Indonesia, and were drawn to the love and compassion they showed for those around them.

Through that friendship, Ms Ameri and Mr Hassanzadeh became interested in learning about God and were profoundly affected by the idea of drawing hope from Him. It was that new found faith that they clung to as their journey across the turbulent ocean continued.

When the couple finally arrived in Australia in 2012, they faced having to learn English, understand the community and find employment, a search Ms Ameri said that was particularly long for her.

Attending to their new spiritual life helped the couple, a great deal, she said. They went every week to churches in Sunshine, Berwick and other places before learning of the Anglican Iranian church that sat beside a busy road in Dandenong.

The encouragement of the then Oaktree Anglican church vicar Reverend Mark Durie, helped them to begin realising a life in ministry.

Eventually Ms Ameri started working, running a restaurant business, but her heart wasn't in it. Her husband had begun his ministry at the Emmanuel-Iranian church, and in 2013 Ms Ameri became a lay minister.

She had come to realise, she said, that what made her happiest, was supporting the asylum seeker parishioners at the church through their fears and troubles.

"They have many issues," Ms Ameri said. "The temporary visa problem, although important, is just one issue."

There is also the language barrier, the struggle to find secure work, being ostracised by others and for many, effects of their traumatic journeys by sea. Then there is the grinding loneliness of being separated from people they'd left behind, she said.

Ms Ameri particularly understood the eroded sense of self the women parishioners carried with them.

"In Iran they think women [have] to be at home, cooking, cleaning, looking after the kids and being a wife. That was the attitude of many Iranian men and therefore of society," Ms Ameri said. The cultural norm made it almost impossible for women to secure employment and even if they did, it was a barrier to their participation in the workplace.

The situation Ms Ameri said often meant that women faced family violence along with a litany of other painful experiences.

Ms Ameri said she realised that in Australia where things were very different and men and women had equal rights, she could help her women parishioners. As a leader in the church, she could make a real difference in the lives of other women, to be a voice for them, and gender equality, and spread awareness to break down barriers in my culture.

Despite having found her calling, Ms Ameri still wrestled with it. She remembers thinking that perhaps she was meant to help others by simply supporting her husband in his ministry. "It has taken me years to understand God's plan for

my life," she said. "But it was the Holy Spirit who guide me to say yes to my calling and to do what pleases God."

For Ms Ameri, the people who attend the church are now her spiritual family. She also believes that for them, in the absence of the loved ones and the life they left behind, the same is true.

"Many of them could not find themselves in this society, so the church is not just a church for them. We are like a family. It means a lot for them. Like a community," Ms Ameri said. "Like a home."

They held gatherings for the community sharing meals, and assistance with language, among other things. During the COVID lockdowns they also provided them with food and mental health support.

But what the Emmanuel Iranian parishioners loved the most when the lockdown finished, Ms Ameri said, was going camping.

"We are just a group of about 25 people with tents, and we gather we worship together, we read the Bible, and we have fun times playing football, basketball or some other activity. And being in nature has helped our congregation a lot," she said.

Ms Ameri attends Ridley College and hopes to become an ordained priest in November. She wants to continue working alongside her husband towards full time Christian ministry among the Iranian believers and to serve in the Church in whatever capacity God decided was possible for them.

She also holds great hopes for the future of the Iranian people. "That they would have chance to know Jesus, not as a Muslim prophet, but as the Lord Jesus Christ. And that they would look for their hope in Him, experience the true hope, joy and peace and love of Christ, and follow Him, whatever it would cost."

This profile of the Reverend Hoda Ameri is part of a series on women in ministry, marking the December 2022 anniversary of 30 years since women were ordained as priests in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

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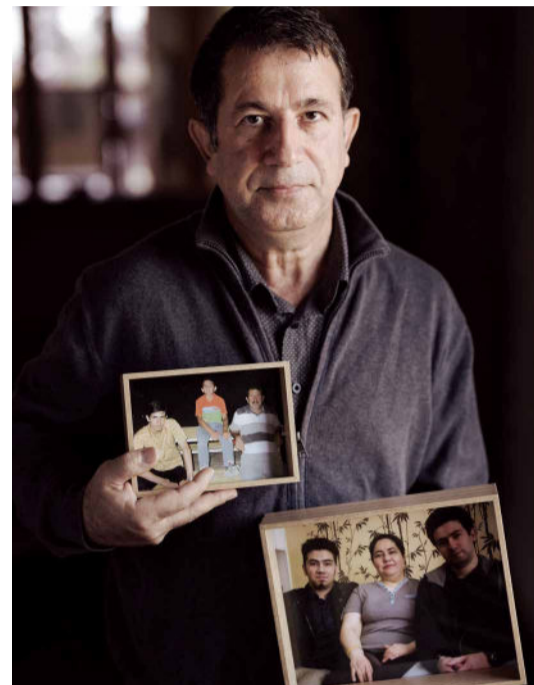
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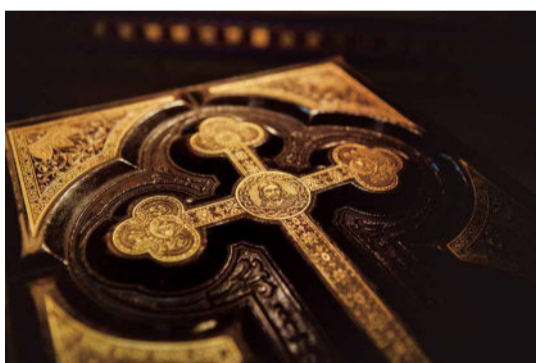
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'For such a time as this': Deb's gift to others in

by Kirralee Nicolle

DEB FOX LIVES AN EXUBERANT life. She is passionate about her job as a journalist for a mission organisation. She loves being involved in her church, St Alfred's in Blackburn North. She has a vast social network and a ready laugh which bounces off the walls of her small unit. A capable dancer, her petite frame seems to simmer with energy despite the exhaustion evident in her eyes.

When I arrive, she meets me at the door with a grin, then cautiously steps backwards.

"I just want to check, are you doing hugs?" she asks. "I don't want to overstep."

Knowing a little of her story, I am initially surprised at her willingness to initiate physical contact during a pandemic.

Deb has been largely house-bound for almost a year.

But in her case, COVID-19 is only a minor factor.

Deb sits on the couch across from me. She leans forward, straining to think. Just as she catches a thought, it seems to slip away again, and another seemingly takes its place.

Just two days ago, Deb had a seizure.

She explains to me how following a neurological event such

"From specialists to fellow Christians, the chronically ill may be told they need to 'just believe' more ... or perhaps worst of all – that they are making it all up."

as this, it can take a little while for the brain to recover.

Around the age of 10, Deb was diagnosed with a rare autoimmune condition, which affects her ability to fight infections. Deb also concurrently struggled with her mental health, including debilitating bouts of OCD.

Just last year, however, another sinister health challenge reared its head.

After fainting at work, she was undergoing monitoring in hospital when medical staff noticed she was having a seizure.

This began a series of tests, which eventually led to the diagnosis of Functional Neurological Disorder, a condition which, besides causing seizures, affects Deb's ability to walk and talk.

Because of the similarity of the symptoms, her specialists

originally thought that she was experiencing epilepsy.

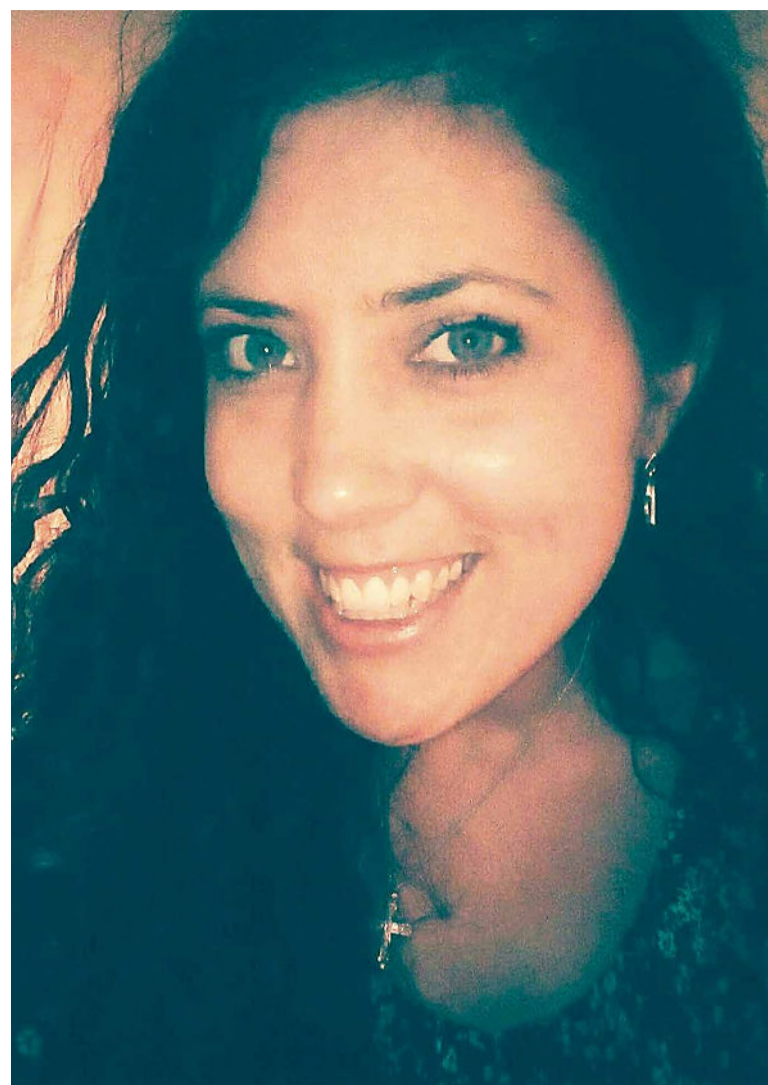
During and after a seizure, Deb may be temporarily unable to communicate. She also finds that the limbs on the left side of her body sometimes operate differently to those on her right side. She experiences significant nerve pain. Each seizure is also followed by several days of deep fatigue.

A further difficulty has been the nature of her diagnosis.

While patients with FND experience symptoms consistent with a neurological difference, the underlying cause remains a mystery. Deb tells me how in her case, it may be the result of a virus, another kind of illness or a traumatic event.

Or, it may be all three.

She tells me that to be permitted to drive, she would need to



Deb Fox is a member of St Alfred's in Blackburn North. Picture: supplied



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pandemic trials

be seizure-free for a minimum of three months.

As a result, she hasn't driven a car since June 2021.

Because of the heightened risks associated with catching COVID-19, she has also been hesitant to enter confined spaces, such as taxis and Ubers.

"It has really shown me how independent I've tried to be," she says.

"But it has pushed me to rely on others, and to rely on God."

Deb tells me how one of the greatest challenges with a chronic illness is being taken seriously. From specialists to fellow Christians, the chronically ill may be told they need to 'just believe' more, that they are not seeking healing effectively, or perhaps worst of all – that they are making it all up.

As we reach the midpoint of our interview, Deb grows quieter and her voice becomes steady, her thoughts clear. The words flow, as if they had just been waiting for the right moment.

She tells me how one of her favourite hymns is *Just as I Am* – "an oldie but a goodie," she says, laughing.

The third verse of the hymn features this cry:

*Just as I am,
though tossed about
With many a conflict,*

*many a doubt;
Fightings within,
and fears without,
O Lamb of God,
I come, I come!*

"One of the biggest revelations for me is that God loves me just as I am," she says.

"I don't have to be this perfect person who has got it all together, as He loves me and treasures me [anyway]."

She pulls her knees up on the couch, her eyes raise slightly toward the ceiling.

"As much as I'd love to be this super healthy person [who can do anything I want to do], [God] has created us all in a way that we can reflect His glory wherever we are."

Deb says how God spoke to her at the end of 2019, around the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

She tells me how He gave her the phrase from Esther, "for such a time as this", with the assurance that He had called her to minister to others in this time.

"It's amazing how God has used my experiences to build empathy for other people," she says.

"I've actually found that [the limitations of] my illnesses [provide] a good way to reach those who feel like they aren't good enough to go to church."

Music program a gift to future

by Jenan Taylor

A MUSIC scholarship designed to familiarise more young people with traditional Anglican hymns and services has been described as unique and rewarding by its first winner.

The program developed by St Margaret's Eltham aimed to show the relevance of a wide range of Christian music, including Gregorian chant and Paul Manz songs, to contemporary culture.

Piano student Lachlan Chau said music scholarships were increasingly uncommon and that the liturgical focus had given him the opportunity to learn a genre of music that was rarely covered in other music education schemes.

Awarded the scholarship while he completed his final year at secondary school, Mr Chau said that he had learned music that he had never had to play before.

"The church I usually go to is more modern and we have a youth group that's casual and contemporary, so in contrast the music at St Margaret's was very diverse," Mr Chau said.

He said the initiative had developed his confidence to perform for a live audience because it had required him to play at regular services in front of the congregation.

Now at university, Mr Chau was also completing a certificate of per-



Lachlan Chau received a scholarship from St Margaret's. Picture: iStock

formance for piano and aimed for a diploma but said he wasn't sure of what his musical path really was.

"I do think the scholarship experience and the increased contacts will open up more doors for me in the future," he said.

St Margaret's Anglican vicar Reverend Keren Terpstra said exposing young musicians to Christian music was important because it was fundamental to human development.

"If you're going to play Sia or U2 songs, or Powderfinger, it's good to have an idea of where those ways of doing things have come from," Ms Terpstra said.


Another impetus for the program was community outreach, but there was also a very practical reality to it, she said. "The musicians that we have are aged and ageing and have been faithful in


offering their gifts, but this is about wanting to make sure that there is another generation of people who are capable of playing for church services," Ms Terpstra said.

Ms Terpstra said the program would be expanding with two more places, but that St Margaret's had fundraising plans to consolidate for it.

Mr Chau said learning about the music had been spiritually engaging and that it was insightful for young people like him. His favourite pieces were hymns 609, *May the mind of Christ my Saviour*, and 234, *How good Lord to be here*.

"I found 609 really calming and a good reminder that we should not be tempted by the world and instill Christ's values every day. Hymn 234 is more celebratory, and full of praise, so it's good to play every now and then," he said.





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Should Christians want to ‘enhance’ humans?

by Victoria Lorrimar

WHAT MIGHT HUMANS become with technology? The prospect of enhancing human capacities through technology has long been a theme in science fiction, and we are seeing more and more real-world implementation. But how should Christians think about human technological enhancement?

Christians rejecting particular technologies as “playing God” has a long history, often in the realm of medicine or agriculture. This is particularly true of technologies that might alter human characteristics in some way. It has been seen as an overstepping of the boundary between Creator and creation. For example, a 2016 North American study showed a stronger rejection of three hypothetical enhancements among individuals with higher religious commitment, who were predominantly Christian, than those with lower religious commitment or none. These suggested enhancements were gene editing to reduce disease risk, neural implants to improve cognitive abilities, and synthetic blood to improve physical abilities. Respondents who answered in the negative judged these as “meddling with nature” and “cross[ing] a line we should not cross”. Revealing more general perceptions, *Christianity Today* published the results with the sensationalist headline “Christians to Science: Leave Our Bodies How God Made Them”.

Often the charge of “playing God” is rooted in fear, as new technologies shift the boundary between what we accept as given and what we can affect through our own action. When something new crosses that boundary into the realm of our own capability, we can be wary.

But what if we are too hasty in dismissing enhancement technologies, or technology more generally, as playing God? Imbued as we are with imaginations, ingenuity, and intellects, might such technologies be a legitimate aspect of human creativity?

There are different kinds of creative acts. Two different types of creation are described in the Hebrew Scriptures in particular. The main word for “create” in Hebrew is *bara*, used in the opening line of Genesis: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth”. This verb appears around 50 times in the Old Testament, and the most important thing to know about it is that the subject is always God. So, God is the one that is doing the creating. If we consider the stuff that is being created, then we have a list of things that include the cosmos, people, specific groups of people, geographical features, creatures, and phenomena. It’s also the verb that is used when David implores God to create in him a pure heart in Psalm 56.

So it’s pretty clear from the usage in the Old Testament that *bara* refers to God alone. It is an



Christians may discern aspects of technological enhancement to be unwise, but faith should not prevent us being part of the dialogue. Picture: iStock

act that is uniquely divine and does not cross the divide between God and humanity. But this isn’t the only Hebrew word for “create” – we also have the verb *yatsar*, which is used in Genesis 2 to describe God’s fashioning of the human from the earth and the forming of other animals. What’s especially interesting about *yatsar* is that it doesn’t just apply to God but is used to speak of human action as well, for instance in Isaiah 29:16 or Habbakuk 2:18. The term and its cognates invoke strong connotations of art and craftsmanship, referring to the work of the woodcarver, and of the potter. This is likely connected to the “lumps of clay” that made up the raw materials in Genesis 2:7. With this verb, we build up an understanding of God as an artist, beginning a project in which we are graciously allowed to collaborate. In his book *Making Good* theologian Trevor Hart sums up this understanding, saying that at some key points in the story of God’s creative fashioning of a world fit for his own indwelling: “divine artistry actively solicits a corresponding creaturely

“There may be many aspects of technological enhancement that Christians will ultimately discern to be unwise, but faith ought not prevent us from being a part of the dialogue concerning technological possibilities.”

Dr Victoria Lorrimar

creativity, apart from which the project cannot and will not come to fruition”.

We tend to think of human creativity mainly in terms of art, but human making is not restricted to the artistic sphere. Through the modern period art and craftsmanship became increasingly separate from science and technology, but all of these endeavours have their place in human creativity.

If we can frame technological activity as within the scope of

humanity’s created purpose, then our questions around human enhancement technology in particular shift. No longer is everything ruled off-limits from the outset as “playing God”. Instead, Christians should practice discernment. Technological proposals move into the realm of ethics, as we weigh up the motives and outcomes of particular technologies. The theological questions are not concentrated on whether such technologies are permissible wholesale, but can instead explore the way in which such technologies are perceived in the broader culture, and the underpinning assumptions they reveal. Many technofuturist visions portray technology as saviour, whether in science fiction or the real world. They promote particular understandings of what makes for a good life – longevity, intelligence, efficiency – that may not always line up with a Christian understanding of flourishing, that should prioritise justice, equality, and mercy.

Christian theology has some-

thing valuable to contribute when it comes to an understanding of the human life and what it might look like to flourish. In *Christian Ethics in a Technological Age* theologian Brian Brock reminds us that the Christian story, “reveals as good news human ingenuity and the richness of creation’s given material order, insisting that the two can come together in the creation of good and beneficial techniques and mechanical artefacts”. In making this statement we affirm two basic claims: that human collaboration with God’s work can compete with mixed motives in a world that is still being redeemed, but also that we are freed from “the burden of ensuring that God triumphs over the powers of this age”.

There may be many aspects of technological enhancement that Christians will ultimately discern to be unwise, but faith ought not prevent us from being a part of the dialogue concerning technological possibilities. While there are certain acts of creation that God alone is capable of, the fact that we are invited into the overall project of ongoing creation gives us a sense of responsibility. We live out our lives within the tension of receiving our created life as a gift, but also understanding it to be a task requiring a response from us.

ISCAST Fellow Dr Victoria Lorrimar is lecturer in systematic theology and academic dean at Trinity College Queensland. She has qualifications in both science and theology and gained her doctorate from the University of Oxford. Her most recent publication is *Human Technological Enhancement and Theological Anthropology*.

“Through the modern period art and craftsmanship became increasingly separate from science and technology, but all of these endeavours have their place in human creativity.”

Dr Victoria Lorrimar

Inspiring the next generation to use God's gifts

by Stephen Cauchi

TONY RINAUDO'S STORY IS that of an underground forest.

The agronomist was working in Niger in the 1980s and 1990s, when he realised there was a solution to the deforestation that had devastated the country.

While the trees may have been cut down, their underground root systems were often still intact. Trees could be grown from this "underground forest" if the growth from the roots was pruned and protected in certain ways.

Crucially, the technique – known formally as farmer-managed natural regeneration – was far easier and cheaper than tree-planting.

It's improved the lives of millions of people.

Mr Rinaudo's recently launched autobiography *The Forest Underground: Hope for a Planet in Crisis* covers his work in this field, a journey intertwined with his faith.

The effect of the simple idea to regrow trees from the roots was huge. According to Mr Rinaudo it has restored roughly six million hectares of land, and over 200 million trees in Niger alone.

He believes the method has the potential to restore degraded drylands with an area the size of India.

Mr Rinaudo's work has earned numerous plaudits and awards for his efforts, including a Member of the Order of Australia, the Right Livelihood Award, and the Commandeur du Merit, Agricole award from the Niger government.

World Resources Institute senior fellow Chris Reij said the technique had probably been the largest positive environmental transformation in the Sahel region, possibly even all of Africa.

Mr Rinaudo said the book had come about as he began to focus on inspiring the next generation to manage projects.

"If by writing this story and showing how God answered prayer and did amazing things – if that would encourage others to use their gifts and to do whatever it is God's prepared for them to do – then it's worth me going to the trouble of writing a book," he said.

Mr Rinaudo grew up in a Catholic family, with a very real



Tony Rinaudo's tree regeneration technique has helped millions of people.

Picture: supplied

faith. At university he began going the Anglican chapel, at the same time starting to own his faith as his own.

In 1982, he and his wife moved to Niger to work with mission organisation SIM. It was here he first encountered the idea which formed the basis of farmer-managed natural regeneration.

Mr Rinaudo said while he had championed and popularized the growing of trees from the roots, it was in one form or another, a very traditional way of managing trees.

The idea is now used in at least 26 countries, mostly in Africa but also India, Myanmar

and Indonesia. Mr Rinaudo said his goal was to see the technique being used in 100 countries by 2030 – including more countries in Africa and Asia, but also in Latin America.

He said virtually no country in the world was unaffected by land degradation and deforestation, while more trees also meant more absorption of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

"You think of the Amazon basin and what's happening there, and land being cleared for grazing and or palm plantations and so on," Mr Rinaudo said.

"That impacts the livelihoods

of ordinary people – their food situation, vulnerability to flooding and drought, loss of biodiversity. Those things affect people, not just the environment."

Mr Rinaudo said the economics of Africa had meant the regeneration technique was particularly suitable for the farmer-managed natural regeneration technique, with a steady market for fuel wood used for cooking.

On the possibility of its use in Australia, he said the economics were completely different, but if the environment continued to degrade it might be necessary to use the regeneration technique to

"You think of the Amazon basin and what's happening there, and land being cleared for grazing and or palm plantations and so on ... those things affect people, not just the environment."

Tony Rinaudo

protect biodiversity, watersheds and streamlines.

In 1999, Mr Rinaudo returned to Melbourne, where he began working at World Vision, and attending St Alfred's Anglican Church in Blackburn.

At World Vision, the regeneration technique was the main focus of his work. Until COVID hit, he was travelling overseas for up to six months a year promoting its use to various governments.

Initially this was mainly to developing countries, but after 2012 the technique began to attract more attention globally.

Part of Mr Rinaudo's work was trying to convince policy makers in these countries that traditional tree-planting did not work.

"Year after year there might be a very low success rate and great expense," Mr Rinaudo said.

"It's trying to influence policy makers and donors that an awful lot of money goes into ineffective development activities."

The Forest Underground: Hope for a Planet in Crisis is published by ISCAST – Christians in Science and Technology. It was launched online on 30 April.

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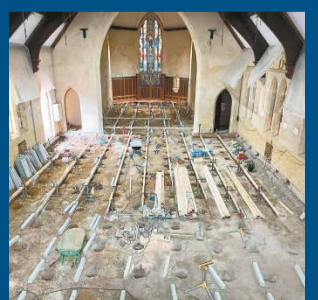
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Vaccine wastage, hesitancy persist: Workers

by Jenan Taylor

VACCINE HESITANCY continues to present major challenges for the uptake of COVID-19 vaccines in the Pacific region according to an Anglican aid organisation.

The Anglican Board of Missions executive director the Reverend Dr John Deane said vaccine hesitancy and misinformation was of great concern to the organisation's overseas partners.

Dr Deane said there was a lack of well-funded and focused education campaigns to counter the fake news which had flooded social media in a number of countries.

The concerns come as a new report warns unnecessary vaccine wastage in high, middle and low-income countries is continuing to contribute to vaccine inequities.

The paper published in BMJ Global health said almost 80 per cent of people in high income countries have received a vaccine dose to date, but only 15 per cent of the population in low-income countries had been vaccinated.

Anglican Overseas Aid warned in December that low vaccination rates placed the Pacific region at risk of further COVID 19 outbreaks and new variants.

The organisation said widespread distrust of authority and bad experiences with previous vaccines in some areas was a major part of their vaccine hesitancy.

The recent paper, written by researchers from countries including Australia and Spain, said refusal of vaccines, misinformation and health and supply system flaws were driving unnecessary wastage.

The report said vaccine wastage



A lack of well-funded and focused education campaigns has left misinformation rife.

Picture: iStock

rates to date were as high as 30 per cent in high income countries, and that at October 2021 Australia had wasted up to seven million vac-

cines because they were unwanted or had expired.

However, vaccine wastage in low-income countries was com-

pounded by donations of vaccines that were close to expiry from high income nations.

It said such "late-date" donations gave the impression that high income countries were contributing effectively towards global vaccine distribution.

In addition, despite the wastage problem, efforts by most countries to track, forecast and reduce wastage were lacking, the paper said, and the situation urgently needed to be remedied.

An author of the report and Burnet Institute deputy director Professor Margaret Hellard said that to control the COVID pandemic successfully in the long run, high levels of vaccination were needed globally.

Professor Hellard said it was crucial that low and middle-income countries could access vaccines.

But she said the way in which high-income countries had been supplying the vaccines to them was one of the reasons this had not been happening.

"There's this notion of gifting countries vaccines," Professor Hellard said. "But we have to make sure that the supply of those vaccines makes inherent sense – that, number one, you are able to provide them with a vaccine that's not going to go out of date in a short period of time, especially if the supply chain within the country means that it could take the country longer to distribute [the vaccines]."

"It's critically important that we work to ensure that whatever we're providing, there's an accompanying infrastructure to support it, to ensure that that vaccine gets off the dock through the system and into somebody's arm."

In late March the Australian government pledged \$85 million and a least 10 million COVID vaccine doses to the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment, a global attempt to support equitable access to vaccines.

It came after End COVID For All, a group of health, business and aid bodies, including The Anglican Board of Missions, sent an open letter about vaccine equity to then Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

End COVID For All spokesperson the Reverend Tim Costello welcomed the government's measures but believed further investment was needed to help deliver and distribute vaccines across the world.

"We have to make sure ... to provide them with a vaccine that's not going to go out of date in a short period of time, especially if the supply chain within the country means that it could take the country longer to distribute [the vaccines]."

The Reverend Dr John Deane

Prayer Diary

Find the prayer diary online at melbourneanglican.org.au/spiritual-resources

JUNE

Wed 1: The Diocese of Melbourne (Abp Philip Freier, Asst Bps Paul Barker, Bradly Billings, Genieve Blackwell, Kate Prowd, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of La Trobe (Gavin Ward); St George's Red Hill (Fiona Goy);

Thurs 2: The Diocese of Newcastle (Bp Peter Stuart, Asst Bps Charlie Murry, Sonia Roulston, Clergy & People); Mentone Grammar School (Mal Cater, Principal); Andrew Stewart, Michael Prabaharan, Chaplains); St Mark's Reservoir West (Hamish Erskine-Fowler);

Fri 3: The Diocese of North Queensland (Bp Keith Joseph, Clergy & People); Church Missionary Society Victoria (Jonathan Wei-Han Kuan, Executive Director); Andrew Gifford, Andrew Livingstone); St Matthias' Richmond North (Yvonne Poon);

Sat 4: The Diocese of North West Australia (Bp Gary Nelson, Clergy & People); Community of the Holy Name (Sr Carol Tanner); St Stephen's Richmond (Matthew Healy);

Sun 5: The Anglican Church of Southern Africa (Abp Thabo Makgoba, Primate); The Diocese of Perth (Abp Kay Goldsworthy, Asst Bps Jeremy James, Kate Wilmot, Clergy & People); All Saints, Rosebud w. St Katherine's, McCrae (Lynda Crossley); St James and St Peter's Kilsyth/Montrose - Pastoral Visit (Abp Philip Freier); St Barnabas' Balwyn - Pastoral Visit (Bp Genieve Blackwell); St Stephen's Richmond - Confirmation Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell);

Mon 6: The Diocese of Riverina (Bp Donald Kirk, Clergy & People); Overnewton Anglican Community College (James Laussen, Principal); Helen Dwyer, Chaplains); All Souls' Sandringham (Jeremy Watson, Samantha White);

Tues 7: The Diocese of Rockhampton (Bishop Peter Grice, Clergy & People); Police Force Chaplains (Drew Mellor & other Chaplains) and members of the Police Force; All Saints' Carlotta Tye Memorial Selby (Barbara Collover);

Wed 8: The Diocese of Sydney (Abp Kanishka Raffel, Regional Bps Chris Edwards, Michael Stead, Peter Hayward, Peter Lin, Malcolm Richards, Gary Koo, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Maroondah (Bruce Bickerdike); St John's, Sorrento w. St Andrew's, Rye (Nicholas Wallace);

Thurs 9: The Diocese of Tasmania (Bp Richard Condie, Missioner Bp Chris Jones, Clergy & People); Ridley College (Brian Rosner, Principal); Tim Foster, Richard Trist); Christ Church South Yarra (Craig D'Alton, Emily Fraser);

Fri 10: The Diocese of The Murray (Bp Keith Dalby, Clergy & People); Cross-Cultural Ministry; Church of the Ascension Springvale (Inpa Eliezer);

Sat 11: The Diocese of The Northern Territory (Bp Greg Anderson, Clergy & People); Deacons' Ministry; Parish of St Alban the Martyr, St Albans (Siosifa Mafi Tongia);

Sun 12: The Anglican Church of South America (Abp Gregory Venables, Primate); The Diocese of Wangaratta

(Bp Clarence Bester, Clergy & People); Anglican Criminal Justice Ministry Chaplaincy (Rob Ferguson, Senior Chaplain & Chaplains); St Stephen's Werribee - Karen Community; Moe Win Tun Kin, Saw Htoo; St Thomas' Moonee Ponds - Pastoral Visit (Bp Genieve Blackwell); The Parish of Holy Trinity, Lara w. Christ Church, Little River - Pastoral Visit (Bp Kate Prowd);

Mon 13: The Diocese of Willochra (Bp John Stead, Clergy & People); Shelford Girls' Grammar (Katrina Brennan, Principal); All Saints' St Kilda East (Rene Knaap);

Tues 14: Anglicare Australia (Bp Chris Jones, Chair; Kasy Chambers, Exec Director); Diocesan Building Committee; Christ Church St Kilda (Turi Hollis);

Wed 15: Theological Colleges, Church Schools & Church Kindergartens; Archdeaconry of Melbourne (Heather Patacca); St James the Great St Kilda East (Paul Bower);

Thurs 16: Mission Agencies of the Anglican Church of Australia; St Michael's Grammar School (Terrie Jones, Principal, Kenyon McKie, Chaplain); St Mary's Sunbury (Gavin Ward, Matthew Browne, Catherine Fisher, Kathleen Alleaume-Ross);

Fri 17: Religious Orders serving within the Anglican Church of Australia; Diocesan Finance; Holy Apostles Sunshine Braybrook (Paul Subramaniam);

Sat 18: Locums and all retired clergy; Diocesan Liturgical Committee; Surfcoast Parish (Sharon Valentino);

Sun 19: Province of the Episcopal

Church of South Sudan (Abp Justin Badi Arama, Primate); The Anglican Church of Australia (Primate Abp Geoffrey Smith, General Secretary Anne Hywood, the General Synod & the Standing Committee); Chaplain to Anglican Centre staff (Heather Cetrangolo); City on a Hill Surf Coast (Louis Glazebrook); St Agnes Glen Huntly - Pastoral Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); St James' Ivanhoe - Confirmation Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); Yarraville Parish - Pastoral Visit (Bp Kate Prowd);

Mon 20: The Diocese of Adelaide (Abp Geoff Smith, Asst Bps Denise Ferguson, Timothy Harris, Christopher McLeod; Clergy & People); Peninsula Grammar (Stuart Johnston, Principal, Mark Sweeney, Chaplain); Holy Trinity Surrey Hills (Mark Pearce);

Tues 21: The Diocese of Armidale (Bp Rod Chiswell, Clergy & People); Diocesan Property Committee; St Luke's Sydenham;

Wed 22: The Diocese of Ballarat (Bp Garry Weatherill, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Stonnington; Tamil Christian Congregation Victoria (Lawrence Anbalagan);

Thurs 23: The Diocese of Bathurst (Bp Mark Calder, Clergy & People); Tintern Grammar (Brad Fry, Principal, Alison Andrew, Chaplain); St Mark's Templestowe (Ben Lui Wong, Paul Hughes, Penny Chartres);

Fri 24: The Diocese of Bendigo (Bp Matt Brain, Clergy & People); Diocesan Provincial Council; St John's Toorak (Peter French; Lydia Thangadurai);

Sat 25: The Diocese of Brisbane (Abp Phillip Aspinall, Regional Bps Jeremy Greaves, Cameron Venables, John Roundhill, Clergy & People); Diocesan Risk Management and Insurance (Matthew Wilson, Manager); St John's Upper Beaconsfield (Shannon Lee);

Sun 26: Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan; The Diocese of Bunbury (Bp Ian Coutts, Clergy & People); Upper Yarra Parish (Luke Whiteside); St Paul's East Kew - Pastoral Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell);

Mon 27: The Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn (Bp Mark Short, Asst Bps Stephen Pickard, Carol Wagner, Clergy & People); Trinity College & Theological School (Robert Derrenbacker, Dean); Parish of Holy Trinity, Upwey/Belgrave (Bruce Hallyburton);

Tues 28: Ministry to the Defence Force (Bishop Grant Dibden, Chaplains & Members of the Defence Forces); Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Schools Commission (Richard St John, Chair, Rick Tudor, Deputy Chair); St Luke's Vermont (Peter MacPherson, Mark Simon);

Wed 29: The Diocese of Gippsland (Bp Richard Treloar, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of The Yarra (Tim Johnson); St John the Baptist Wantirna South (Stephen Morris);

Thurs 30: The Diocese of Grafton (Bp Murray Harvey, Clergy & People); Trinity Grammar School (Adrian Farrer, Principal; Chris Leadbeater, James Hale, Chaplains); St John the Baptist Wantirna South (Stephen Morris).

Take advantage of creative skills at church

by Evan Englezos

WHEN I TURNED 18, A youth pastor approached me to begin a new youth service. I was excited at the opportunity. We drew a lot of people into our community and experimented with different expressions of church, with various degrees of success. Looking back, it was a very formational time for me and my peers.

Some key ingredients that contributed to this included:

- Being identified, guided and released in creativity
- Strong trust, ownership and collaboration
- A safe environment to experiment and permission to fail

This experience taught me the value of participating in wholehearted Christian service. It taught me to include and raise up young people. When I was on staff at St Hilary's Kew an important focus was to identify and encourage teenagers in their gifting and their walk with Jesus. With the right guidance, they can have an important role in re-building our churches.

In a recent Facebook post about 31 vacant parishes in Melbourne Ridley lecturer Andrew Judd suggested that "every clergy in Melbourne needs to be personally inviting five young people to have dinner together with them to hear about the character and gifts they've observed in all of them and why the church desperately needs their leadership now".

I've never felt called to ordination or formal theological studies. As a creative lay leader, I do not fit an obvious mould or fit neatly in a ministry box. I expect there are many younger people who also question the value of their gifts and what role they can play



As more hybrid engagement emerges, so does potential for creative expression.

Picture: iStock



Evan Englezos.

contributes to sustainable ministry. Creating opportunities around each person's gifting will be more effective than trying to attract people to pre-existing ministries that don't involve their areas of interest and experience.

Releasing lay people into new ministries requires intentional leadership, and the good news is that many of these intentions are finding expression in our churches. Practical steps towards this include:

- Building a united vision and commitment
- Resourcing and budgeting
- Identifying people's gifts and the opportunities
- Enabling lay ministry and giving permission
- Providing parameters and guidance
- Releasing people in their giftings

Ministry is not easy, but God has good plans for his church. We plant the seeds in faith and pray for the harvest in His time. As I engage with emerging Anglican lay leaders, my prayer is:

"God, what are you up to in our midst? What do you require of us? Breathe your new life and ministries into us."

"The church and the creative industry need each other more than ever. Many creatives have been starved of opportunities during COVID."

Evan Englezos

munities to express their creative talents in physical and online spaces with art shows, music, dance, Stations of the Cross and

other new expressions.

From my experience, being released to use my creative gifts brings joy and effectiveness that

A trip into past that spoke to the present

by Clare Boyd-Macrae

RECENTLY, MY husband was asked back to his first parish in a tiny Victorian town. The last time he had preached in that pulpit was Christmas day 1988. We loved our four years there, but they were hard work. We were so young, and so wet behind the ears! In his first week, he had two funerals to conduct, neither of them old people. The manse was right next to the church, and it was another age – we hadn't learnt, back then, about boundaries. We were barely aware of gender politics, and were completely unaware that I was most likely, at the time, suffering from undiagnosed depression. I worked at the local hospital, and we threw ourselves into the community with gusto.

I suspect many ministers wonder if all their work has had any "result", however you might measure such a thing. And this is not something that



*a word
for all
seasons*

only those in ordained ministry wonder about. All of us have a ministry, and even for those with no religious sense, people of goodwill become weary and wonder if what they've toiled at for decades has had any effect.

But when we returned to this town we were blown away by meeting former parishioners again, and others with whom we had connected deeply in our time there. There were plenty of traumas and sorrows in those years – babies who died, marriages that foundered, natural disasters, domestic violence and suicide. People band together to support each other through

events like these, and that bonds you for life.

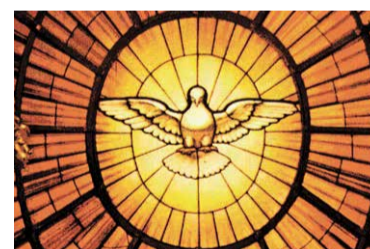
On our trip back, memories of past joys and laughter and grief almost overwhelmed me, together with a profound sense of gratitude that the people in this little, remote community had opened their hearts to us, despite our hippy appearance, my determination to have my own job, and I suspect our somewhat arrogant assumption that we would sort out their theology. What a lot we learned! What a lot that funny little place allowed us to contribute.

The experience made me want to encourage all of us of a

certain age and who have been plugging away at things that sometimes seem pointless and exhausting. Life is so messy and we all have regrets. I find great joy and satisfaction working in the Church bureaucracy. But sometimes, much as I know how vital good administration is for enabling mission, I wonder what all that meticulous administration achieves in bringing on the Reign of God.

But my recent experience reminded me of two things. One, that it is all about community and human connection – it's no accident that Christianity is a corporate faith. And that all we are asked to do is to keep turning up and trying. It is God's mission and God's endeavour, and we can be on board, or not. We can rest in the knowledge that nothing, no matter how humble and tentative, is lost in the heart of God.

Clare Boyd-Macrae's blog is at clareboyd-macrae.com.



Spirit Words

"We all need to know Truth if we are to make even the beginnings of an attempt to sort out truth from fiction in all the claims and counterclaims of human experience..."

Iain Provan

Women fight to avoid being swallowed whole

by Wendy Knowlton

MICHELLE OBAMA (Viola Davis) resisted expectations that she become, what she called a “Stepford FLOTIS”. Her determination echoes through the stories of Eleanor Roosevelt (Gillian Anderson) and Betty Ford (Michelle Pfeiffer) in this intriguing 10-part series, which moves between the decades interweaving the stories of these three first ladies.

Each must fight to define her White House role as more than decorative accessory. Iconic outfits and hairstyles are meticulously reproduced for this handsome production and the three portraits shown in the first episode depict one way of seeing each woman. The aim of the series, however, is to seek what’s behind the carefully curated images. Sharp-witted Roosevelt is aware of expectations that she “smile, nod and gaze adoringly” but is scornful of a title that refers to her sex rather than her skills. Ford’s progressive views and “candour” are feared by those who



Betty Ford (Michelle Pfeiffer) sits for the official portrait that represents the serene femininity expected of her
Photograph: Showtime

feel the less they hear of her opinions the better. Obama is warned that any attempt to be assertive will have her labelled an angry black woman who could harm her husband’s ambitions. It is alarming to see how little has changed over time, as a procession of men in suits attempts to force each woman into following protocols.

Michelle Pfeiffer delivers the standout performance as Betty Ford. She is the most reluctant first lady, unexpectedly stepping into the position when her husband took over from the disgraced Richard Nixon. Her dependency issues give her a vulnerability that requires strength of character to overcome, and Pfeiffer conveys both beautifully. Anderson enhances her reputation for taking on iconic women from history, and Davis gives us the private Michelle Obama, terrified of the very real danger of the assassination facing America’s first black president.

The choice to jump between storylines allows for parallels or contrasts enhancing individual strands. But the fragmentation

can also be frustrating. Involving scenes sometimes end abruptly, stripping the audience of the opportunity to examine the moment in depth. There is some unevenness between episodes too. The backstories for each woman are less compelling than their lives in the White House, despite some intriguing moments. For instance, we learn that Ford trained with dancer Martha Graham and was able to wrestle small alligators.

But this imagining of what lives thrust into the spotlight through marriage rather than choice might be like, has a lot to offer. Each woman must avoid being swallowed by fashion shoots and house and garden renovations. A four-year term might seem more like a four-year sentence. As Eleanor acerbically notes about being first lady, “That’s not a job ... that’s my circumstance”. What these women do with their circumstances is what makes this series worth pursuing.

The First Lady is currently available on Paramount+.

A world where men’s fate rests on a missing eyelash

by Wendy Knowlton

THE PREMISE of *Operation Mincemeat* seems ludicrous. Hoping to make Hitler believe the Allies are about to launch a major offensive in Greece rather than Sicily, a dead body containing misleading plans is off-loaded from a submarine and left to wash ashore in Spain. The fact that this is based on a true story is surprising enough, but the deceptively informative corpse is only the beginning of a plot rife with triple agents, double bluffs, betrayals and outlandish speculation. While the potential for black comedy lurks, these war games are played with real lives, and this makes everything much more serious than the synopsis suggests.

A fine cast of British actors takes us to wartime London, where elegant functions come with a side

of tinned Spam, and darkened streets conceal the “hidden war”. The agents of this war are all storytellers, lying to family and friends about what they do, and weaving tales to beguile the enemy and garner advantage. A duty-driven Ewen Montagu (Colin Firth), Charles Cholmondeley (Matthew Macfadyen) and Jean Leslie (Kelly Macdonald) brainstorm a backstory for the morgue-acquired body, posthumously pressed into service as their heroic courier. For all of them, the line between what is true and what is invented blurs, and their own loyalties are challenged in a world where nothing is necessarily what it seems.

By this late in the war everyone has broken everyone else’s codes and bugged most of their offices. So the team’s task is not only a matter of feeding others information and intercepting “chatter”, but



Ewen Montagu (Colin Firth) leads a team who aim to deceive Hitler and end the war.
Photograph: Netflix

of deciding what will be believed and whether to dismiss their own acquired memos as genuine or deceptive constructs. Then, of

course, they have to predict who will find the body and whether this person will be loyal or treacherous, meticulous or lazy. If they report to

the right people, will those people do what is expected? And if not, which double agents will be in place to prod them or re-route the plan? As if this isn’t enough, MI5 is spying on Montagu, and Cholmondeley is keeping Montagu and Jean Leslie under surveillance, jealous of their growing closeness. Everyone seems ripe to betray or be betrayed, and working out who will do what is mentally draining.

Success in war is a relative term. Even “minimal casualties” represent human lives. Any loss strikes a necessarily sombre note. Whilst the audience knows the operation’s fate, the tension felt on the protagonists’ behalf is very real. After all, anything can happen in a war where a corpse can be eloquent, and the fate of men hangs on a little more than guesswork and a missing eyelash.

In cinemas now.

Euthanasia tale sidesteps ethical posturing for human story

by Tim Kroenert

MEDICALLY ASSISTED suicide is an issue that seems indelibly fraught. It’s an individual’s right to bodily autonomy, versus the sanctity of life. Arguments in favour of “dying with dignity” sit against what this phrase implies about the supposed indignity of being old, or of experiencing disability. Is euthanasia a step on the slippery slope towards eugenics? Or are we as a society sufficiently, ethically equipped to demarcate what’s acceptable from what’s not?

In *Everything Went Fine* French auteur François Ozon treats such quandaries as read. He sidesteps ethical debate to instead examine the legal and bureaucratic minutiae of a European family’s quest to fulfill a loved one’s desire to die. He

explores the emotional burden of this, for those tasked with carrying out his wishes. “This is our story,” says Emmanuèle (Sophie Marceau) to her husband. It is not her life on the line, but it’s her experiences that are centred.

Emmanuèle is the adult daughter of André (André Dussollier), an 85-year-old art collector and former factory owner who as the film begins has suffered a stroke leaving him partially paralysed. Unwilling to continue living like this, he asks Emmanuèle to arrange for him to die. They have a tense relationship but she loves him. Caught somewhere between these emotional poles, Emmanuèle agrees to his request.

She does her research. She consults a lawyer and the representative of a Swiss clinic where

the procedure can be performed. A significant amount of box-ticking needs to be done, to make sure she and the clinic are legally protected, and to smooth the logistical aspects of André’s relocation.

Through it all Emmanuèle clings to hope that André might change his mind. She’s told by the clinic that sometimes, at the last moment, the patient declines to drink the fatal brew. André has emotional peaks and troughs that seem to confirm doctors’ insistence that his despondency is just a phase. Indeed, the date of André’s death having been decided, he defers it so that he might see his grandson perform in a music recital. But quickly, a new date is set.

Everything Went Fine is based on a memoir by French writer Emmanuèle Bernheim, a former



Everything Went Fine explores the human story behind a death.

Ozon collaborator who herself died in 2017. Ozon’s script and Marceau’s performance pay nuanced, respectful tribute to this complicated and painful saga from Bernheim’s life. We feel, with Emmanuèle, the

turns from hope to sad resignation and grief. We also feel the strong sense of daughterly duty to which she clings, whatever complicated feelings she might have towards her father.

Her sister Pascale (Géraldine Pailhas) provides willing support, but Emmanuèle is determined to see her duty through. She is determined to a fault – at one stage she is theatrically pained at having to repeat a difficult task she botched the first time, but when Pascale offers to do it for her, Emmanuèle immediately shuts her down. This is her story, after all. And, it’s a thoroughly compelling one, made all the more so by avoiding pat ethical posturing, focussing instead on basic human experience.

Screening at Cinema Nova.