

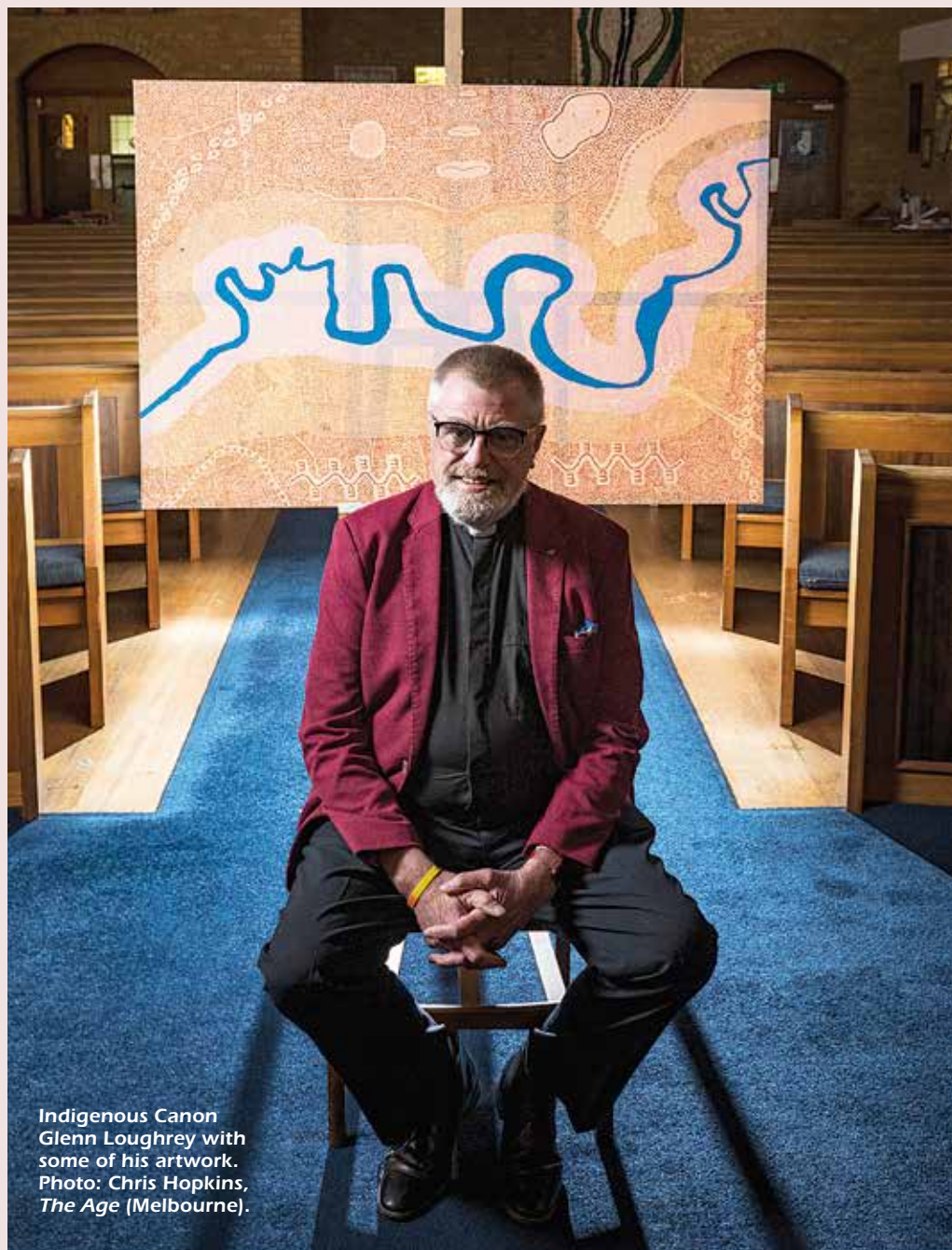


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respond to
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Indigenous Canon
Glenn Loughrey with
some of his artwork.
Photo: Chris Hopkins,
The Age (Melbourne).

Indigenous art from first Aboriginal Canon Glenn Loughrey to adorn St Paul's

by Stephen Cauchi

ST PAUL'S Cathedral's narthex screen is to be adorned with glass artwork from newly appointed Indigenous Canon and Artist-in-Residence the Revd Canon Glenn Loughrey.

Canon Loughrey, the Vicar at St Oswald's Glen Iris, is the first Indigenous canon in the Cathedral's history. A Wiradjuri man from NSW, he is the second First Nations artist-in-residence at the Cathedral, following Maori artist, the Revd Regan O'Callaghan, in 2016.

A canon is a senior leader of the Cathedral. Canon Loughrey will continue his ministry at St Oswald's.

Two pieces of Indigenous artwork from Canon Loughrey, each broken into three glass panels, will be installed in the narthex screen. The screen is the carved wooden portal separating the entrance from the main body of the church.

They depict a bird's eye view of the pre-colonial Melbourne region from the Dandenongs to the You Yangs, including Port Phillip Bay, the Yarra River, sacred trees, human footsteps and meeting places.

Canon Loughrey has already completed the artwork, which has been in the planning stages for two years. The process of tracing and casting the artwork into the six pieces of semi-

opaque glass is set to begin shortly.

The Dean of the Cathedral, the Very Revd Dr Andreas Loewe, made the announcement of the artwork and Canon Loughrey's appointments on 3 August.

Canon Loughrey told TMA he felt "pretty chuffed" by the news his artwork would adorn the narthex screen. "I never thought I would be a sufficient enough artist to get such a wonderful opportunity. It's an affirmation of my artistic practice but it's also an affirmation and a step towards reconciliation by the Cathedral by placing that in such an important position at the entrance of the building," he said.

"From my Aboriginal point of view, it's a very powerful statement about what the Cathedral sees as important."

Canon Loughrey said he was "very happy" with his artwork. "It does everything I want it to do and it speaks to country which is what we wanted to get across – the idea that when you walk into the Cathedral you walk through country and when you walk out of the Cathedral you walk through country."

"It's about people getting to recognise where they are and how to adjust the way they think about things in terms of where they are on country."

Continued on page 7

Unity threat warning from Gafcon plan

by Stephen Cauchi

MELBOURNE'S ARCHBISHOP Philip Freier has joined the Anglican Primate of Australia, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith, in criticising Gafcon Australia's plan to set up a breakaway Anglican diocese, with both leaders warning it would split and undermine the Church.

In an *Ad Clerum* (To the Clergy) on 6 August, Dr Freier wrote that he knew from his role as the co-chair of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) how persistent the effects of church division were.

"The formation of separate

ecclesial bodies is no small thing and the impact of separation is likely to be very long lasting," Archbishop Freier warned.

"I agree with the Primate's view that there is no need for this 'new church entity' – Anglican doctrine has not been changed by the recent Appellate Tribunal opinion or the effect of the Diocese of Wangaratta's application of the national church's *Canon Concerning Services*. Undoubtedly, the proponents of this initiative think differently for the reasons they describe."

But the deputy chair of Gafcon Australia, retired Sydney Archbishop Glenn Davies, said the Appellate Tribunal's decision

on same-sex marriage blessings, which prompted Gafcon's plan for a separate diocese – had plunged the Church into an "absolute chasm".

The chair of Gafcon Australia, Tasmania's Anglican Bishop Richard Condie, formally announced plans for the breakaway diocese in July. Bishop Condie said that the new church entity will be formed through a company structure, led by a small board of directors.

In his *Ad Clerum* letter, Archbishop Freier wrote: "Church division is always painful – the separation of any human community

Continued on page 5

Stay positive despite tough lockdown, Archbishop urges

by Stephen Cauchi

ANGLICAN CHURCHES are labouring under tough new restrictions to produce video and livestream services as the Delta strain of COVID-19 forces Victoria into an indefinite lockdown.

The diocese is also continuing to urge Anglicans to be vaccinated, with two inner-city Anglican parishes offering a pop-up vaccination clinic.

Archbishop Philip Freier, in a YouTube message last month, said many people were despairing over the spiralling COVID case numbers and burdens of lockdown.

"We hear on a daily basis the numbers from the COVID positive cases, people who are

in hospital," Archbishop Freier said. "They seem both in New South Wales and Victoria to be stubbornly growing."

"It's very easy for us to feel the heavy weight of the world upon us."

For some people, Dr Freier said, "it looks like ... the world we've known seems to be unravelling around us".

"We could easily let that weight sink into our hearts, fill our minds and totally alter our perspective about how we look at our life and the lives of others. It's not hard to see how any of us can reach some point of despair."

Reading Scripture, by contrast, was "a very productive

Continued on page 3

Opening door to God's house key to mission

THOMAS KEN WAS THE Bishop of Bath and Wells in England in the 17th century. Previously acquitted in a political trial in the reign of James II, he was deposed from his diocese in 1691 for refusing to transfer his allegiance to William and Mary when they seized the English throne in 1689. The last 20 years of his life were spent in relative obscurity but were memorable for his continued spiritual writing and hymn composition. He is the author of some words of prayer that I think are worthy of our reflection, words that sometimes are inscribed on Church doors:

O God, make the door of this house wide enough to receive all who need human love and fellowship; narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and strife. Make its threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling-block to children, nor to straying feet, but rugged enough and



strong enough to turn back the tempter's power: make it a gateway to thine eternal kingdom.

Thomas Ken captures here the paradox of what the Church needs to be within its local community. He holds together an openness to the seeker and the rigour of discipleship. Most importantly, by starting with "the door of this house", he opens up the relationship between God's incarnational presence through the Church and the divine, transcendent promise

"We have our own 'Reimagining the Future' resources and I hope that they are stimulating your thinking about the shape of your congregation and its mission ..."

of eternal life. Sam Wells, the Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields in London, has collaborated with colleagues across different parts of the Anglican Communion to develop a movement called "HeartEdge". Bishop Kate Prowd has been the primary contact person in these discussions from Melbourne. HeartEdge talks about four "Cs": commerce, culture, compassion and congregational life, as a conceptualisation of how mission can operate in a modern and secularised world.

Some churches have chosen two, three or all of these "Cs"

as a means of reimagining themselves and the society in which they exist. We have our own "Reimagining the Future" resources and I hope that they are stimulating your thinking about the shape of your congregation and its mission as we traverse our current circumstances and the many changes that have been accelerated by the COVID pandemic.

Thomas Ken prayed his words in a very different context and society to ours, but I find they contain a valuable truth about the Church's vocation in

any place and at any time. He was a man who knew the cost of discipleship and the cost of holding to his principles. Despite his deprivation from office, he had an open heart to see the Church's mission prosper in every parish and congregation. He emphasises ministry to children and those who are searching for meaning as pressing priorities in any culture and context. He knows that the discipleship and the coherence of Church discipline are fundamentals in the successful flourishing of the Church's vocation. He emphasises that bringing people to share in life in eternity is the overarching parameter of anything that the Church does.

Whether on our door or not, it is these aspirations that I hope animate our life throughout the Diocese of Melbourne.

Philip Melbourne

Clergy Moves

Vacant Appointments as of 25 August 2021:

Bellarine Anglican Parish; St Edward, Blackburn South; St Martin Belgrave Heights (from February); St Peter, Bundoora; St Faith, Burwood; St Catharine, South Caulfield; St Alban, Coburg West; Darebin South; Christ Church Dingley; St Peter (Eastern Hill), Melbourne (from 2022); Christ Church, Essendon; St Matthew, Glenroy with St Linus' Merlynston; St Cuthbert, Grovedale with St Wilfrid, Mount Duneed; St Columba, Hawthorn; St David, Moorabbin; Pascoe Vale-Oak Park; St Aidan, Strathmore; St Thomas, Upper Ferntree Gully; St James Wandin with St Paul Seville (from October).

Appointments:

COX, The Revd Jonathan James, appointed Incumbent from Priest-in-Charge, St Luke, South Melbourne, effective 5 August 2021
BROWNE, The Revd Matthew, Assistant Priest from Assistant Curate, St Mary, Sunbury and Parish of Christ Church, Lancefield with St Paul, Romsey, effective 20 August 2021
GARCIA, The Revd Christopher Mark, appointed Priest-in-Charge, Parish of St Luke, Cockatoo, effective 19 October 2021
HOPKINS, The Revd Michael Charles, appointed Incumbent, Parish of Jika Jika, Preston, effective 31 August 2021
JONES, The Revd Keiron, appointed Priest-in-Charge, Parish of St John's, Flinders with St Mark, Balnarring, effective 6 January 2022
LOUGHREY, The Revd Glenn William, appointed Canon of St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne 20 August 2021
O'GORMAN, The Revd Janice Maree, appointed Renewal of Priest-in-Charge, St James and St Peter, Kilsyth/Montrose, effective 20 August 2021
PEDERSEN, The Revd Kevin John, appointed Area Dean, Deanery of Glen Eira, effective 5 August 2021
RAIKE, The Revd John Alan, appointed Chaplain to Victoria Police in the Deanery of The Yarra, effective 20 August 2021
TAYLOR, The Revd Neil William, appointed Chaplain, Metropolitan Remand Centre, effective 29 July 2021
WINDOW, The Revd Jane Elizabeth, appointed Canon of St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne 20 August 2021
WILLIAMS, The Revd Peter Victor, appointed Spiritual Care Coordinator, Peninsula Health Network, effective 30 July 2021
WONG, The Revd Gregory Xiong Wei, appointed Priest-in-Charge, All Saints, Mitcham, effective 10 March 2022

Ordained to the Diaconate 6 August 2021:

LINDSAY, The Revd Jack Neil Thomas, Assistant Curate, Christ Church Brunswick

Permission to Officiate:

CAMPBELL, The Revd Matthew Robert Jack, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 29 July 2021
WALZ, The Revd Hans Michael Franz, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 20 August 2021

Resignations:

WALZ, The Revd Hans Michael Franz, Assistant Priest, All Saints, Newtown and Geelong West, effective 7 July 2021

Retirements:

PETERSON, The Revd Ronald James, Priest-In-Charge, Wandin, Seville and Mt Evelyn, effective 24 October 2021
WILLIAMS, The Revd Peter Victor, Chaplain, Eastern Health Hospital, effective 29 July 2021

Obituaries:

BOUMA AM, The Reverend Dr Gary Donald, 19 August 2021

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

Submissions call for Professional Standards Act

A REVIEW into the *Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016* is seeking submissions about the legislation, which has operated in the dioceses of Melbourne and Bendigo for almost five years.

The Act is intended

- (a) to facilitate the just, quick and inexpensive resolution of the real issues in the complaint or matter; and
- (b) to regulate fitness for ministry or service to uphold standards in the Church and for the protection of the community.

The Archbishop-in-Council has established a Professional Standards Review Panel to canvass

comments, concerns, recommendations and suggestions for improvement of the processes, systems and operations of the Act in accordance with the overriding purposes stated above.

People who have engaged with the legislation, its operations and processes as they relate to clearances, complaints or any other element of the Act are encouraged to make a submission. All submissions will be strictly in-confidence.

How to make a submission

Submissions may be lodged by email, post and online through the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne website.

Please share the call for submissions with your network and refer to the Anglican Diocese website for further information.

For enquiries contact PSUA.Enquiries@melbourneanglican.org.au

Submissions must be received by 5pm on 24 September 2021.

Please Note: The Panel has no mandate to review individual complaints.

Information provided to the Review Panel is subject to the Privacy Policies of Anglican Diocese of Melbourne and the Anglican Diocese of Bendigo.

See advertisement on page 15.



St Paul's Cathedral
Together transforming our City and Diocese

REGULAR SERVICES

Available online during lockdown

Sundays	8am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10am	Choral Eucharist
	1pm	Mandarin Service 華語崇拜
Weekdays		
Monday	2.30pm	Choral Evensong (on Channel 31)
Tuesday	5.10pm	Choral Evensong (online only)
Wednesday	12.15pm	Holy Eucharist

Services broadcast via our website & social media

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Dean commits Cathedral to 2050 climate action target

THE DEAN OF MELBOURNE, the Very Revd Dr Andreas Loewe, has written to Prime Minister Scott Morrison urging the Government to act more urgently to respond to climate change and committing St Paul's Cathedral to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

In a letter dated 10 August, Dr Loewe, writing on behalf of the Cathedral congregation and staff, said it was a matter of "gospel justice" to act decisively now in order to save the planet.

"I am writing to you on behalf of the members and my colleagues at St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne, to express our concern at the lack of government action to address the current climate emergency," the Dean wrote. "During the past years, the physical effects of climate change – floods, droughts, bushfires – have increased. Not only here in Australia but also overseas. We believe that it is a matter of gospel justice to act decisively now in order to save our planet."

"At St Paul's we have set ourselves a target to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We already have a good track-record in reducing our carbon footprint. Our investment in sustainable technologies to light and heat our building has reduced our carbon footprint by 14 metric tons a year. We aim to reduce our own footprint further year on year,



The Very Revd Dr Andreas Loewe.

and are encouraging our members to do the same. While we each can choose to reduce our individual carbon footprints, we can't put a halt to the government's investment in energy generation from fossil fuels, nor can we set Australia's emission targets. But you can."

Dr Loewe cited biblical references in which God places responsibility on His people to be good stewards of the planet – Jeremiah, chapter two, verse seven; Matthew 6:7 and Luke 16:19-21. He strongly encouraged Mr Morrison, who worships in a Pentecostal church in Sydney, to adopt the COP26 goals set by the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow later this year.

"These are ambitious but realistic and necessary targets. From these targets flow direct, positive outcomes. I would urge you to work with your fellow global leaders, and your cabinet, to put in place strategic and measurable goals to transition swiftly from power generation by burning fossil fuels to creating power from renewable sources."

"We not only have a duty to care for our planet but also for our fellows. Any climate policy therefore needs to take into account the most vulnerable global communities to make sure that no one gets left behind. Some of the most endangered communities, such as the Pacific Islands, are our immediate neighbours. And some of the most priceless habitats threatened by the effects of climate change, such as the Great Barrier Reef, are on our own shores."

Dr Loewe concluded with an appeal that in order "for the last window we have to prevent irreversible damage not to close on us, we need to see wise and decisive leadership that works across national and party lines."

"Together we can keep 1.5 degrees within reach. We are committed to working to be better stewards of God's good creation. With your leadership and action, Australia and its global partners can do the same."

New Editor for TMA

A JOURNALIST with the *Bendigo Advertiser* who is active in the Anglican Church is to be the new Editor of TMA.

Ms Elspeth Kernebone is to begin her new role on 13 September.

She succeeds Ms Emma Halgren, who left TMA last November to take on a communications role for Tearfund Australia. Mark Brolly has been interim Editor since then.

The Chief Communications Officer of the Melbourne diocese, Ms Michelle Harris, said Ms Kernebone had been chosen after an extensive search process with a strong field of applicants "and brings with her strong skills across traditional and digital mediums".

"Elspeth has extensive volunteer experience as a Director with the Balnarring Scripture Union Family Mission," Ms Harris said. "She is a Board member with Sparklit (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia) as well as being an active member of Holy Trinity Anglican Church in South East Bendigo."

Ms Kernebone began her career in journalism with the *Braidwood Times* in NSW, also working on publications in Canberra and Goulburn,



Ms Elspeth Kernebone.

before joining the *Advertiser* just over three years ago.

She graduated from Monash University with Honours in History, receiving a number of awards and spending a semester exchange at the University of Exeter, England, in 2013.

Brianna Bambery

Ms Harris also announced the appointment of Brianna Bambery as Communications Administration Assistant, succeeding Jessica Meegama, who has stepped up her university studies. Ms Bambery has been an Administration Assistant, Concierge and Verger at St Paul's Cathedral and will be working with Anglican Media two days a week.

Stay positive despite tough lockdown, Archbishop urges – Continued from page 1

counter-measure to that natural human tendency".

It was important for Christians "to enter into that reflective and meditative space with the Christian Scripture". "Some things will really speak to us."

"God is wanting to be present with us, irrespective of our circumstances."

"Use these opportunities of the great gift that we have in scripture to fill your heart."

Archbishop Freier said he had been focusing on passages from

the book of Isaiah, particularly Isaiah chapter 26 verse four: "Trust in the Lord for the Lord God is an everlasting rock."

"I think it's good for us to find that rock at the heart of our existence, that firm truth that doesn't change with the things of the world."

Bishop Paul Barker told TMA that churches were labouring under "the toughest restrictions that we've had".

Five people were able to livestream or video a church service,

according to Government restrictions – but it has to be the same five people every time, Bishop Barker said.

"The hardest change for us is the bubbles of five for recording or broadcasting a service. It has to remain the same group of five people, each time – day-to-day, week-to-week," he said.

Bishop Barker said it was possible for a church to have multiple bubbles – one for Wednesday and one for Sunday, for example – but each bubble would have to have

separate personnel.

"There can't be any overlap in those bubbles. And some churches would have only one camera person or they might have, of course, one vicar."

It also meant it was hard for bishops to visit churches.

"Last year in lockdown, I would be in two or three places every week. Now it's much harder because we can't just lob into some church on our schedule, because we can't do it with their bubble of five."

Bishop Barker said he was now recording sermons for ministers to use if necessary.

While the lockdown was difficult, "we recognise that the lockdown is the right thing," he said.

"I've not heard anyone from my churches think that the protesters were right the other day, for example."

"I think we are very compliant and careful and I think on the whole everybody is keen to be vaccinated."

Fighting Crime's Vicious Circle



Amanda George
Flat Out Chairwoman



Paul McDonald
Anglicare Victoria CEO

The Victorian Government is spending \$200 million to expand a women's prison, but to end the cycle of despair and failure for many former prisoners, we need more houses, not prisons. **Amanda George**, chairwoman of Flat Out, says women on release may struggle to get a home, a job and their children back. Join Melbourne **Archbishop Philip Freier** and guests Amanda George and Anglicare Victoria CEO **Paul McDonald** in the Archbishop's Federation Square conversation as they discuss crime and disadvantage. LOCKDOWN PERMITTING.

Wednesday 15 Sept 2021 at 7.30am (morning please note)
Deakin Edge, Federation Square – ADMISSION FREE



Korus turns from Access Ministries to connect during COVID

by Stephen Cauchi

FROM 2011 TO 2014, ACCESS Ministries – the organisation which provided religious instruction in Victorian state schools – seemed to be all over the news, and for the wrong reasons. That's not the case now, in part because it is no longer called Access Ministries.

In 2016, the organisation was rebranded as Korus Connect. Korus, says chief executive Dawn Penney, is a union of the Greek word *khora*, meaning space, and the English word chorus, which refers to the "harmony and wholeness that comes from connection".

"For us, Korus speaks of a space for people to unite, join together, and be supported and inspired," Ms Penney told TMA.

The name change was designed to reflect a "conscious widening of our focus and expansion of our services beyond the school gate into the broader community".

Marketing commentators might also say the change was an attempt for Korus to rid itself of the damage done to the Access Ministries brand in the 2010s.

It was a long list of bad publicity – accusations of proselytising, bias, preaching creationism and presenting Christian beliefs as fact; resistance from parents, principals, teachers and students; complaints of inadequate training for volunteers; material that claimed that girls who wore revealing clothing invited sexual assault; opposition to homosexuality, masturbation and sex before marriage; a comic book that implied teachers were too lazy or callous to help children unless God intervened.

Perhaps still sensitive to the effect such publicity can have, Ms Penney declined a formal interview with TMA, instead supplying a list of responses to written questions.

Ms Penney declined to answer a question about how Korus had changed in response to the criticism.

However, the National School Chaplaincy Program – for which Korus is one of about 20 providers throughout Australia – was overwhelmingly popular, she said.

Independent research from the Federal Government found that "85 per cent of principals were extremely satisfied; 86 per cent of students were extremely satisfied; 81 per cent of teachers were extremely satisfied" with the NSCP, she said.

Furthermore, "88 per cent of all principals surveyed considered the NSCP to be important to their school".

Ms Penney also asserted that "all Korus Connect chaplains, Special Religious Instruction volunteers and community connectors are highly trained and accredited" and abided by the NSCP Code of Conduct, which specifies "respect, impartiality, sensitive and non-judgmental conduct and the avoidance of evangelising or advocating



for a particular religious view or belief".

"We are grateful for the continued, and indeed escalating, support and demand for our chaplains in schools across Victoria, captured in the ongoing research we conduct with school principals and school communities," she said.

Ms Penney said the pandemic had resulted in an upswing in demand for the pastoral support provided by chaplains.

"For many, there has been a renewed interest in pursuing God as a means of finding meaning,

"More than ever, people need another trusted person to talk to ..."

purpose and hope," she said. "It is indeed a privilege to help children gain some insight into such things."

Ms Penney said "the Christian

faith has been a source of hope for millions of children and adults since its earliest days, including in times of pandemics and disasters".

"Its ability to offer hope remains undiminished."

Korus Connect research involving almost 200 chaplains indicated that they had provided "stability and ongoing support" for their school communities, she said.

"The demand for psychosocial support has increased because of COVID and its negative knock-on effects, particularly fear, loneliness and grief and loss.

"More than ever, people need another trusted person to talk to, to express themselves, to be heard and to be referred to psychosocial support structures and services as required."

Korus Connect, "in partnership with other organisations and services", would be there to help, she said.

While most chaplaincy work (60 per cent) in 2020 involved students, 19 per cent involved staff and 18 per cent parents, guardians and caregivers.

In addition, 61 per cent of students required ongoing chaplaincy support.

Chaplains have also been able to assist students returning to school after long periods of remote learning, she said.

"Students (have) struggled to re-engage with face-to-face teaching and socialising after having adjusted to the home learning environment and its smaller social context.

"(Chaplains) have been able to greet students at the gate and ease them into returning to their classes when they feel comfortable, first with the chaplain accompanying and staying with them, and then easing back into the classroom on their own."

Victorian schools currently receive funding of \$20,280 a year to engage a chaplain, which provides a minimum of 400 hours of chaplaincy services per year.

According to figures from Korus, 413 of Victoria's 1553 government schools have been granted funding for a chaplaincy position – a total cost of about \$13 million.

Of the 27 per cent of government schools that receive chaplaincy funding, 60 per cent had chosen to use Korus Connect as their chaplaincy provider.

This funding is provided via the National School Chaplaincy Program to the Victorian Government. No additional funding is provided by the State Government.

Korus – which is based in Surrey Hills – has 196 chaplains employed in Victorian schools. It also has seven community connectors who support individuals and groups through local hubs such as shopping centres. In addition, 57 volunteers are accredited to provide Special Religious Instruction, when schools are able to offer it in person. This is also offered online.

Ms Penney said COVID had reinforced the need for the sort of pastoral care offered by Korus.

"Our current experiences as a state and as a nation have reminded us of what is important, what is ephemeral and what is critical to human flourishing. Most of what we regarded as certain has been challenged and found wanting; what we took for granted is no longer and things we had forgotten have been re-discovered," she said.

"One of the re-discoveries is the importance of connection, including with that which is beyond us, which is transcendent. That which is eternal and unaffected by COVID."

Females, VCE students suffer most COVID pain

by Stephen Cauchi

VICTORIAN, FEMALE and VCE students: these have been the categories of teenagers who have suffered the most throughout COVID, according to a new report from national Christian charity Mission Australia.

The 28 July report, which sampled nearly 18,500 Australians aged between 15 and 19, said that education, experience of isolation and mental health were the biggest concerns that COVID had inflicted on the nation's youth.

The Young Voices of the Pandemic: Youth Survey COVID Report 2020 was carried out between April and August 2020. The report found that:

- Nationally, 68 per cent of those reporting mental health concerns due to COVID were young females. Only 23 per cent of males felt similarly affected;
- Young Victorians were more likely to report COVID was the biggest issue they had been facing than their peers in other States and Territories;
- Young people in Victoria were more likely to be concerned about COVID-19 affecting their education,

isolation and mental health than their peers in other States and Territories;

- Nationally, 41 per cent of respondents who said COVID affected their education were 17 years old, indicating those in their senior years of school were severely affected;
- 34 per cent of respondents who reported that COVID-19 and education was their top personal concern were living in Victoria; and
- 43 per cent of the young people who felt isolated as a result of COVID were living in Victoria.

Young people quoted in the report said that COVID disruptions made them feel worried, stressed and unable to access their regular support.

"These findings make clear the breadth and depth of the toll that COVID-19 has had on young people living in Australia," said Mission Australia chief executive James Toomey.

"Major disruptions to education, increased isolation from peers, family and community, and mental health concerns understandably featured heavily within young people's responses. "The severe impact of the

pandemic on young Victorians in particular is not unexpected, given these young people endured Australia's longest lockdown in 2020 and extended school closures."

Mission Australia says there were a range of solutions put forward by young people, including:

- Support for young people feeling overwhelmed, stressed with study, isolated and experiencing poor mental wellbeing;
 - Extra support for young people in schools to support their wellbeing, especially for those completing their final years of school;
 - Flexible mental health early intervention support for isolation periods; and
 - More services and resources to support the mental wellbeing of young people, including through schools and outreach programs.
- "We're not out of the woods yet," said Mr Toomey, who described remote learning as an "uncertain world". "Young people in Australia completing their final years of school during COVID-19 restrictions may need extra support to achieve their goals."

See our Focus on Schools supplement, pages 11-14.

Providing space for women: academia, ministry

by Laura Cerbus

ACADEMIA IS AN INTIMIDATING space.

At least, that's how it feels to me, as someone without institutional affiliation, and as a woman in theology.

I know I'm not alone – even for those women who are aligned with an institution, the gender gap in academia, particularly in theological studies, means few role models or companions on the way.

That's why the Evangelical Women in Academia (EWA) conference, held annually in Melbourne, has been critical for me and many other women – to connect, to support and to encourage one another in our academic and ministry endeavours.

This year's conference at Ridley College from 6-7 August focused on the topic of "Persuasion", a topic that in many ways spoke into the increasingly fraught and polarised issues of the past year and a half. Considering God's persuasion of us, persuasive trends in our world and our persuasion of others, the speakers and the academic papers covered a broad range of subject areas. Several papers addressed issues particularly relevant to our cultural moment, such as persuading the vaccine-hesitant, persuading God through prayer, the means

for those who are powerless to persuade and the role of anger in persuasion.

The hoped-for hybrid format expanded the geographical scope of the conference as women from all over the world, including New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the UK, Canada and the US, were able to participate both as attendees and presenters. With 195 registrations, the conference attested to the significant number of women who value the kind of support and encouragement that EWA offers.

Despite the sudden lockdown in Melbourne announced only the afternoon before, the conference smoothly pivoted to a fully online format, offering a rich intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic feast for the participants. Several states hosted local hubs, where women gathered in person to participate in the conference together.

On Friday evening, the conference began informally with presentations from Miriam Dale, Anne Ellison and Melinda Cousins. The evening included poetry and visual art, together demonstrating the legitimate place and powerful role of art in persuasion. The three powerfully delivered presentations opened the conference space as one that would be both for women as well as committed to theological depth.



Ridley's Academic Counsellor, Felicity (Flyck) Clift, was MC for Saturday's session of the EWA conference last month.

Saturday's program offered a full slate of talks from three keynote speakers, interspersed with a few opportunities for informal conversation through Zoom breakout rooms, and two panel discussions. Keynote speaker Lucy Peppiatt, a British theologian, writer, and the principal of Westminster Theological Centre, opened the day. She spoke about persuasion as the work of God, the character of which we imitate in our own persuasive efforts. Peppiatt pressed the idea of the incarnation as simply a *kenosis*, or emptying, arguing that it was also

a *pleurosis*, a filling of the Son of God by the Spirit of God. She also concluded the conference, giving a more informal narrative of her own experience as a woman in academia. She specifically spoke of her work as lecturer, then Dean of Studies and now Principal of WTC.

Justine Toh, a senior research fellow at the Centre for Public Christianity, followed with the second keynote address. She considered our posture toward the world, suggesting that an open hand rather than a closed fist more readily persuades. Rather than bottling our anger, however, Toh pointed to the Psalms of lament, which give the example of bringing our anger, without reservation, to God.

The CEO of Common Grace, Brooke Prentis, gave the third keynote, offering the analogy of guest and host to frame the conversation about reconciliation between black and white Australia. She argued that taking the role of guests will enable the church in Australia to learn and build friendships with Aboriginal peoples. Her presentation included her own enacted invitation to join with Indigenous Australians at the table.

For me, participating from my home in Melbourne, the online format restricted the sense of

camaraderie that past conferences have created. In that way, it was consonant with my more general experience of academic work over the past year and a half: remote participation, done with the hum and demands of home and family in the background.

Even so, the weekend was refreshing and stimulating, and it was exciting to see such a high calibre of academic work done by women. As a woman and an academic, I am grateful for EWA for bringing together women in order to feature their scholarship, demonstrating the hope for a less isolating future. I'm grateful to Ridley College and the Australian College of Theology for their support and financial sponsorship. And I know that the wider academy as well as the church have much to be grateful for, and much to look forward to, from evangelical women across Australia.

Laura Cerbus lives in Melbourne.

She's a teacher at Melbourne Scholé Community, a homeschool co-operative which she co-founded. She serves on the editorial board of *Soul Tread* magazine, and she writes at lauracerbus.com

For more information about Evangelical Women in Academia initiatives, visit ewa.ridley.edu.au

Unity threat warning from Gafcon plan – from page 1

around a matter of disagreement seldom goes smoothly."

Dr Freier conceded that "earlier than later" some parishioners may leave Anglican churches within the Melbourne diocese to join the new entity.

"This will be difficult and likely a painful time, depending on the decision that people make.

"I don't want to get ahead of things in my comments to you – these kinds of announcements can run in many directions. The developments its proponents advocate

may change direction more than they or I can anticipate."

He urged clergy who joined Gafcon's diocese to "voluntarily relinquish their Anglican orders before accreditation or ordination in the new church".

Archbishop Freier said the new entity should pay its fair share of sexual abuse redress.

"... I want to express my concern that some, especially survivors of child sexual abuse, may see this initiative as an attempt to shed redress responsibilities or to

leave them entirely in the Anglican Church of Australia without carrying any of that liability and responsibility to the new entity. It would be valuable if the new entity resolved, early on, to fund redress in the diocese where any (of its churches) previously operated or where former Anglican Church of Australia clergy have served.

"Be assured that I am resolved to continue the missional leadership of the Diocese of Melbourne and will ensure that my efforts and the efforts of the Diocese do not

get diverted from our main task."

Dr Freier said the diocese had dealt with church division before, most recently in 2012 when the Roman Catholic Church formed the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross for former Anglicans to be in communion with the Pope while retaining aspects of their Anglican worship, governance and identity.

Five clergy, including two vicars, and a number of lay people from the diocese had left to join the Ordinariate.

"So we have some experience at rebuilding parish ministries

after the loss of leadership and, in Kooyong parish, the vast majority of membership," Archbishop Freier wrote.

In a letter to Australia's bishops in late July, Archbishop Smith said that Gafcon's actions were contrary to the Bible's instructions to make "every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit".

He stressed that the opinion of the Appellate Tribunal, the highest court of the Church, "has not changed the doctrine of the Anglican Church of Australia". "The Appellate Tribunal can't change the doctrine of anything."

As the nation continues to deal with ongoing lockdowns and an unemployment rate that is still too high, it is those people facing disadvantage and looking for work who continue to be most impacted.

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Finding grace in self-isolation: Julian of Norwich

Julian of Norwich's *The Revelations of Divine Love* is a classic of the spiritual life. Felicity Costigan explores what lessons this contemplative may have for us in a time of pandemic more than 600 years after her death.

LOCKDOWNS AND LONELINESS have made for an avalanche of serious mental health concerns, particularly for those living alone through enforced isolation. Yet, in a world where we rail against the severity of lockdowns and guard with a jealous zeal any attempt at curbing our claim on a monumental list of personal freedoms, we can forget that this is not a novel idea dreamt up by those in Government, but a tried and tested method for survival.

Anyone interested in the etymology of the word *quarantine* will discover the word has its roots in the Latin, *quadraginta* – meaning 40, and then the Italian *quaranta giorni* meaning 40 days which comes in to use as a verb in the Venetian policy of 1377 whereby any ships from Plague-infested countries attempting to enter their ports were forced to wait off-port for a period of 40 days to make sure they were disease-free. So, the understanding that social distance and isolation could be effective

against disease and pandemics has well been established.

But what of those religious hermits who throughout history have willingly gone into self-isolation, either through vocation or to express their faith at the highest level as a lay person. How did they cope?

When we think of those who did manage to tough it out in isolation, my thoughts go to the much celebrated anchoress, Julian of Norwich (1342-1416). The fact that she didn't descend into a crumpled holy heap of despair is, to me, one of the most confounding mysteries of all.

Julian could well have been forgiven for thinking that *All will in fact not be well*, as she lived at a time in history where the Black Death had decimated Europe and killed nearly half of her City of Norwich in three years. There is some speculation that Julian lost a child and a husband to the plague as well as nearly losing her own life. So, it would almost seem the only course of action to retreat to your



Julian of Norwich, artist's impression.

own four walls and never come out. That way, at least, your fate would be more predictable.

But if Julian was hoping for a hastened exit to the afterlife she was to be disappointed as being in isolation successfully preserved her life and she lived to the respectable age of 74. Extremely unusual for the time and particularly unheard of for a woman.

With Church maids to bring her food, she had the perfect opportunity to meditate, reflect and finally to compose her book, *The Revelations of Divine Love*, the first surviving book written by a woman in English.

In a recent article published on the BBC site, historian Dr Janina Ramirez makes the point that this was a desperate but logical choice for many anchorites of this time.

"I think she was self-isolating.

The other anchorites would have understood that by removing themselves from life this would not only give them a chance of preserving their own life but also of finding calm and a quiet focus in a chaotic and frightening world," Dr Ramirez says.

It raises the question, how much of her decision was voluntary and how much was her only option to survive?

The *Ancrene Wisse* or the *Anchoresses Guide*, published sometime between 1225 and 1240, gives us the best indication of what life was like for Julian and those like her. It also gives tips for staying sane, which echo the ideas used in survival psychology today.

Surprisingly, it's not necessarily about the *will to live* nor is it about a survivor personality type. The key to surviving isolation is more focused around the idea of an *extrinsic* motivation for survival, a mentality that requires goal-directed behaviour to focus the mind. Ritual and repetition are a big part of this and it is also where the importance of prayer comes in. To this end, the acknowledgment of vulnerability is crucial.

Julian of Norwich encouraged her readers to interpret vulnerability as strength. She writes: "Christ did not say, 'You shall not be perturbed,

you shall not be troubled, you shall not be distressed,' but He said, 'You shall not be overcome.'"

Similarly, we in Victoria and particularly Melbourne know that lockdowns are tough, no one likes them, but we do them for the good of the community.

Dr Ramirez writes: "The job of the anchorite was to gather into your heart all those who are ill or wretched." Now, nurses and doctors are urgently calling for a similar commitment from the public when begging "Stay home for us", Dr Ramirez writes.

According to American writer and academic Kaya Oakes, "self-isolation may be easier to bear if instead of seeing it as a stretch of boring but comfy nights in, you recognise it as an unpleasant, stressful experience – but also visualise all the people whose health you are protecting by staying home".

Our snap COVID lockdowns pale in comparison, and we would do well to remember Julian of Norwich, St Ignatius and the devotion and bravery of all those who mastered self-isolation and who overcame what was before them with the grace of God.

Felicity Costigan is CEO of the Melbourne Anglican Foundation.

Staring down the pandemic: Daring to plan

by Ken Morgan

"WE'LL PROBABLY have another couple of lockdowns before Christmas." I've heard the same statement in different words from most of the people I've coached over the past couple of months. It's usually accompanied by the rhetorical: "What's the point of planning when everything can be thrown into disarray by another lockdown?"

Faced with such unpredictability, it makes sense to maintain a fairly short planning horizon and prioritise stability over progress. Just how many cancelled events can one endure before hope evaporates and resignation sets in?

Every month or two, lockdowns are called then gradually relaxed, creating an on-again-off-again kind of ministry environment. The need for constant adaptation as the rules and requirements change has



left ministers tired and congregations disengaged. Surely the way to survive this era with one's sanity intact is to maintain basic services and just wait it out.

Although there's a certain logic to this thinking, the projected date to achieve the 80 per cent vaccination rate necessary to avoid lockdowns is some time mid-March 2022. That's six months away.

In his classic book *The Fifth Discipline*, systems scientist Peter Senge observes: "In the absence of a great dream, pettiness prevails." Simply waiting out the pandemic is not a great dream, and over the past few months I've observed small but persistent conflicts, com-

"The leadership challenge of the hour is daring to plan and lead with a future-oriented direction despite the vulnerability of our plans to disruption."

plaints and distractions emerging in parishes as pettiness overtakes the purpose.

The leadership challenge of the hour is daring to plan and lead

with a future-oriented direction despite the vulnerability of our plans to disruption. This is a test of the leader's faith and resolve. The mission of the church is not in suspension pending better times. A refusal to merely hold the fort until the pandemic is over invites parishioners to hope, to enrol in something bigger than their own immediate difficulties and to exercise their faith in the face of uncertainty.

A well-developed and well-understood plan focuses the attention of the parish on the timeless purpose of church: a much more compelling *raison d'être* than simply avoiding closure. Looking forward and investing resourcing into a preferred future serves to engage people, inspiring them to look beyond the vicissitudes of the present.

At this stage of the pandemic, we're past the time for snappy

"pivots:" or radical, short-term, discontinuous adaptations. Now is the time to look one to three years ahead, despite the uncertainty. It's time to develop plans that embrace solid missiology with sufficient contingencies that they can survive the disruption of lockdowns and other restrictions. Going beyond nostalgia or aspiration, our plans must be sufficiently specific to shape capital expenditure, budgets, staffing and staff work plans.

It would be folly to pretend the pandemic does not exist, or to ignore the challenges it presents. But allowing the pandemic to rob us of our purpose and missional imperative dooms us to expending our resources on managing the immediate and the inconsequential.

Ken Morgan is Head of Parish Mission and Resourcing for the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.



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Prevention of violence against women: next steps

by Chris Shearer

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE Anglican Church of Australia have come together to begin to map out a national church approach to the prevention of violence against women, following the release of the first known national study into the prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) within a faith community.

Diocesan representatives met during the *Next Steps* National Anglican Family Violence Working Group Conference, held on 10-11 August, to learn from the research, share what is working on the ground and put in place concrete steps to address the scourge of IPV.

The virtual Conference follows the release of the study's results and the Church's 10 Commitments to prevent and respond to violence in June this year. The Church is now releasing the full research reports conducted by NCLS Research.

Bishop Genieve Blackwell and the Revd Scott Holmes helped

plan the *Next Steps* conference and develop the national research and 10 Commitments as part of the General Synod Family Violence working group. Bishop Genieve said the new national approach would help shape the future work already being carried out in Melbourne by the Prevention of Violence Against Women program.

"The 10 Commitments and the research gives us a framework and an impetus to continue the work that we are already doing. They underline how critical preventing, and being able to respond well, to violence against women is," she told TMA.

The Primate, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith of Adelaide, said the conference was crucial to developing practical strategies that will make a difference on the ground.

"This conference is important because we need to respond to the reality our research exposed with practical, locally based strategies," he said.

Convenor of the National



Anglican Family Violence Working Group and Melbourne Anglican the Revd Tracy Lauersen said the conference was a crucial next step in driving the necessary change right across the country.

"Church representatives from across the country have come together to deeply examine the research, share resources, consult with government agencies and start to develop a truly national approach

to their response to violence against women," Mrs Lauersen said.

"The research we commissioned showed us that violence against women affects women in both broader society, and also women in our churches as well.

"That's why we came together over Zoom, despite the lockdowns in place across the country, because this work is too important to delay.

"There is an urgent need to understand what is working and where the gaps are and to start to put in place the right supports across all Anglican Church communities in Australia.

"That's what we were able to further develop at this ... conference, which highlights the resolve of the Church to really take a leadership role on this issue and better support those in our faith communities."

The research, released earlier this year, produced 28 main findings, including that the prevalence of gendered IPV among Anglicans was the same or higher than in the wider Australian community.

Mrs Lauersen, formerly of Melbourne and now in Gippsland diocese, said the conference – which also heard from the Assistant Minister for Women, Senator Amanda Stoker, and CEO of Our Watch Patty Kinnersly – highlighted the need for the Federal Government to include faith-based communities in the National Women's Safety Summit.

"Churches are in significant positions of influence and need a seat at the table to help address family violence in all its forms," she said.

"We want to work with the Federal Government on the development of the next National Plan to reduce family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia, and on its implementation."

For more information, please visit: <https://anglican.org.au/our-work/family-violence/>

See also PVAW Program Manager bids Australia farewell, page 8.

Indigenous art from first Aboriginal Canon Glenn Loughrey to adorn St Paul's – from page 1

Canon Loughrey, who will continue to be a full-time priest at St Oswald's, said he was "gobsmacked" about being made a canon.

"It's also a great opportunity and a responsibility to be in the Cathedral and have the possibility of making more inroads into the process of reconciliation through that place.

"I'm chuffed but I'm also very humbled by it.

"When they asked me – and being the first Indigenous canon – I thought, 'Yes, this is a good thing to do.

"I didn't have anything to do with it at all. I'd done the design for the narthex screens and in the conversation a month or so back (Dr Loewe) said we ought to make you a canon at some point."

Canon Loughrey, a Wiradjuri

man, said he was asked to do the artwork specifically for the narthex. It took about six or eight months to complete.

Glass artisan Mark Edwards at Wathaurong Glass in Geelong will create the glass screens from Canon Loughrey's artwork.

Canon Loughrey said: "Creativity is central to both my traditions (Anglican and Wiradjuri) and I look forward to watching what comes into being within the Cathedral and the Diocese as a result of this appointment."

Mr O'Callaghan, the Cathedral's inaugural First Nations Artist-in-Residence, joined St Paul's during its 125th anniversary year in 2016 and continues to work with Chapter's Culture and Heritage Committee on the development of a new triptych for the Cathedral's

Chapel of Unity.

Dr Loewe said the Cathedral had been thinking since 2014 of a way of honouring Indigenous Australians.

"How can we put the fact that we worship on Aboriginal land – sovereign land that had not been ceded but was taken – front and centre at the Cathedral?" he asked.

Dr Loewe said the Cathedral had initially considered a plaque, but "we wanted to have something that was a much more transformative experience". Then the idea of the narthex screen came up.

"It is the entrance screen into the cathedral, and kind of creates a space between the outside world, the country in which we are, and the sanctuary space," he said.

"We thought if we can use this screen as a place where we can

acknowledge where we're coming from, and where we're standing on, then that could be a very powerful personal experience as you walk through the screen."

Transforming the screen in this way would mean "you're literally walking through the map of the country on which we minister, on which the Cathedral stands and on which the whole diocese ministers".

Canon Loughrey's artwork "gives you this rare birds-eye view of where we're at, what this country looked like before colonisation, and you walk through this and in walking through it you are entering the ceremonial space of the Cathedral".

Dr Loewe said the artwork would also be visible to those standing at the altar. "We will be reminded of the land in which we stand," he said.

"When I'm standing at the altar and celebrating the Eucharist, or giving the blessing at service, I could also have my own vision changed because I'll see what's out there – the open doors into the City of Melbourne through that map."

The project has yet to be approved by Heritage Victoria, which could delay the installation of the artwork to the end of 2022. At the earliest, the artwork would be installed by the end of this year.

The First Nations Arts Program with the Anglican Foundation will fund other artistic endeavours and will help contribute to a budget for Canon Loughrey's work. You can donate at: <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/melbourne-anglican-foundation/melbourne-anglican-cultural-organisation/>

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PVAW Program Manager bids Australia farewell

by Chris Shearer

AFTER THREE-AND-A-HALF years at the helm of the Prevention of Violence Against Women (PVAW) program, Robyn Andréo-Boosey has said goodbye to the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

She is returning to the UK two years after she was last able to see her family and friends there, and will be taking up the role of Advocacy Manager for the Mothers' Union.

Speaking with TMA shortly after her last official day, Robyn said she felt "grateful and blessed" for her time with the diocese and the program.

"I feel that I have grown so much professionally but also spiritually. I feel really encouraged by the progress we've seen in that short period of time," she said.

"And I feel really thankful for all the friendships and relationships I've made across the diocese. I really feel part of the Melbourne Anglican community, part of the family."

Robyn's time as PVAW Program Manager was one in which considerable steps were made to empower church leaders to understand, take action to prevent and respond to violence against women. Earlier this year, an evaluation report produced by the University of Melbourne found that the program had contributed to a shift in culture, attitudes and practices across the Church in Melbourne, and lessons from its work are being shared across Australia and internationally.

"I'm looking back quite amazed at all of the things that have happened in the last three-and-a-half years," Robyn said.

"A lot of that is thanks to parishes and church leaders deciding that they will prioritise this despite all the other



Robyn Andréo-Boosey.

competing demands. Without their engagement the program wouldn't have any impact at all.

"What I've found particularly encouraging is what the evaluation report has found: the fact that as a result of the program, churches have become safer and leaders have more confidence to respond, and that there's this culture developing where people feel they can talk about violence against women but that people are also starting to take action to challenge the culture, starting to do the prevention work that challenges the attitudes, beliefs and jokes that underpin and drive violence against women."

Robyn also highlighted the entire program's effort to secure funding for a five-church pilot program that ultimately led to the development a whole-of-church approach towards prevention as a stand-out of her time with the diocese.

The PVAW program will now begin the search for a new Program Manager.

"We're at the end of this chapter. A new chapter is opening. That chapter of the program will be re-strategising, taking stock of what the evaluation has told us, what are we hearing from the national studies and the 10 Commitments. There's

already a strategic plan for the next few years, but looking at all that for the next person to strategise and plan that next phase," Robyn said.

Chair of the Preventing Violence Against Women Committee of Management, Bishop Genieve Blackwell, said Robyn's efforts to connect and build relationships across the diocese and the wider family violence sector were crucial to what the program has already achieved.

"Her work has been invaluable in the way she has been such a great ambassador for the program and the Church," Bishop Genieve said.

"Robyn has worked so well with clergy, parishes and theological colleges across the Diocese. She's worked collaboratively all the way through and has taken people on the journey."

"She's really helped to get a strong sense of ownership in the Diocese, I think, and has played an invaluable role in making our Church a safer place."

"She's made it into a program we can be proud of, a program that it is critical we continue."

Robyn's final message echoed these thoughts.

"We've seen really significant change and progress and the work is starting to have positive impacts, but the change we're working towards is generational," she said.

"We've got these strong foundations, but we need ongoing investment to really embed what we've started so make sure it's not lost. I'd like to encourage the Church to keep going with this one step at a time and really engage with the work of my successor to continue to make the Church a place where everyone is safe and valued and respected."

Tribute – Professor the Revd Gary Bouma

MELBOURNE ANGLICAN priest and leading international sociologist of religion Emeritus Professor the Revd Gary Bouma died on 19 August, aged 79.

In a message read out at Professor Bouma's COVID-restricted funeral at St John's East Malvern on 26 August, Archbishop Philip Freier offered deep thanks to God for his life and ministry, both as a priest and an academic.

"His generous sharing of his ongoing research greatly challenged us all, yet more importantly gave much hope for the future," Dr Freier's message said.

Prominent academic and commentator on international affairs Greg Barton delivered the eulogy, describing Professor Bouma as "much, much more than a scholar".

"He loved humanity and he showed us what it meant to be fully human," Professor Barton, Research Professor and Chair of Global Islamic Politics at the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation at Monash University, said. "He was a humanist in the best sense of the word."

"Gary's religious faith and his interest in the lives and beliefs of others were bound up in a love of all creation and especially human beings in all their rich diversity."

The Revd John Baldock, former Vicar of East Malvern, knew Professor Bouma for 40 years, when both men were preparing for ordination in the Anglican Church.

"I can hardly think of another Anglican in this country who has been such a consistent, well-informed, passionate voice calling the Church to be engaged in the complex issues and debates of the day," he said.

Professor Bouma was born into a Dutch Reformed family whose involvement in the civil rights movement led to the Ku Klux Klan setting a flaming cross in their yard.

Ordained a Presbyterian minister in the US in 1970, Gary Bouma came to Melbourne in 19 and was ordained in the Anglican Church in the early 1980s.

He served as Assistant Curate at St John's Toorak and as Assistant Priest at St Andrew's Brighton, St Faith's Burwood, St Martin's Hawksburn and St Dunstan's Camberwell, as well as Associate Priest at St George's Flemington and at St John's East Malvern and St Agnes Glen Huntly.

Archbishop Freier wrote in a Clergy News bulletin announcing Professor Bouma's death that "Gary was called to a 'Pauline tent-making ministry', like St Paul, his service being of no financial

burden to the Church".

Among many accomplishments, Professor Bouma chaired the Board of the Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne in 2009 and four years later was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for services to the Academy, to Interreligious Relations and to the Anglican Church of Australia.

In a tribute published in *The Age*, Monash University honoured him for his 42 years' service there.

"Professor Bouma was an eminent sociologist, a lifelong and tireless worker for promoting tolerance of difference, respectful inclusion of diverse races, religions, genders and sexualities, and a multicultural and interfaith approach to combating the challenges of social injustice and oppression," a notice placed by Monash said.



Professor Gary Bouma.

"He devoted much of his professional and non-academic life to showing that religion is a legitimate causal agent of social change, and he was a leader in developing a broad range of studies in religion and theology, and elaborating and strengthening the highest standards of research ethics.

"In all this and more he displayed boundless energy and an exceptional depth and diversity of competence considered rare in higher education.

"An ordained priest in the Anglican communion, Professor Bouma was active in parish ministry and in the wider work of the church to the end of his days."

A notice placed by his family said: "An Anglican Priest and Sociologist of Religion, Gary was admired, respected and honoured in Academic and Religious circles worldwide for his generosity, wisdom, intellect, scholarship, wit, humility, gentleness, kindness and passion for justice, encouraging people and making the world a better place."

Professor Bouma is survived by his wife, the Revd Patricia Bouma, and family.

Surfcoast Parish looks back, forward in celebration

by Norma Morrison and the Revd Sharon Valentino

SURFCAOST PARISH gathered on 15 August to launch *A History of the Surf Coast Anglican Churches*, to thank those who have gone before us and serving in these times, and to look toward St Luke's 75th Anniversary in August 2022.

Due to COVID restrictions, we were not all able to celebrate but 75 or so were present at each location in a parish that covers St Luke's in Torquay, Church of the Transfiguration in Anglesea and St Aidan's in Aireys Inlet.

The day began with a combined Thanksgiving Service at St Luke's led by Priest-in-Charge, the Revd Sharon Valentino.

After the service, morning tea was served in the hall, then followed lunch at Kithbrook Park, where a roast dinner was enjoyed by all. Between courses, Torquay Historical Society and Surfcoast Parish formally launched parish historian Norma Morrison's book



A History of Surf Coast Anglican Churches.

Norma's book covers the early days of the churches in Mt Duned, Torquay, Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Connemara, Lorne and Modewarre, which were covered within the Parish of the Surfcoast, various configurations have existed over the years and several churches have now

closed. Torquay is now the largest town in the parish, followed by Anglesea and Aireys Inlet.

The book includes stories of bushfires and celebrations as well as the regular worship and activities of the parish, accompanied by an abundance of photos.

Copies of the book can be ordered via the parish office, surfcoastanglican@icloud.com

Lord's Prayer retained in Victorian Parliament

THE LORD'S PRAYER WILL continue to be said in the Victorian Parliament, but the Labor Party has committed to putting forward a replacement if it is re-elected to a third term in government in November next year.

The Age reported on 4 August (in a story headlined "Lord's Prayer stays in State Parliament, but may not be there for ever and ever") that Labor had struck an 11th-hour deal with Reason Party leader Fiona Patten to put off a vote to remove the prayer from the Legislative Council, where it has been recited each sitting day since 1918.

Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes, the only Government MP to speak

on the motion, confirmed Labor would "commit to workshopping a replacement model that is purpose fit for Victoria" if returned to office.

The Age reported that several upper house sources who spoke on the condition of anonymity said Ms Patten struck a deal with the government hours before the debate, ensuring the motion was delayed, not defeated.

In exchange, Labor had given a commitment to axe the Lord's Prayer in both houses if re-elected in November 2022.

Premier Daniel Andrews said Victoria was stronger and better for being a multi-faith community and axing the Lord's Prayer wasn't a



priority in the pandemic.

"Far from being at the top of my list, this is not even on my list," Mr Andrews said, *The Age* reported.

Only the Australian Capital Territory among Australian jurisdictions has replaced the Lord's Prayer, in 1995, inviting members to pray or reflect.

Several Liberal and National MPs spoke against the Victorian motion.

In an editorial opinion published two days earlier, *The Age* said while Christianity was still the most common faith, it was evident that the religious and ethnic make-up of Victoria was far more diverse today than it was a century ago.

"*The Age* believes our Parliament should reflect these societal changes and we can see a future where there is an opening of Parliament that is more inclusive of all faiths than the current practice of reading the Lord's Prayer each day," the editorial said.

"The urgency of the pandemic makes it seem unlikely that our political leaders' attention will be fully focused on changing the parliamentary prayer. However, *The Age* believes a replacement model should be found. Victoria has changed for the better since 1918 and is a more welcoming and diverse community. It's important Parliament reflects and supports those changes."

Archbishop Raffel names his successor as Dean of Sydney

by Russell Powell

ARCHBISHOP KANISHKA Raffel has appointed Canon Sandy Grant, of St Michael's Cathedral Wollongong, to be his successor as Dean of Sydney.

Canon Grant will be the 13th Dean of Sydney since 1858.

A leader in the Church in combating domestic violence (he has chaired Sydney's Diocesan Task Force on Domestic and Family Violence for seven years

and led the diocese in addressing the issue, including through the adoption of wide-ranging policies and practices for responding to domestic violence in the Church), he has been the Senior Minister of St Michael's since 2004 and will take up his ministry at Sydney's St Andrew's Cathedral in December.

The post became vacant when Archbishop Raffel was elected Archbishop in May – the first Dean of Sydney to go on to serve

as its Archbishop – to succeed Dr Glenn Davies.

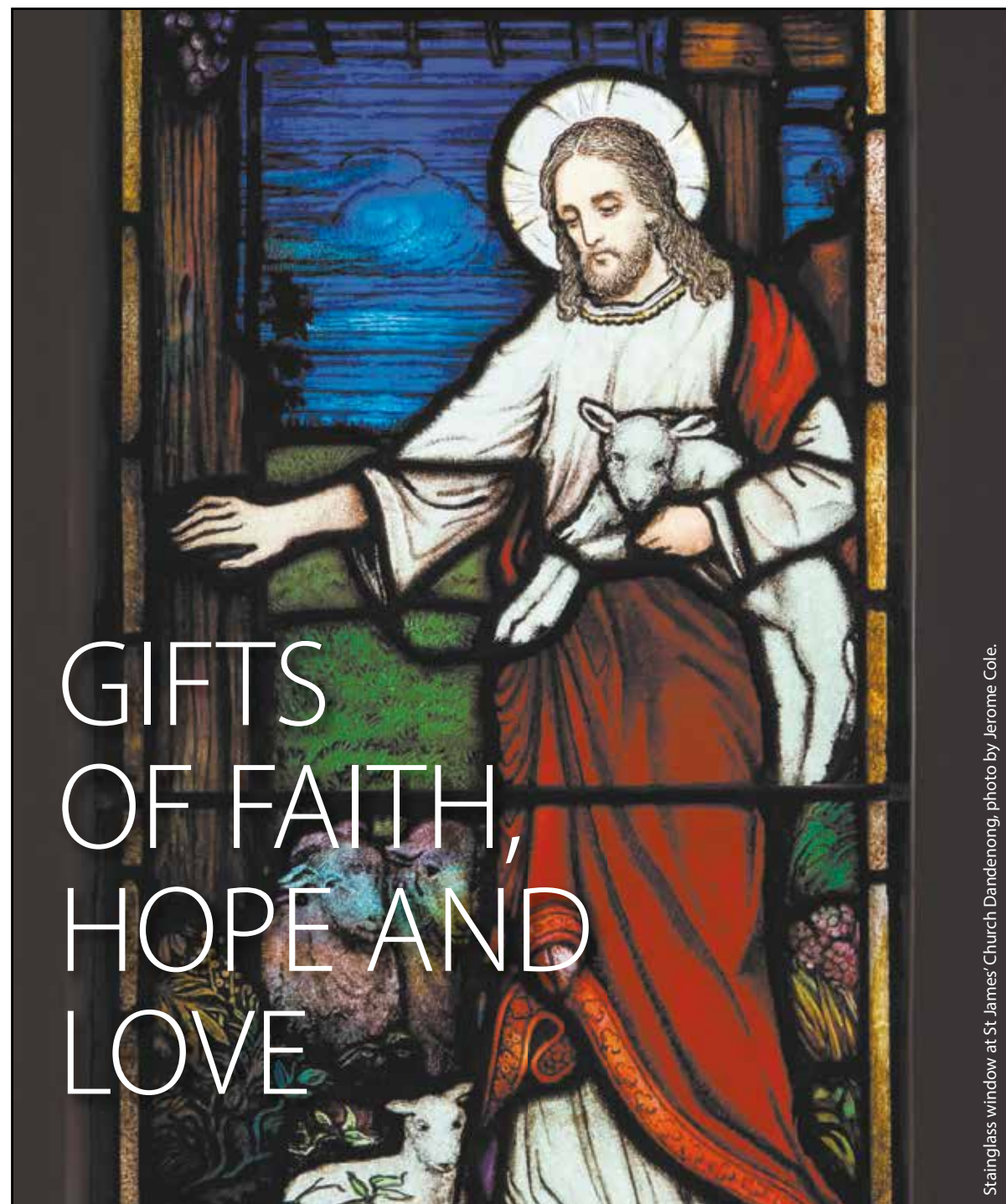
Canon Grant is a passionate anti-gambling advocate and has also promoted Indigenous reconciliation locally in Wollongong and through the Synod, including as a member of the Diocesan Social Issues Committee. He was also a central figure in the recent 'Jesus is...' mission in the Illawarra.

"Sandy understands and appreciates the role of St Andrew's

Cathedral as the central church of the diocese as well as having a sense of the community and civic role of a Cathedral in the life of the city," Archbishop Raffel said. "He has a personal appreciation for the music ministry of the Cathedral. Perhaps most importantly, he is an able, experienced, and prayerful pastor-teacher. He is well suited to minister to the Cathedral's ethnically and socially diverse congregation, while also engaging the unique evangelistic opportunity so

distinctive of Cathedral ministry."

Canon Grant said: "It is humbling to have the confidence of Archbishop Kanishka and the Cathedral Chapter to serve the people of St Andrew's in the heart of Sydney. It has been a privilege to provide a voice to the city of Wollongong in the name of Jesus and his followers, and I look forward to trying to offer the same perspective to the great city of Sydney, where I grew up." [Sydney Anglicans]



Stained glass window at St James' Church Dandenong, photo by Jerome Cole.

"The Anglican Church has been part of my life forever and my involvement with the **Melbourne Anglican Foundation** has confirmed to me there is plenty of interest in ensuring that the Christian legacy passed on to us, is passed on afresh to future generations."

Geoffrey Court

*Bequestor, Patron and Board Member of the **Melbourne Anglican Foundation***



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Christians urge Australia to accept 20,000 Afghan refugees

by Mark Brolly

THE ANGLICAN PRIMATE OF Australia has joined leaders of other churches in appealing for an urgent response by Australia to the rapid return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan, with Christian leaders urging the Federal Government to take in 20,000 Afghan refugees.

Archbishop Geoff Smith of Adelaide said on 20 January that the situation in Afghanistan required an urgent response. That response includes prayer, particularly for the most vulnerable such as women, those who have assisted Western Forces, minority tribes, and all people of Afghanistan whose human rights are threatened at this time.

"We must also pray for the safety of our ADF (Australian Defence Force) members currently deployed to evacuate Australians and Afghans. And we also pray for Afghanistan that it might know peace security and unity," he said. "We express our deepest sympathy with the families of Afghan background in Australia and embrace them with our solidarity."

"We also urge the Australian Government to do all it can to ensure safe passage for Afghan citizens, particularly those who assisted Australian troops in Afghanistan over the past 20 years."

Archbishop Smith said the Australian community should ready itself to welcome, receive and include refugees from Afghanistan.

He also urged Australians to pray for and support the 36,000 veterans who had been deployed to Afghanistan over the past 20 years, who would be deeply affected by recent events, and for those family members who had lost loved ones or who had loved ones wounded or emotionally affected in some way.

"Despite what occurs in Afghanistan now, we pray that they may know we are thankful for their service and sacrifice."

The Primate's appeal came as denominations and Christian organisations joined to support Afghan refugees, launching the *Christians United for Afghanistan* campaign. Former Melbourne assistant Bishop Philip Huggins, the President of the National Council of Churches in Australia, Archbishop Kanishka Raffel of Sydney and the Revd Tim Costello were among the leaders expressing support for the campaign.

"When Jesus saw the huge, harassed and helpless crowd, Jesus, then as now, was full of practical compassion and looked after them (Matthew 9:36)," Bishop Huggins said. "Thus, in Holy Spirit, we will look after vulnerable Afghan people, as best we can and in partnership with our Government. Jesus have mercy."

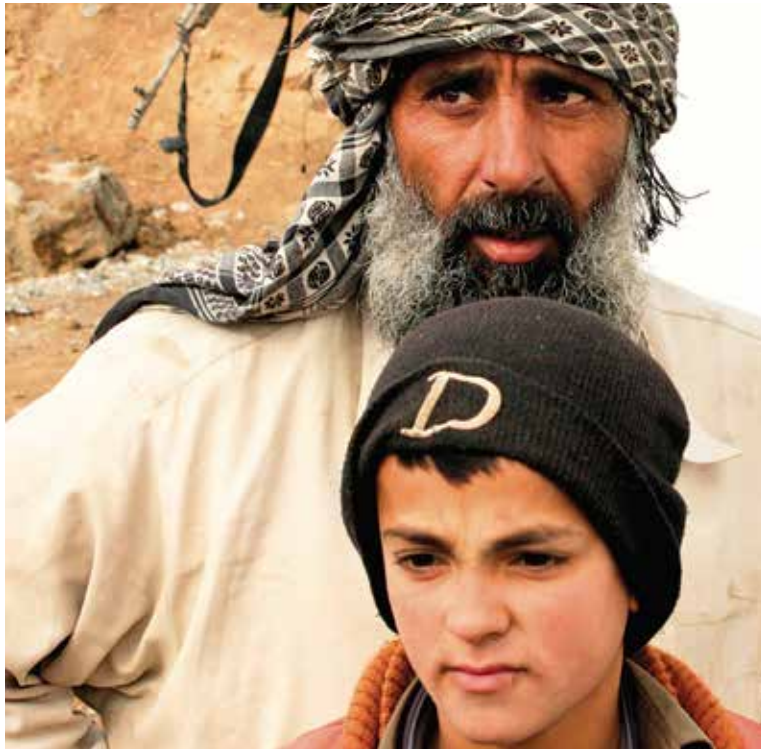
Archbishop Raffel said: "I'm calling on the Australian Government to be as compassionate as we can be in responding to the unfolding crisis in Afghanistan. Jesus said 'love your neighbour as yourself', and after 20 years in Afghanistan, we should have no hesitation saying they are our neighbours."

The Uniting Church in Australia, Baptists, Catholics, Pentecostals as well as the Australian Christian Lobby, Micah Australia and Common Grace also signed on to support the campaign.

Mr Costello, the Executive Director of Micah Australia, said: "This crisis has already shown its power to unite us across theological, political and denominational lines."

"Together, the Australian Church is calling on our government to make a just and compassionate commitment to help the most vulnerable Afghan people. We want to ensure our nation responds in a way that we can look back on proudly in generations to come."

The campaign aims to amplify the Christian voice with one main goal: to call on the Federal Government to provide a special



intake of an additional 20,000 Afghan refugees and support the ongoing well-being of all Afghan refugees and their families.

So far, the Government has announced an initial commitment of 3000 refugee spaces from within Australia's existing humanitarian program, well below what is needed to respond to this crisis.

The UNHCR estimates that more than 550,000 Afghans have already fled their homes since the start of the year – 80 per cent of them women and children.

Western powers, led by the US, evacuated their citizens and some Afghans in the last weeks of August after the Taliban captured Kabul and amid a terrorist attack by a rival group claimed the lives of refugees and military outside Kabul's main airport.

Coordinated by Micah Australia, the campaign is working closely alongside the refugee services sector including the Refugee Council of Australia. The campaign also acknowledges and supports the #ActionForAfghanistan petition

and open letter, coordinated by the Afghan Australian Advocacy Network, made up of people from diverse ethnic and religious groups in the Afghan Australian community.

UK response

The Archbishop of Canterbury said the failure of the West in Afghanistan was not a military or diplomatic one but political.

Speaking in a House of Lords debate on Afghanistan on 18 August, Archbishop Justin Welby said the courage, suffering and sacrifice over the past 20 years was rightly remembered, and he acknowledged the courage being shown by the UK ambassador and British service people in Afghanistan at the moment, together with their colleagues and reporters.

"The failure we face today is not military or diplomatic: they did all they could. It is political," he said. "Recovery and hope will come to Afghanistan with us supporting commitment to the neediest and

most desperate. We have proven capacities in soft as well as hard power.

"We owe an absolute, lavishly generous moral covenant to all those who are at risk because they served with us in Afghanistan or took seriously our frequently professed commitment to its future, women and girls included. An Afghan refugee, now a UK citizen said to me this week, 'Families in such times of trouble belong together'. His words are not politics but humanity. This is about morals not numbers. Will the Government confirm that their policy will reflect moral obligation and not be controlled by numbers?"

Archbishop Welby said the West must undertake dialogue and support Pakistan, which was struggling with refugees, "learning afresh the religious and cultural literacy which is essential to effective work".

"We must not put any groups there, or in Afghanistan, into a corner where they may be driven to greater extremes. The aid we offer must support dialogue, inspire hope and prepare reconciliation. And that aid must be genuinely additional, not a transfer from other places of need."

"We must renew commitment to freedom of religion and belief everywhere, a point not much mentioned so far. That will count in Pakistan and Afghanistan for Christians and religious communities such as Shia, Hindus, Jains, Ahmadis and Sikhs. A WhatsApp, from a Christian in Afghanistan yesterday, asked for support there and in Pakistan. Memorably, it said, 'I am willing to die for Jesus, but I do not want to die forgotten'."

"My Lords, this is a very bad time, especially for so many in Afghanistan, and for those who served there. It is a time for prayerful humility – and for us to display generosity, virtue and courage. Rebuilding our reputation in such ways will give many others hope as well."

Charities urge support for threatened Afghan Christians

FEARS FOR the small Christian population in Afghanistan have grown, as the airlift of vulnerable Afghans from Kabul airport ends.

The number of Christians is unknown, ranging from 10,000-12,000, a figure quoted by the US charity International Christian Concern (ICC), to a few hundred. Most non-Muslim activity in the country was clandestine, even under the previous regime.

The ICC last week quoted an unnamed Afghan Christian leader saying: "We are telling people to stay in their houses because going out now is too dangerous."

"Some known Christians are already receiving threatening phone calls. In these phone calls, unknown people say: 'We are coming for you.'"

There are reports that Christians have discarded their

phones to avoid recognition, even though this now makes them hard to contact from overseas.

The CEO of the UK-based charity Release International, Paul Robinson, described the news from Afghanistan as "mixed".

He said: "Many callers are talking about life going on almost as normal, while others are extremely troubled by the recent takeover and fearful for their lives as followers of Christ, wondering if someone will denounce them. They are looking for ways out of the country."

A Christian father called a Release International contact, saying: "I came to Christ a year ago. The Kabul situation is dreadful. The lives of my eight-year-old daughter and my own are in danger."

A 16-year-old girl reported: "People are terrified. Everyone is

afraid and scared of the Taliban. I'm crying out to God right now. Someone please help us."

Partners of the charity report that the Taliban have been conducting house searches for named individuals, and that some have escaped and are in hiding.

A US-based charity, Global Catalytic Ministries, has released an uncorroborated account by "Pastor X", who reported on 25 August: "Our people are on the move; running from house to house and city to city to avoid getting caught. Unfortunately, many Afghans are calling out the location of people in hiding to gain favour with the Taliban."

"The situation is dire for our people as they are witnessing women and girls being taken from their homes as prizes for the Taliban and being raped."

"The streets of Kabul are nearly empty. There are no women or girls walking around, Afghans are no longer wearing Western clothes, and leaders have been stopped at the borders by the Taliban. Even though our leaders have been threatened, not one has been hurt or killed."

Pastor X continues: "Isis killers are now joining the ranks of the Taliban, ignoring their differences until all infidels are caught, tortured, and killed. They have names of people who have converted to Christianity and are aggressively searching them out."

On Friday, four bishops urged the UK Government to "go further in helping at-risk Afghans". In a letter to *The Guardian*, the four – the lead bishop for migrants and refugees for the Catholic Bishops'

Conference of England & Wales, Bishop Paul McAleenan; Bishop John Perumbalath of Bradwell; Bishop Christopher Chessun of Southwark; and Bishop Paul Butler of Durham – argued for a more generous response to the Afghan crisis.

"We urge the British Government to go further in helping at-risk Afghans, human-rights defenders, and women activists, and create safe passages so that people can find sanctuary without resorting to dangerous journeys."

"We have seen in our parishes the warm response to refugees from Afghanistan and other parts of the world. As a nation, we should not be led by a quota, but by the need and pain before us."

[Church Times]

Nothing beats in-person learning: St Michael's

by Stephen Cauchi

WHILE REMOTE LEARNING has shown its usefulness during lockdown, it can't replace a fantastic experience in a real classroom, said Head of School at St Michael's Grammar School in St Kilda, Terrie Jones.

"What the pandemic has told us is there's no amount of mediated screen learning that can replace that social aspect of schooling," Mrs Jones said.

"Young people yearn for the connection that being at school, and a great sense of belonging, and a strong values set, and respectful relationships, create in a community.

"The great thing about Anglican schools, and I think the great thing about St Michael's, is that nothing replaces that."

St Michael's is a co-educational Anglican primary and secondary day school at 25 Chapel Street, St Kilda. From small beginnings, it now has more than 200 staff and about 1200 students.

It was founded in 1895 by the Community of the Sisters of the Church and remains in its original location on a single campus.

During the past 18 months, teachers at the school had tried to creatively "facilitate connection" and "recreate community", Mrs Jones said.



"The challenge has been the need to keep social connectedness vibrant and sustaining for staff and for students."

In 2020, St Michael's designed an online timetable to make time in the day for physical activity, wellbeing check-ins, community connections and online clubs and prayer services.

Aspects of this online delivery will continue even if the school returns to normal operation in 2022, she said. The extra emphasis on wellbeing and physical activity introduced during lockdown will also continue.

"The class pages and the learning blogs through our learning management system are available to everyone all of the time but we've maintained that. We didn't let that drop, so it's available to everyone all of the time.

"That means they can access their learning, revisit their learning and learn at their own pace a little bit more but it also facilitates more the students who for whatever reason can't be at school. They don't miss out."

Mrs Jones noted that students were away for school for lots of reasons, particularly illness and excursions, and online learning helped them to keep up.

"Our class pages, our learning blogs, the way which students can access their learning online if they are ill, or if they're away for a period for any reason, whether it be an excursion or something else – the blended approach we're taking enables them to keep their learning live in periods of absence."

The past 18 months, while difficult for students, had made them

more resilient learners, she said.

"The provision of support for students to learn at their own pace and develop their own approaches to their learning in a more independent way have certainly been a more telling legacy of 2020 that the kids have brought into 2021.

"I think they are more resilient as learners and with that comes a responsibility to take that capacity and allow them to direct their own learning more and we've been able to do that by providing time in the timetable for them to do that."

Online learning could have a wider impact on the education system generally, Mrs Jones said.

"Victoria's schools distance education facility is full, they're not taking any more students. And that's as a result of the increased demand of students. They've certainly seen an uptick in demand for their distance education courses.

"Perhaps there is a space for the development of more (online) courses ... that is something to watch in the whole of the schooling ecosystem."

However, Mrs Jones said that St Michael's would not be offering online courses as a way of sharing subjects or courses with other schools.

"In terms of other schools, I don't see that yet as something that we're exploring. I know that some

schools are offering open online courses and things like that but it's not something we're looking at," she said.

"These are courses that some organisations, and universities as well, develop and then they make available (online). Our teachers have long been aware of that and sometimes make use of some of the content in the delivery of learning but we aren't developing those ourselves."

St Michael's – originally called St Michael's Church of England Girls Grammar School – was originally a school for girls. In the early 1970s, the idea of making the school co-educational was first floated.

In 1974, a co-education sub-committee was established, and the school embarked on its co-educational journey. In 1980, with the appointment of Headmaster Anthony Hewison, the decision was taken to admit boys to all levels of the school, thus making it fully co-educational.

The values and traditions of the Community of the Sisters of the Church continue to guide the School and its approach to education. The Sisters have retained their interest in the school but no longer play a part in its governance. The school is managed by a Head who is appointed by a board of directors.

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eLearning part of the future for Korowa

by Stephen Cauchi

TECHNOLOGY IS A KEY theme at Korowa Anglican Girls' School – both in distance learning during lockdown but also in the school's plan for the future.

"It's shown us that we have an enormous capacity to adopt, adjust and modify our teaching to meet the current demands," Principal Helen Carmody told TMA.

"It's given us great confidence in terms of our ability to do that."

In her message on Korowa's website, Ms Carmody said that the school was taking "bold strides into the future" with a "responsive and dynamic curriculum and cutting edge eLearning technologies".

eLearning, she added, was "a professional interest of mine after completing my Masters in this field".

Korowa is an Anglican day school for girls in Glen Iris. A non-selective school, it caters for just under 700 students, ranging from the Early Learning Centre (three- and four-year-olds) to Year 12s completing the Victorian Certificate of Education.

The school consistently places in the top 10 academic performing schools in Melbourne and greater Victoria. In 2019, the school ranked sixth in Victoria based on the median VCE study score of 37.

Ms Carmody said that thanks to Korowa's skilful use of technology, the past 18 months had been "a lot more successful than what I would have anticipated".

"We've been in this constant adjustment – refining our first



approaches and then building on those and getting better as we go along," she said.

"We used the Microsoft Teams platform and that technology kept evolving through the course of the past 18 months. We kept up-

to-date with the improvements in the platform and ensured that we used those creatively."

Korowa had also ensured that all of the usual school activities – not just classes – had continued in an online environment.

The school's technology program includes:

One-To-One Laptop and iPad Program

Korowa students from Year 5 and teachers have their own laptop with up-to-date tools and creative software. Work from laptops can then be uploaded for further development in the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) Lab. There is a dedicated Media Studio for video and sound work.

Every student in Prep to Year 4 has access to an iPad for the year. Students develop an understanding through programs such as Hector's World and eSmart to develop how to use technology and be safe when online.

Konnect – Learning Management System

This platform supports every individual class with an online page to House resources, communications, online assessment and reporting.

Learning Online

A digital toolbox allows students to create, design, collaborate and problem solve. Tools include: Microsoft 365, OneNote, Stream, Adobe Creative Suite, Minecraft, CAD.

STEAM Lab

The STEAM Lab facilitates creative problem solving through robotics. The STEAM Lab has a

"We've been really creative about making sure that we kept up with all of the rituals of assemblies and meetings and gatherings and fun things – I think that's really helped us along in the distance environment as well."

But while online learning had benefits, there were also clear costs, she said.

"It's a particularly exhausting environment to work in for lengths of time. I think it's cognitively very taxing to work in that screen mode all of the time and it robs people of spontaneity in terms of conversation and opportunities to catch-up. So that's been very detrimental."

Nevertheless, the school had given "a great deal of thought" to

what aspects of online learning would be retained in a post-COVID environment.

"We know that our parents really appreciated the online parent-teacher interviews, so that's been an unintended positive. We might consider that, we'd have to think about that carefully," she said.

"I think the ability to reclaim resources and enable students to have an anytime access to sharing resources and lesson content – that's been a really positive one as well and we might continue some of those aspects."

"And we might actually look at hybrid models where perhaps we've got courses that are partially delivered in an online format and supplemented with a real time face-to-face contact."

A recent online parent seminar held by the school attracted over 700 people, she said.

"We wouldn't have been able to really do that onsite. So that's been fantastic to share that professional learning opportunity for parents and educators far beyond our own school gates."

Korowa's staff and students have access to Cloud-based programs such as Microsoft Mail, OneDrive, Microsoft Teams and professional tools such as the Adobe Creative Suite.

"The use of technology is balanced with the need to ensure students understand the importance of maintaining their personal safety online," said the school website. "We actively teach aspects of cyber safety at all levels of the school."

When students couldn't come here, school went to them

by Chris Shearer

IN THE chaos of 2020, many schools in Melbourne were forced to adapt to the circumstances of the pandemic. But perhaps no school was forced to make such a large change as the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School, which last year made the decision to temporarily move its students and staff to the other side of the country.

In what used to pass as normal times, MITS was based in Richmond, where it would receive about 22 Year 7 Aboriginal students from the Northern Territory and regional Victoria each year. There, they would study and board at MITS for a year in preparation for them to transition into one of the 12 partner schools from Year 8 onwards, with MITS maintaining support – and boarding – programs for their alumni. But last year was not normal, says MITS Executive Director Edward Tudor.

"If we rewind to March last year, we were very concerned to get our students home as quickly as possible. Firstly for their own safety and wellbeing, secondly because we could probably foresee travel interruptions that otherwise might get them home, and thirdly so they weren't acting as carriers

of COVID into their communities," Mr Tudor says.

"We were actually the first Victorian boarding school to get our students home. We then ran a term of remote learning in term two last year and that was pretty effective. We were really impressed by our students and their efforts to engage in remote learning."

But the circumstances highlighted some of the barriers to education MITS students could face, such as telecommunications issues in remote communities, parents who don't speak English

"With five days' notice, MITS moved 22 staff members ... to a new Darwin hub."



as a first language, and access to spaces for online learning and technology in general. The school was able to adapt thanks to the efforts of staff, support from Telstra with Internet dongles donated to all students and support from local schools, but "it was clear by the end of term two that remote learning was not a sustainable option for our students", Mr Tudor says.

"When it was clear we wouldn't be able to have students return to Melbourne, it was very clear that we had to get them back to some form of in-person learning. So we figured if they couldn't come to Melbourne, we would come to them."

With five days' notice, MITS moved 22 staff members and nine of their family members, as well as the three Victorian Year 7 students,

to a new Darwin hub, where they would remain for the rest of the year.

"It took a bit of doing, but most importantly it put the students at the centre of it all," Mr Tudor says. "It was a really, really successful move, and the students thrived."

Students returned to Melbourne this year, but some of the lessons from that time have shaped how MITS continues to support its students.

"When our students meet their partner schools for the first time and meet those people that they'll be going to school with, obviously in previous years we always did that in person, and that was an exciting but pretty nerve-racking thing for students to do," Mr Tudor says. "Last year we had to do that by Zoom because they were all in Darwin, and we actually found that Zoom was a much less nerve-racking way for students to meet their partner schools for the first time. That's an example of something we'll be carrying forward."

Mr Tudor says the students and alumni are doing remarkably well in Melbourne this lockdown, and that the whole experience of the pandemic has reinforced MITS and its partner schools' commitment to reflecting on how they can better support their students.

"I think as much as anything the challenges that we have to recognise are our students often come to us from a very different cultural context to our own, and they do an extraordinary job of adapting themselves to this Melbourne context and we in Melbourne, whether it's at MITS or our partner schools, need to ensure that we are just as focused on self-reflecting and seeing what we can change in our own school."

Looking forward, Mr Tudor says the school intends to grow its boarding program for MITS alumni who have gone on to partner schools.

"The data tells us that students who continue to live with MITS have stronger wellbeing and stronger retention and academic programs, so we are opening another boarding house in 2022 and a further one in 2023."

A further challenge will be continuing to secure enough funding. "We're very reliant on donation income to support the opportunities that the students are accessing, so we do need to grow that donation support year on year," Mr Tudor said.

If you would like to help support MITS's work, please visit <https://mits.vic.edu.au/donate>

Keeping routines good for fast-growing Hume

by Mark Brolly

AT A TIME WHEN ROUTINES have been disrupted by COVID and lockdowns, one Anglican school has worked hard to stick with them – and it appears to be paying dividends.

Mr Bill Sweeney, Principal of Hume Anglican Grammar on Melbourne's fast-growing northern fringe, says staff and students have managed the challenges of the pandemic "very well".

"Our default position has been that we will run everything as normally as we possibly can," he said. "In other words, we will still run assemblies, we will still have lessons, we will still even have co-curricular activities taking place, even remotely."

Rapid adoption of technology has been a key, with the school using Microsoft Teams, Seesaw for



junior primary classes, Learning Management System Canvas and a wellbeing program, Skodel, enabling teachers to check in on how students are faring in areas beyond

academic performance.

"Every day the students attend their classes, they have lunch at the normal time, exercise, they come back at the end of lunch.

"That's been very effective in terms of maintaining consistency, normality, the kids have got structure, routines, expectations. Standards are still being met."

"We even have academic detentions after school and they attend this remotely sitting at home."

But Mr Sweeney said of greater concern was the students' social wellbeing. They became independent learners, which might seem good but can be a drawback.

"Their collaborative learning skills really were quite weak."

Teachers had to ensure students worked together on tasks when required rather than going off on their own as they had become accustomed to do.

He said isolation had also been a big issue for Years 8s and 9s, when they would normally be consolidating their groups and relationships.

Next year, a Director of Student

Wellbeing will begin work.

As for the school, it seems it has hardly missed a beat.

Hume Anglican Grammar was established only in 2008 by St Peter's Church Craigieburn but already has two campuses – Mt Ridley and Donnybrook – with a third, in Kalkallo, to open in 2023.

The school draws four out of five of its students from Mickleham and Craigieburn but others come from as far away as Sunbury, Roxburgh Park and Wallan.

Enrolments this year total 1670 students at the moment (up from 1450 last year), 1930 next year and close to 2100 in 2023.

Mr Sweeney said there was still strong residential growth in Hume's catchment, unlike some areas to the west that relied on employment with airlines, a sector hit particularly hard by the pandemic.

"The future is bright," he said.

Trinity Grammar weathers storms to find strength in community

by Mark Brolly

TRINITY GRAMMAR School, Kew, has hit particularly rough weather twice in three years. In 2018, it was a much-publicised disruption caused by the dismissal of a long-serving staff member, later reversed. This year, Trinity found itself in the eye of the COVID storm.

Principal Adrian Farrer, who took the reins of the school only a few weeks before coronavirus upended so much of life in March 2020, acknowledges that 2021 has been a challenging year but says the school community's response was "simply wonderful".

"With 20 direct and at least eight indirect cases of COVID, we were pretty visible in the public domain in recent months," he says.

"After a year last year of cancellations and adjustments, this further challenge was quite impactful. Nearly 30 of our people contracted COVID. Some became quite ill. Every school family endured 14 days of quarantine.

"Despite these vivid challenges, the school community's response was simply wonderful. The concern shown for others was palpable."

Trinity, which reaches the 120th anniversary of its foundation

late next year, is not all it seems, according to Mr Farrer, the school's 12th principal.

"We have a large catchment area," he says. "While most people think of us as a Kew school, we have students that travel very significant distances each day to get a Trinity education.

"The concern shown for others was palpable."

"It is something we do not take for granted. Each year, we accept students at Year 7 from around 50 primary schools and they join our 100 students from Junior School."

The school offers an Early Learning Centre for three and four-year-olds through to Year 12, with 1500 students and 300 permanent staff.

"We have nearly 20,000 'old boys' who also take a keen interest in the school," Mr Farrer says.

Even the pandemic has had a silver lining in the ability for more

family members to access key moments in the students' education, he says.

"We have enjoyed having more uptake by parents of Parent/Teacher interviews, more audience members for performances and overseas visitors to events that, not long ago, would not have been conceived. Our staff are much better with technology ... and so are our families.

"Finding the 'new normal,' is a challenge, but also an opportunity. Importantly, I think that there will be a strong sense of appreciation for choice in education after this situation has settled. Different settings offer different attitudes to education and the opportunity will exist for parents to conceive a 'scoreboard' of achievement or responsiveness (or resilience, perhaps) that may not have been as vivid prior to COVID's ravages."

Mr Farrer says Trinity will embark on its next Strategic Plan with "a slightly different lens from any in our history."

"I suspect the empathy demonstrated by our community during the last 18 months will serve as a terrific guide to the model of operation for the immediate future of the school."

Overnewton's long-serving Principal honoured

THE PRINCIPAL of Overnewton Anglican Community College, Mr Jim Laussen, was presented with Life Membership of Anglican Schools Australia (ASA) at its annual conference last month, held online.

The conference is an opportunity for Anglican schools from around Australia to gather and learn from world-class experts on topics relevant and pertinent to education, life and faith in an educational setting – and, of course, to being an Anglican school.

Mr Laussen was the recipient of a 20-Year Membership badge. He was recognised for his contribution both as the Principal of Overnewton for more than 20 years and his direct contribution to the ASA Management Committee, serving on the ASA Management Committee from 2013-19 and as President from 2015-17.

Life Membership is the highest recognition that can be awarded in acknowledgement of exceptional service and contribution, and this year's award brought the total number of recipients to five.

Mr Laussen has contributed to many professional organisations, including membership of the Victorian Executive of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia,



Mr Jim Laussen.

and membership of the board of the Anglican Schools Commission. He has been awarded an Australian Council for Educational Leaders Fellowship, is a member of the Victorian Secondary Principals' Group, Victoria's Teaching Institute's Accreditation Committee and is a board member of the Victorian Association of Independent Schools.

Overnewton Anglican Community College, Yirramboi Campus at Keilor, opened in 1987 in direct response to community need for accessible quality education in the north-west of Melbourne. The second campus, Canowindra at Taylors Lakes, opened in 1996.



Ella Phillips.



Emily Dunne.

Premier's VCE Awards to Mentone Girls' Grammar duo

TWO MENTONE Girls' Grammar students, Ella Phillips and Emily Dunne, received a Premier's VCE Award for their respective results in French and Creative Digital Media in 2020.

Mentone Girls' Grammar Principal, Ms Natalie Charles, praised Ella and Emily for excelling under the most challenging of circumstances of coronavirus.

"These results are a testament to fortitude, grace and mastery in a year that was otherwise filled with disruptions and change," Ms Charles said.

Ella said achieving the Premier's Award was "incredibly meaningful".

"At Mentone Girls' Grammar, I was surrounded by motivated peers and exceptional teachers who cared not only about my education but also my

future. The girls were more than happy to help each other achieve their goals [and] my teachers would sacrifice their own time to go over essays and further explain concepts, which definitely increased my confidence and contributed enormously to my academic success."

Ella is studying medicine at Monash University while volunteering with the Regional Education Support

Network and fundraising to "help minimise health inequity" in the Philippines.

Emily acknowledged Creative and Digital Media teacher Mr Mark Garland's "dedication and encouragement" in supporting her. She acknowledged 2020 was challenging but she remained focused, positive and motivated through her teachers and the school community.

"There were group study

sessions online, initiated by Year 12 girls, to keep each other motivated, as well as dedicated teachers helping with work outside of class, highlighting the community's focus on working to lift each other up," Emily said.

Emily is studying engineering and science at Monash University – a degree she says combines her many interests in science and design.

Tintern Principal hails resilience of students, staff

by Chris Shearer

FOR TINTERN GRAMMAR Principal Bradley Fry, the past 18 months have demonstrated the flexibility and resilience of both his students and staff.

"They have adapted – not effortlessly, it's taken a lot of energy – but their ability to adapt has been remarkable," he says. "You've got to admire the adaptability and agility of the human brain."

For a school such as Tintern, which prides itself not just on a high-quality education but also for caring for student wellbeing and the development of their social relationships, the pandemic presented additional barriers to the common difficulties faced by all schools moving to an online-only environment.

"COVID when it arrived presented us with barriers around the ability to engage with students in the way that we were used to and with the level of closeness that we could," Mr Fry says.

"So when you want to support students, you need to know them well, and with different students that means different things. But almost invariably it means taking time to have conversations with them, to listen to them, to understand their world, what dancing



group they're with or football team they play for, and to understand them not just as a name or a number."

The East Ringwood school, which runs a "parallel learning model" that places students in the Early Learning Centre and Years 10 to 12 in co-ed classes while Prep to Year 9 are in single-sex classrooms, has worked hard to continue this commitment to the academic and social education of students, and professional development of staff. Many of these learnings are shaping the way the

school will run when Melbourne is no longer afflicted as seriously by the pandemic.

"Some of the things that we've looked at doing, the tools going forward, say you have to gather a hundred staff together to have a briefing; well, no you don't, we've proven that. A lot of those things are now conducted online, meetings, professional learning and similar, and staff have really welcomed that," Mr Fry says.

"Similarly for students, we've developed ways of teaching that will certainly endure. So things

like screen-casting, interactive PowerPoints where we're getting formative assessment as they work their way through, they've proven to be really effective learning tools. So we've got those resources developed and they can be adapted and improved and they're being used when students are on campus and of course when they're back off-campus again.

"Moving into that further there's been a great deal of work done on Virtual Reality that we can present on the screen, so those sort of tools are really helpful.

"In terms of our ability to connect with kids, we've got better at that. A lot of that has been to do with using older kids to mentor other kids, that's been a really helpful thing. That's been as simple as getting kids in our middle school to read to our Year One, Prep, or ELC kids, and they love doing it, but it's really effective."

Mr Fry said Tintern's strong VCE results in 2020 were "about where we expected", with some metrics even showing improvement on 2019. Indeed, the circumstance and learnings of the pandemic have helped shape the school's forward strategy, which is being finalised after 12 months' work.

"It's been a pretty interesting environment in which to frame

your forward strategy," Mr Fry says.

"I think when we look at what what's happening in the climate, what's happening in social relations, whether we talk about social relations like #MeToo and various other things, or whether we look at the effects of the pandemic on education and social relationships, we're clearly looking at a future where there is going to be continuous change.

"And in terms of how we frame that for young people, we need to empower them with the sort of learning in schools that will give them the outlook and disposition that will enable them to walk towards those challenges, but also those young people are going to go out into a world where they can learn, unlearn and relearn cyclically as the world around them changes. So that means we need to build into young people an understanding that's underpinned by really good tools and strategies to do that.

"That's our big strategy, along with of course maintaining what we're known for as a school, and that is our care for kids and their social wellbeing, the social relationships they develop and the core business of schools: you've got to provide a really high-quality education as well."

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What the IPCC report means for Australia

The latest IPCC Assessment Report on climate change was released last month, three months before the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow. Ian Hore-Lacy and Chris Mulherin analyse what the report says, its implications for Australia – and come to what they acknowledge is one “provocative” conclusion.

HOW SHOULD WE THINK about climate change? On the one hand, there are the more politically correct views that speak of a climate emergency. On the other hand are those who point out that the climate has always changed incrementally so they deny either that there is a problem or that human intervention can amount to much.

Then there are more nuanced positions, addressing diverse options for action against cost and practicality, while calling out unwarranted claims. Hope, they say, is both realistic and psychologically necessary. And for Christians, of whatever climate-change persuasions, hope in the God who is sovereign should be part of their perspective. Another essential contribution to a Christian (or any other) perspective – whatever “position” we take on the issues that face us – should be the very best science.

The science of climate change is monitored and reported on by the IPCC – the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – which reports every few years on the scientific consensus. Each IPCC Assessment Report is made of parts produced by three Working Groups. And, if you were watching the climate news in August, you will have noticed that the Working Group I report on the physical sciences (AR6-WGI) is out now.

AR6-WGI was released with a good deal of fanfare as the Glasgow climate change conference in November approaches. It is an impressive publication of more

than 3700 pages, plus a 150-page Technical Summary and a shorter Summary for Policymakers urging action on emission reductions.

In great detail, the AR6 scientific report shows little that is new or changed from its predecessor AR5 eight years ago; nor is the content unexpected. It confirms the IPCC conclusion that most observed global warming is caused by human activities: that’s just over one degree of warming in a bit more than a century. And, for the first time, the IPCC report provided detailed regional assessments.

Although it doesn’t convey any impression of the science being settled, AR6-WGI does significantly

“The stark question that must be resolved is how to achieve those reduced emissions when the main emitting countries have no immediate intention of reducing, and in fact are clearly increasing their emissions strongly.”

firm up our understanding of the complex science involved in the world’s climate, so we have a better idea of what is happening. That’s a great starting point for Christian concern about being responsible stewards of God’s creation.

On the basis of more accurate science, the report’s scenarios to



2100 are clearer and cover a broader range of emissions futures than AR5; there is less uncertainty due to better understanding of climate drivers and feedbacks. The possible futures outlined include high CO₂ emissions scenarios without climate change mitigation, as well as a low CO₂ emissions scenario reaching

zero” is our only long-term option:

The near-linear relationship between cumulative CO₂ emissions and maximum global surface temperature increase caused by CO₂ implies that stabilising human-induced global temperature increase at any level requires net anthropogenic CO₂ emissions to become zero.

However, the science can only take us so far. It is up to governments to decide how to respond to the best information to hand: “So what?” Is the pertinent question, as science hands over to politics and ethics. There is no obvious reason why the world cannot adapt to envisaged changes in climate, though that will clearly be easier in the reduced emissions scenarios.

The stark question that must be resolved is how to achieve those reduced emissions when the main emitting countries have no immediate intention of reducing, and in fact are clearly increasing their emissions strongly. Apart perhaps from the US with 15 per cent of world CO₂ emissions (versus China, India and Russia with 40 per cent between them), there is nothing

that any other country can do that will make any substantial difference to world climate. So, those Western governments with tiny shares in the climate-change pie must balance the value of setting an example against practical economic management. Like decisions in the current COVID crisis, there are many opinionated lay “experts” and vested interests, but the burden is on governments to weigh up ethical aspects and long-term implications of all courses of action.

What might that mean for Australia? One obvious policy proposal is to reduce from our more than 50 per cent reliance on coal for electricity generation. But replacing reliable, dispatchable generation with intermittent renewables such as wind and solar incurs rapidly increasing system costs as the proportion of renewables rises. No country such as ours (without the ability to import and export electricity) has yet achieved any major replacement of reliable sources with wind and solar.

To end on a provocative note, if Australia wants to head anywhere near “net zero” CO₂ emissions, we will probably need to rely heavily on nuclear power – historically far safer than coal and part of God’s abundant provision for humanity. However, to put that option on the table requires a significant change in policy that is long overdue.

Ian Hore-Lacy is a fellow of ISCAST – Christians in Science and Technology, author of ‘Responsible Dominion: A Christian Approach to Sustainable Development’, and Senior Adviser for the World Nuclear Association.

Chris Mulherin is Executive Director of ISCAST and tutors in Introduction to Climate Change at the University of Melbourne.

The AR6-WGI report and shorter versions can be found on the IPCC site at www.IPCC.ch



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Six ways to recognise God's guidance

Perth-born Malcolm Dunje is a retired Baptist minister, doctor and missionary who has lived and worked in places as diverse as Papua New Guinea, Yemen, Bangladesh and the Northern Territory. Now in his 80s, he offers some ways to discern God's way.

TODAY, PERHAPS MORE THAN ever, people are asking, "What does God want me to do now?" The future may appear uncertain to many, considering current events but my lifetime of experiencing God's guidance has taught me how to recognise His voice in the wilderness.

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We've lived in Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Yemen and the Northern Territory of Australia, with children in tow.

How did God "engineer" those momentous changes? My wife and I learnt how to hear His voice.

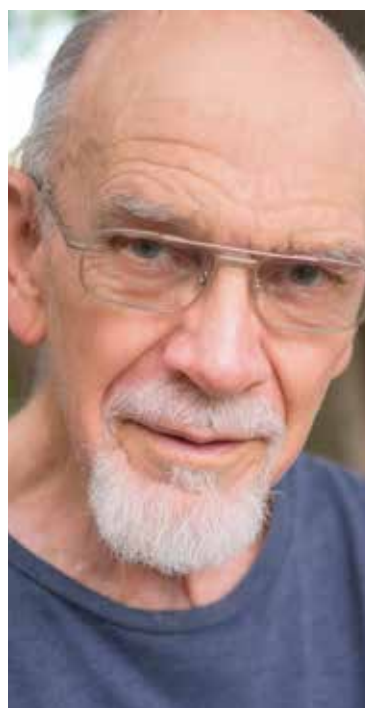
Here are six ways to recognise God's guidance:

1. Read His word, and especially

Proverbs 3:6, "In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight." Claim that as a promise. Our part in that is to totally surrender to Him, really wanting His directions for life and obeying those directions when revealed. His part is to give us straight paths ahead with no forks.

2. Talk often (all the time) to Him. Discuss steps for clarification, "Really? Do you really mean that?" Such praying is indispensable for guidance.

3. Pay attention to the lives, examples and words of other Christians. The idea of Bangladesh came to us from an unsolicited invitation to a meeting, where the speaker told us of the need for doctors in Bangladesh. The next day, we received a Christian newspaper with the headline "Doctor Needed for Bangladesh". We were amazed



Malcolm Dunje.

(even trapped), and we had to think and pray about Bangladesh. Our mission, Interserve, ultimately also steered us to the needs and opportunities in Pakistan and Yemen.

4. The "wet and dry fleeces" method used by Gideon in the Old Testament (Judges 5). It basically meant asking

God to do something nearly impossible as evidence of God's leading. I'm not happy with that seemingly bizarre plan but it's in the Bible, it worked for Gideon and for my wife, Audrey, when she asked, in prayer, for the Director of the Health Department to personally ring me and ask me why I hadn't applied for a job he had advertised. He called and I got the job!

5. Another unlooked-for guidance step, physically unwelcomed, were our numerous health issues. Over a period of 70 years, there have been several major health problems giving rise to unexpected withdrawals from countries. Through the ironing out of circumstances, such as house, children, schools, money and so on, we saw God, who is in charge of circumstances and surprises, and recognised Him straightening out our path as promised in Proverbs 3:6.

6. The deep inner peace of God "which passes all understanding", giving His seal to His plan. His plan wasn't always easy and there had to be small, practical enabling steps like obtaining appropriate

qualifications for the tasks ahead: a long-term plan to be completed before commencing the above; making arrangements for the children; obtaining finance to live and work overseas (including support from family and friends); winning government approval to change regulations, getting agreements for projects and the granting of visas.

The Lord has also guided us through 65 years of happy marriage, with 23 children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. And that has been our greatest adventure of all.

Malcolm Dunje is a medical doctor and ordained minister who has worked with his wife Audrey in Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Yemen, either for government or as medical missionaries.

He retired at age 80 and has been busy writing ever since. Malcolm has written four books, including *To the City of the Great King* (autobiography); *136 Questions about God...* (theological); *Stethoscopes Kiaps and the Law of the Jungle* (PNG) and *Yemen* (about his and Audrey's work as medical missionaries).

Find out more:

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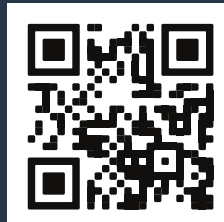
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Getting old: What shall Christians think?

Some of Christianity's greatest thinkers have struggled to develop a coherent and consistent theology of ageing. Is it the result of sin or part of God's good creation? In the first of a two-part series, David Hooker traces Christian views of ageing and what it might mean for theology if partnered with scientific understandings of the ageing process.

ON SHEER NUMBERS ALONE, we face a tsunami of older people. In 2018 and for the first time in recorded human history, people over 65 outnumbered those aged under five, with the United Nations predicting that by 2050 the over-65s will be more than double the number of under-fives. Globally, people over 80 are the fastest growing of any population fraction. In the words of one commentator: "Age no longer has the value of rarity. In America, in 1790, people aged 65 or older constituted less than 2% of the population; today, they are 14%. In Germany, Italy, and Japan, they exceed 20%. China is now the first country on earth with more than 100 million elderly people."

Just like the ocean wave that catches people unprepared, it would seem that the world is not ready for this tsunami; we are ill-prepared on attitudinal, emotional and ethical levels. The ancient Greek veneration

of the young and aversion toward the elderly is an early and influential example of a long history of negativity toward the aged in Western society that continues today. Old age is perhaps the only life-stage that often evokes responses of fear, disgust and even hatred. These responses include the fear of decline, morbidity and impending mortality, disgust by the non-aged over the unpleasantness of bodily decline, and hatred in the form of elder abuse, which, according to the World Health Organisation, is a widespread and growing global problem. "Ageing anxiety" is prevalent in those experiencing the onset of decline and, for those still young, ageism, the discriminatory stereotyping of the aged, keeps getting old at arm's length. On this, theologian and ethicist Frits de Lange explains: "Ageism may function as an anxiety buffer, keeping the awareness of ageing and its inevitable decline and ending at a distance, by con-



"How can we assimilate and accept decline and loss into our Christian understanding of life?"

structing a cultural worldview of growing older, in which everything that reminds us of deep old age at the threshold of death is kept far away." Meanwhile, some scientists are working on "trans-humanist" possibilities of stopping the ageing process and even reversing it, acting as if ageing is a defect or disease that needs to be conquered. Overall, it seems that we struggle to accept and assimilate the aged and the ageing process.

As Christians, what theological resources do we have to respond intelligently and with love to the realities of this tsunami of the aged? Unfortunately, a Christian understanding of ageing is beset with inconsistencies, omissions and controversies.

First, there is the question of whether human ageing is an aspect of God's good creation or a result of sin. On this, the giants of Christian theology disagree. For example, the great Reformation theologian John Calvin says ageing is "among the blessings we receive from God".

Yet he appears to contradict himself when he also says: "It is on account of our sins that we grow old and lose our strength." Other theological giants – such as Augustine, Aquinas and Wolfhart Pannenberg – argue that ageing is a result of sin. Moreover, numerous biblical interpreters argue that when humanity fell into sin, the creation degenerated in a way that includes ageing.

In contrast, Karl Barth, perhaps the 20th century's most eminent



theologian, arrives at a thoroughly positive perspective on the ageing process. And Augustine, despite his negative perspective outlined above, promotes the concept of a currently good creation with the implication for ageing being that it, too, forms part of a good creation. Thus, from some of the greatest Christian thinkers we discover an obvious and indeed troubling lack of consistency.

Another question is whether Christian theology is engaging specifically enough with the question of ageing. The answer is that while Christian thinkers have much to say on creation, sin, death and the image of God in humanity, they say comparatively little on ageing, which is a matter so intimately related to all those themes. Even prominent theologians tend to

Continued on page 19

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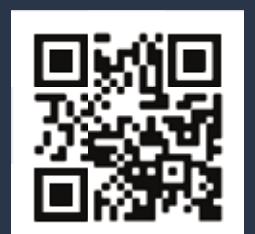


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Navigating religious love and enmity

Jesus' call to His followers to love God, love one another and love their enemies created an inherent tension in a world, like ours, where much of what is called "peace" has been won at the point of a sword, writes Christopher Porter.

IT SEEMS WE NEVER HAVE TO look far to see examples of people and groups being defined as the "enemy". Especially in our current context of COVID policies and protests over lockdown, the news coming out of Afghanistan, and what feels like constant political tension and dispute. The general zeitgeist is one of increasing bifurcation and entrenching divides.

Lest we think that this is something new, Jesus' teaching in Matthew chapter five, verses 43-47 responds to some of the same expression of group divides: "Love your neighbour, and hate your enemy." Into this setting we find a broad expansion of the commands of Torah – as summarised in Matthew 22:37-40 – to encompass those who would be considered enemies. The reframing of enmity to incorporate love for the enemy was a radical concept – particularly in a world dominated by the "peace" of an empire that came at the end of a sword. It may be hard to grasp the outworking of this new ethic, especially with the gruesome pattern of persecution and martyrdom levelled at the early Church. Nevertheless, in the 2nd century Ignatius writes to the church in Ephesus:

Be meek in response to their wrath, humble in opposition to their boasting; to their blasphemies return your prayers; ... and for their cruelty, manifest your gentleness. While we take care not to imitate their conduct, let us be found their brethren in all true kindness; and let us seek to be followers of the Lord. (Ignatius. Eph 10.1-3)

Sadly, and all too commonly, the response to this new ethic was more like the persecution in Vienne and Lyon:

When these accusations were reported, all the people raged like wild beasts against us, so that even if any had before been moderate on account of friendship, they were now exceedingly furious and gnashed their teeth against us. And that which was spoken by our Lord was fulfilled: 'The time will come when whosoever kills you will think that he does God service.' (Ep. Vienne and Lyon)

However, as admirable as this new love ethic may be, there is an inherent tension within the construction itself. In the Gospels we are given a tripartite set of love commands: love God, love one other and love of enemy. In this framework we find a tension within the social groups defined through the horizontally relational commands of loving one another and loving one's enemies. The command to love one another from the upper room discourse (John 13:34) highlights a specific construction of the group to be loved: *we* or *us*. Socio-cognitively, this is the *in-group* that one is a member of within the context of the Christ-followers. Enemies, on the other hand, are over there, they are the *others*. In order to love our enemies, we need to construe them as a distinct group, someone else to ourselves.

But how does one know who *we* are and who the *other* is? In order to know who to love, one must know the social relations between groups. For one to know who is "in" within a social group, one must also know what the defining characteristics of the social group are, what they hold to be normative. This is the same process whether it is a sporting team, workplace or the church. There is the same process about who the *other* is. Members of a



experiments divided participants into two groups – ostensibly based on preference for Paul Klee or Wassily Kandinsky, but in reality, at random – and showed participants were biased against the other group even on this minimal differentiation. The very definition of groups into *us* and *them* – the process of othering – leads to "in" group bias and "out" group enmity.

This becomes problematic when the very nature of group categorisation and interaction gives outcomes that are intrinsically at odds with the Christian love ethic. Indeed, some have observed that Christianity itself – inheriting from Judaism – is based around this way of perceiving the world. While the early church was primarily comprised of Jewish Christ-followers who had reservations about Gentile inclusion (Acts 10-11 & 15), before very long the church would be primarily Gentile and rejecting of nascent rabbinic

alistic lost cause? While the more pessimistic amongst us may lean in this direction, I, for one, think the new love ethic is still valuable. Because, as much as our innate inclination may be towards the categorisation of our world into distinct groups and neat boundaries, the community that Jesus picked for disciples was anything but neat and tidy. Simon Peter, whose enthusiasm outstrips his reality, ends up denying Jesus as a result. Philip can't see the way forward in the upper room. Thomas won't believe anything until he sees it. Let alone Judas Iscariot, who would go on to betray them. It is this original community who would have their love ethic turned upside down and go on to love through to their own martyrdom.

From their example there can be only one impetus for this change, and ultimately it is found only in the love of Jesus for the world that allows anyone to love in this way – against human nature. Because in Jesus' love paradigm, he expanded the frame of reference for what the group is and redefined who is in and out. As Charles Spurgeon preached:

Christ loved you before all worlds; long ere the day star flung his ray across the darkness, before the wing of an angel had flapped the unnavigated ether, before aught of creation had struggled from the womb of nothingness, God, even our God, had set his heart upon all his children.

It is this love displayed in the cross that transforms the enterprise of the love ethic and renders it even possible.

It is only through the transformation of the cross that we can navigate the complexity of political, societal, ethical and even religious enmity. When we are tempted to *other*, we are enabled to draw in to *us*. It is in this scope that Jesus "loved [us] who are in the world ... to the end" and so too we are to love to the end.

"There can be only one impetus ... ultimately it is found only in the love of Jesus for the world that allows anyone to love in this way – against human nature."

group need to know that *they* hold to different characteristics than the "in" group, so they may be categorised as an "out" group – a process of comparative fit.

By defining "neighbour" and "enemy" as groups to be loved there is an inherent sociological impetus to define them as *other* by the process of comparative fit. Here we have a problem, in that the basic process of understanding the world through *us* and *them* categories yields an inherent bias towards one's own group. Henri Tajfel and John Turner highlighted that this "in" group bias could be stimulated by as little as a perceived preference for one modernist artist over another. Their minimal group

Judaism (e.g., Marcion). To be sure, this *othering* had a justifiable intention of loving one's enemies, such as that of Augustine's exhortation to "proclaim these divine testimonies to the Jews, with great love for them" (*Sermon Against the Jews*, 8.11 cit. Fredriksen, 2010, 330). Nevertheless, the pattern of othering to love finds its arguably lowest point in the reportedly "loving" instruction of Arnaud Amalric "Caedite eos. Novit enim Dominus qui sunt eius" ("Kill them. The Lord knows those that are his own") leading to the Béziers massacre of 1209.

What then do we do with the love instruction? Should it be discarded as simply an overly ide-

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They can't breathe: Myanmar's military rulers deny oxygen to their people in COVID crisis

Myanmar's military leaders are reserving oxygen for themselves and their cronies as hundreds of the people they rule die each week from COVID-19. Bishop Paul Barker, who has taught in the country for many years, writes about the pain of losing friends – a pain deeply felt also by St Stephen's Karen Congregation in Werribee.

MY FRIEND, PETER, DIED of COVID-19 in late July. A fit and healthy 74-year-old, Peter had no hospital he could go to for help. There was no official provision of oxygen, though some had been found privately. Peter died at home, with his wife and daughter beside him. Joy, his wife, is recovering herself from COVID, as is their daughter.

We expect a functioning health system, with free access to hospitals for COVID treatment, easy access for COVID tests, quick results and the supply of oxygen when needed. But Peter died in Yangon, Myanmar's biggest city.

There is no functioning medical system in Myanmar as health workers largely opposed February's military coup. Doctors who seek to help people with COVID are harassed or arrested by authorities. Indeed, the former head of the country's vaccination program has been arrested and accused of high treason. Oxygen is scarce, reserved for the junta and their cronies. Friends have told me how the military has confiscated oxygen tanks and concentrators from people, and forced factories to stop producing them. Queues

defy curfew and arrests simply to scrounge oxygen for those gasping for breath. Millions of dollars of COVID aid money from the UN sent in February have been unaccounted for by the military.

More than 60 pastors in Chin State died of COVID in recent weeks, along with hundreds of others, a death toll that will be absent from any official record. Unofficial estimates suggest well over 100 deaths from COVID-19

"Unofficial estimates suggest well over 100 deaths from COVID-19 each day in Yangon alone in recent weeks. No tests, no doctors, no oxygen."

each day in Yangon alone in recent weeks. No tests, no doctors, no oxygen.

In the two Bible colleges I have regularly taught in for the past 15 years, at least seven faculty have, or have had, COVID, some requiring oxygen. At least half a dozen clergy in Yangon diocese have



The Revd Moewin Tunkin.

COVID, and all the diocesan and Bible college drivers.

In a country plunged into a coup, led by a military who do not care and are only there to fleece the

development organisations. He has had a long history of association with the Anglican Board of Mission, AOA and World Vision. Peter has two daughters in Melbourne. Alison attends St Alfred's North Blackburn. She and her sister Wendy, and families, are grieving. Theirs is a grief exacerbated by distance, the difficulty of saying good-bye, the inability to return for a funeral and mutual comfort, and the anger at the illegitimate government's evil disdain for people.

The Revd Moewin Tunkin, Priest-in-Charge of our St Stephen's Karen Congregation in Werribee, has lost his aunt recently, despite her being able to source some oxygen. Aunt was a surrogate mother to Moewin when he was a teenager. They were close. Moewin is grieving her loss. Moewin's uncle now is also ill with COVID. Numerous of the parishioners of St Stephen's Karen congregation have had relatives and friends die of COVID in Karen State in Myanmar. Here is a large congregation grieving deeply.

It is easy to feel helpless. The military has frozen bank accounts, limited withdrawals, and plunged the nation back into widespread poverty. Ten years ago, after half a century of military rule, the once rice-exporting nation imported rice and 48 per cent of its people lived below the poverty line. Before COVID hit, the percentage of those living in poverty had halved under Aung San Suu Kyi's

government. Those in poverty are expected to double by next year. Coup and COVID are wreaking havoc as the infrastructure of the society collapses. A major humanitarian crisis is emerging.

Another friend, Ronald, whose mother died from COVID and who is himself recovering from COVID, is trying to source money for oxygen in his community on the edge of Yangon. It is risky, knowing authorities may find out and stop him or even arrest him. But Christian compassion compels him. His is far from a unique situation. Many others are seeking to do the same.

Anglican Overseas Aid has launched an emergency appeal through ABM for money to support people in dire need in Myanmar. This appeal will supply money for oxygen, medicines and personal protective equipment. There are secure avenues to ensure this support gets to those in need, via people known to and trusted by AOA. While church members will benefit, the church will also be able to offer help to others in their communities, a witness to Jesus' love and generosity.

Let me urge your prayer and generosity. Details can be found here: <https://anglicanoverseasaid.org.au/our-work/emergencies/myanmar-covid-19-appeal/>

Bishop Paul Barker is Bishop of Jumbunna Episcopate and has taught in Myanmar for many years. He is Deputy Chair of the Board of Anglican Overseas Aid.

Getting Old: What shall Christians think? – Continued from page 17

apply basic theological affirmations to the phenomenon of ageing without developing a focused theology of ageing. As one commentator says: "There is no special theology for the ageing. There is only the one biblically and confessionally based theology which is applied to the problem of older adults."

A third question is that of our openness to learn from the science of ageing. On this, theology has been left behind by rapid scientific progress into both the ageing process and also the transhumanist possibility of extending life indefinitely. Again, only a minor proportion of theologians offer a compelling voice. One such distinguished thinker is Pannenberg, yet even his appreciation for the natural

sciences does not incorporate the most current understanding of the ageing process. More recently, the prominent theological ethicist Gilbert Meilaender asks the question, "Should we live forever?", in his book of that name. He considers the place and power of science to extend life indefinitely. However, he chooses not to focus on the scientific question "How do we age?" in favour of the question of God's purpose for ageing. "Why do we age?" This leaves a gap in theology's engagement with the science of ageing. In his book, *This Mortal Flesh*, Christian social ethicist Brent Waters investigates medicine's drive for human transformation and also follows Meilaender's track, likewise not engaging with the detailed

mechanisms of ageing that are coming to light in the 21st Century.

Another question for theology is that of how to relate our ageing to that pivotal entity in Christian faith and understanding: *death*. It is here that we hit a puzzling challenge, especially when we *do* allow contemporary science to partner with Christian theology. Consider the following: popular Christian understanding and indeed much of Western theology forges a strong link between humanity's fall and human physical death. We commonly assume that sin leads to physical death. Yet medical science tells us that the ageing process leads to death. So, it appears that ageing is the mechanism that enacts the fall's effects. However, what if age-

ing was shown to be the result of genetically determined processes? Theologically, would such processes be understood as the manifestation of the fall or of the good creation? And if we conclude "of creation", what implications does this have for ageing and natural physical death in the doctrines of Christian theology?

A final question, more practical than theological perhaps, is about *decline* – that increasing limitation or loss in body and mind that comes with ageing, often with the accumulation of maladies and infirmities. Perhaps the most challenging questions of all is how can we assimilate and accept decline and loss into our Christian understanding of life?

The way we answer these ques-

tions will have a profound effect on how we view "getting old" and our attitude to the older people around us. As Christians, we are called to offer an intelligent, compassionate and unified voice to the world, but on the matter of getting old, we are not. In the second part of this article, we will look at possible answers to these questions, especially whether ageing can be understood as good in the biblical creation sense.

David Hooker is Publications Director for ISCAST—Christians in Science and Technology. David is trained in science and theology and recently completed doctoral studies synthesising science and theology on the topic of human ageing.

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Your say on Gafcon and mask-less music

Not plain reading but a misreading of Scripture

GAFCON IS wanting to schism over what they claim is the “plain teaching of Scripture” to deny a place in the church for people in same-sex relationships (TMA August 2021, Gafcon’s breakaway diocese plan slammed). Unfortunately, theirs is not a plain reading, but a misreading of Scripture.

The prohibition on same-sex relationships is arrived at by taking a few (last count was seven) disparate Bible verses out of context as proof texts, adding an interpretive gloss, putting them together and coming up with an ethical rule against same-sex relations. This is an invalid exegetical method, and rather than schism, Gafcon should simply jettison the rule.

That this is a misreading of Scripture can also be seen by looking at the particular Bible verses themselves. For example, Romans 1:26-27 is often used as one of the proof texts. In first century Rome, there was deep animosity between Gentiles and Jews, including within the Christian faith community. Paul wrote his letter to show that both Jews and Gentiles have an equal place in the community of faith. The argument is that both Gentiles and Jews are equally sinners because all break the law: the Gentiles their own natural law; the Jews the law given to them. In verses 26 and 27, Paul was not referring to same-sex relationships in the sense meant today because he is speaking of the universality of Gentile sin. He is using a rhetori-

cal device of siding with the Jews’ prejudiced view of the Gentile lifestyle in Rome in order to make his point that all Gentiles are sinners. He later turns his argument back on the Jews and shows that they all are sinners too. Universality of sin means universality of restored relationship with God through the faith of Jesus Christ for all who believe.

Erroneously claiming that these verses 26 and 27 put same-sex attracted people in a special class of sinner, outside the faith of Christ, outside the Church, is to require of them to be justified by works and not by faith. Which is opposed to the very argument that Paul is using these verses to mount. In taking this action of schism, Gafcon is promoting justification by works and undermining the gospel of Christ.

There are those in same-sex relationships – ordained and lay – who are greatly used by God in

wonderful, Spirit-filled ministries in the Anglican Church. Can anyone withhold the ministry of these people who are so used by the Holy Spirit?

Michael Down
Sale

Truth not open to ‘give and take’

I WAS saddened to read the headline, “Gafcon’s breakaway diocese slammed”. It was sad because unity couldn’t be reached. On the other hand it was encouraging to know that compromise couldn’t be reached either, on matters that are not open to give and take. Regarding Gafcon’s decision to create a separate Anglican identity, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith made the pejorative remark: “Clearly for Gafcon, it is ‘my way or the highway.’” It’s a misleading turn of phrase in the context as it has been made quite plain time and again that it’s not about some

non-essential, parochial issue, it is all about “God’s way”. In fact, we read this prophetic refrain repeatedly throughout Scripture, expressed differently but with the same meaning – “It is God’s way, or the highway!” It often fascinated me that when Israel rejected God’s word, their religious practices in the Name of Jehovah didn’t cease. Worship still continued on the surface, shaped by the addition of new clauses, subsections and reinterpretations. As the history of Israel unfolds in the pages of the Bible, we see the tragic recapitulation of “out with the true and in with the new”. The French polymath Blaise Pascal wrote: “Truth is so obscure in these times, and falsehood so established, that unless we love the truth, we cannot know it.” This profound statement is just as relevant today as it was in the 17th Century.

Stephen Fry
Hoppers Crossing

Keep in mind those with hearing difficulties

I am deaf, and have two Cochlear implants. My church has a fine choir, but as present COVID-19 requirements in churches are that masks must be worn during singing, I find it almost impossible to follow the choir’s singing. Masks muffle the wearer’s speech, and consequently make hearing the singing during worship very difficult, for those with hearing loss.

Celebrants, readers and intercessors are allowed to remove their masks during the service; could



this please also be permitted for choirs (even if the congregation must wear masks as they sing)? The choir being able to sing mask-less would greatly assist those with hearing impairments to follow singing in worship.

Our churches have ageing congregations, many of whom have hearing impairments. Could the Diocese please ask Government that *all* “service leading participants” – including the choir – be permitted to be mask-less, so that those with hearing impairments can follow *all* of the service, including the singing?

If this could be permitted, I’d really enjoy being able to sing at Sunday worship, being able to hear the choir properly!

Yours sincerely,

Kaye Gooch
Pahran

Editor’s note: This letter was written just before the latest Victorian lockdown but remains relevant for when churches reopen.



Prayer Diary

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

SEPTEMBER 21

Wed 1: Mission Agencies of the Anglican Church of Australia; Archdeaconry of The Yarra (Dave Fuller); St Michael & St Luke Dandenong (Santa Packianathan);
Thu 2: Religious Orders serving within the Anglican Church of Australia; St Michael’s Grammar School (Terrie Jones, Principal, Kenyon McKie, Chaplain); St Philip’s Deep Creek (Megan Curllis-Gibson);
Fri 3: Locums and all retired clergy; Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Corporation (Justin Lachal, General Manager); Parish of St John’s, Diamond Creek w. St Katherine’s, St Helena and St Michael’s, Yarrambat (Tim Johnson, Kirk Mackenzie, Ros Rudd);
Sat 4: The Anglican Church of Australia (Primate Abp Geoffrey Smith, General Secretary Anne Hywood, the General Synod & the Standing Committee); Calling Melbourne2Prayer Group (Jill Firth, Rachel McDougall, Jamie Miller, Philip Trowse); Christ Church Dingley (Incumbency Vacant, Tanya Cummings); Provincial Visit – Gippsland (Abp Philip Freier);
Sun 5: Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (Abp Ezekiel Kondo); The Diocese of Adelaide (Abp Geoff Smith, Asst Bps Denise Ferguson, Timothy Harris, Christopher McLeod; Clergy & People); St David’s Doncaster East (Judy Frost); Provincial Visit – Gippsland (Abp Philip Freier); St Peter’s Murrumbidgee – Pastoral Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell)
Mon 6: The Diocese of Armidale (Bp Rick Lewers, Clergy & People); Peninsula Grammar (Stuart Johnston, Principal, Mark Sweeney, Chaplain); Holy Trinity Anglican Church Doncaster (Andrew Price, Alan Xue, Geoffrey Hall, Vijay Henderson, Mark Chew, Esther Ruan)
Tue 7: The Diocese of Ballarat (Bp

Garry Weatherill, Clergy & People); Hospital Chaplaincy (Stephen Delbridge, Co-ordinator & Chaplains); St Mark’s Anglican Church Dromana (Michael Woodcock);
Wed 8: The Diocese of Bathurst (Bp Mark Calder, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Williamstown (Glenn Buijs); St Margaret’s Anglican Church Eltham (Christopher Garcia, Keren Terpstra);
Thu 9: The Diocese of Bendigo (Bp Matt Brain, Clergy & People); Tintern Grammar (Brad Fry, Principal, Alison Andrew, Chaplain); St Mark’s Anglican Church Emerald (Andrew Bowles, Vivianne Dias, Jerome Dias); Installation of four new Trinity Fellows (Abp Philip Freier);
Fri 10: The Diocese of Brisbane (Abp Phillip Aspinall, Regional Bps Jeremy Greaves, Cameron Venables, John Roundhill, Clergy & People); Children’s & Families’ Ministry (Dorothy Hughes, Facilitator); St Matthew’s Anglican Church Endeavour Hills (Kim Wellard);
Sat 11: The Diocese of Bunbury (Bp Ian Coutts, Clergy & People); Chinese Ministry (Richard Liu, Missioner); The Parish of St John the Evangelist Epping (Raffaella Pilz);
Sun 12: The Anglican Church of Tanzania (Abp Maimo Mndolwa, Primate); The Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn (Bp Mark Short, Asst Bps Stephen Pickard, Carol Wagner, Clergy & People); Angliss Health Services; The Anglican Parish of Rowville and Ferntree Gully (Hilton Jordan, Luke Pedersen); Holy Trinity Lara 50th Anniversary Holy Communion Service – (Abp Philip Freier); Geelong Grammar Sunday service (Bp Kate Prowd); St Philip’s Mt Waverley (Pastoral Visit, Bp Paul Barker);
Mon 13: Ministry to the Defence Force (Bishop Grant Dibden, Chaplains & Members of the Defence Forces); Trinity College & Theological School (Robert

Derrenbacker, Dean); St Mark’s Anglican Church Fitzroy (Stuart Soley);
Tue 14: The Diocese of Gippsland (Bp Richard Treloar, Clergy & People); Church Missionary Society Victoria (Jonathan Wei-Han Kuan, Executive Director; Andrew Gifford, Andrew Livingstone); St George’s Anglican Church Flemington (Manoli Mager);
Wed 15: The Diocese of Grafton (Bp Murray Harvey, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Box Hill (Dianne Sharrock); Footscray Anglican Parish (Chaplain Soma, Gabriel Mayen);
Thu 16: Ministry with the Aboriginal people of Australia (Bp Chris McLeod, National Aboriginal Bishop, Aboriginal Clergy & People); Trinity Grammar School (Adrian Farrer, Principal; Matt Campbell, James Hale, Chaplains); St Mark’s Anglican Church Forest Hill (Philip Knight);
Fri 17: Ministry with the Torres Strait Islander people of Australia (Torres Strait Islander Clergy & People); Community of the Holy Name (Sr Carol Tanner); St Luke’s Anglican Church Frankston East (Glen Macrae, Rene Pfitzner, Louisa Pfitzner, Dennis Emery);
Sat 18: The Diocese of Melbourne (Abp Philip Freier, Asst Bps Paul Barker, Bradly Billings, Genieve Blackwell, Kate Prowd, Clergy & People); Cross-Cultural Ministry; The Parish of St John’s, Frankston North w. St Luke’s, Carrum Downs (David Sullivan, Cheryl Sullivan);
Sun 19: The Church of the Province of Uganda (Abp Stephen Kaziimba); The Diocese of Newcastle (Bp Peter Stuart, Asst Bps Charlie Murry, Sonia Roulston, Clergy & People); Defence Force Chaplains; St Paul’s Anglican Church Frankston (Claudia Mauracher); St Andrew’s Brighton (Pastoral Visit, Bp Paul Barker);
Mon 20: The Diocese of North Queensland

(Bp Keith Joseph, Clergy & People); Yarra Valley Grammar School (Mark Merry, Principal); St Stephen’s Anglican Church Gardenvale (Paul Carr);
Tue 21: The Diocese of North West Australia (Bp Gary Nelson, Clergy & People); Deacons’ Ministry; Christ Church Anglican Church Geelong (Russell Trickey);
Wed 22: The Diocese of Perth (Abp Kay Goldsworthy, Asst Bps Jeremy James, Kate Wilmot, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Dandenong; City on a Hill Geelong (Andrew Grills, Lynette Pearson, Peter Taylor);
Thu 23: The Diocese of Riverina (Bp Donald Kirk, Clergy & People); Brighton Grammar School (Ross Featherston, Principal; Chester Lord, Chaplain); St Paul’s Anglican Church Geelong (Nigel Pope);
Fri 24: The Diocese of Central Queensland (Bp Peter Grice, Clergy & People); Diocesan Building Committee; The Anglican Parish of Gisborne (Dennis Webster, Alan Smith, Debra Saffrey-Collins)
Sat 25: The Diocese of Sydney (Abp Kanishka Raffel, Regional Bps Chris Edwards, Michael Stead, Peter Hayward, Peter Lin, Malcolm Richards, Gary Koo, Clergy & People); Diocesan Finance; St Barnabas’ Anglican Church Glen Waverley (Phil Meulman, Ming Li, Breannon Wilkinson);
Sun 26: The Episcopal Church of USA (Presiding Bp Michael Curry); The Diocese of Tasmania (Bp Richard Condie, Missioner Bp Chris Jones, Clergy & People); St James’ Anglican Church Glen Iris (Samuel Crane); 50th Anniversary Ordination of Reverend Noel Whale (Abp Philip Freier); Redemption Church Craigieburn (Pastoral Visit, Bp Kate Prowd); St Matthew’s Endeavour Hills (a.m.) & Berwick Anglican Church Confirmation (p.m.) (Bp Paul Barker);

Mon 27: The Diocese of The Murray (Bp Keith Dalby, Clergy & People); Beacons Hills College (Tony Sheumack, Principal; Peggy Kruse, Chaplain); St Oswald’s Anglican Church Glen Iris (Glenn Loughrey);
Tue 28: The Diocese of The Northern Territory (Bp Greg Anderson, Clergy & People); Diocesan Liturgical Committee; All Saints’ Anglican Church Greensborough (Julie Blinco-Smith);
Wed 29: The Diocese of Wangaratta (Bp Clarence Bester, Clergy & People); Archdeaconry of Essendon (Vanessa Bennett); St Stephen’s Anglican Church Greysthorne (Rodney Morris);
Thu 30: The Diocese of Willochra (Bp John Stead, Clergy & People); Camberwell Girls’ Grammar School (Debbie Dunwoody, Principal; Helen Creed, Chaplain); St Alban’s Anglican Church Hamlyn Heights (Jonathan Taylor).

OCTOBER 21

Fri 1: Anglicare Australia (Bp Chris Jones, Chair; Kasy Chambers, Executive Director); Archdeaconry of Frankston (Helen Phillips); Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hampton Park (Argo Biswas);
Sat 2: Theological Colleges, Church Schools & Church Kindergartens; Camberwell Grammar School (Paul Hicks, Principal; Charles Butler, Chaplain); Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hampton (Ross Duncan);
Sun 3: The Church in Wales (Primacy Vacant); Mission Agencies of the Anglican Church of Australia; Diocesan Property Committee; Holy Trinity Anglican Church Hastings (Timothy Anderson); Christ Church Brunswick – Pastoral Service (Bp Genieve Blackwell); Oakleigh Anglican Parish of Holy Trinity and Emmanuel Church, (Pastoral Visit, Bp Paul Barker).

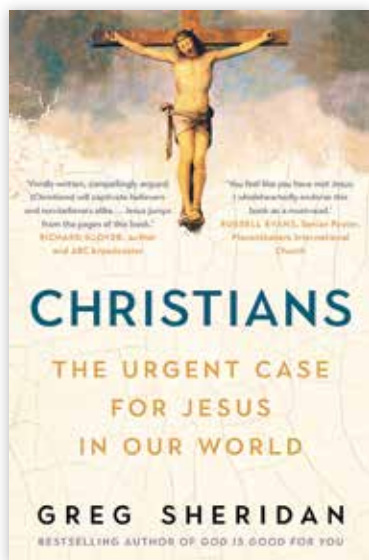
A compelling case for Christianity in our world

Christians: The urgent case for Jesus in our World by Greg Sheridan (Allen and Unwin, 2021)

reviewed by Ian Palmer

WHAT AN AMAZING, COMPELLING and exciting read. Dramatically, *Christians* places Jesus Christ in his historical 1st Century context and shows how his small group of companions, transformed by his love, forgiveness, healing and hope, changed the world as they lived and died for him.

Greg Sheridan makes the person of Jesus and his closest followers easily accessible and understood. He sets out the historical evidence for Jesus and places his followers in their historical context. Through his writing they live in a very human way. Because Sheridan's mind readily turns to examples and illustrations, he gives profound insights into these people. It doesn't matter if Sheridan is writing about Mary, Paul or Jesus, or the beloved disciple John; each one shines from these pages with a vibrant light – the light of angels, which is the subject of another chapter. This book is worth reading, and in his erudite but easy-going journalistic style Greg Sheridan writes with passion and conviction.



Greg Sheridan is the Foreign Editor of *The Australian*. After the publication of *God is Good for You* (2018), he was challenged to write about the extraordinary, complex, living person of Jesus who changed all of history. He writes with great accomplishment. He is well read, but the scholarship is not laboured. He puts different points of view, but tells us what he thinks. This is a personal book, and is his testimony to the person he has fallen in love with: Jesus Christ.

And that's only the first half!

The second half of the book tells stories of people who are

making a difference in our world – especially Australia.

The background to *Christians* comes at the beginning of *God is Good for You*, where Sheridan writes: "Human beings are formed in a culture, and a culture without God will form different human beings." In *Christians* he asks: "How can Christians 'smuggle' (or 'inject') Christianity back into popular culture?" "Western culture deserves to have Jesus in it, and should really have him at its centre" (p172).

In *The Weekend Australian* (12-13 June 2021), Sheridan argued that there are "three wrong ways for Christians to respond to a culture going mad: Go to total war with it; Surrender to it totally, thereby offering no ethical challenge; or retreat from it into a tight ghetto." He continued: "The right path is different: continued engagement with the culture, insistence on proclaiming the truth, but taking victory and defeat both with good cheer ... Human example, creative institutions, sustained formation – these can change culture." These form the substance of this second half of this book.

He gives examples of Australians serving their communities in distinctive ways that arise from their Christian faith. These include Melbourne's

Jenny George, who is the CEO of Converge International, an organisation that provides health and wellbeing services, especially in mental health, to more than 900 Australian organisations.

In another chapter, he focuses upon the faith of Christians in prominent positions, including former Governor-General Peter Cosgrove and Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

Sheridan has a special interest in Asian affairs. It's not surprising that there are two chapters on Christianity in China. His depth of knowledge will provide substance to stories we read in social media. At the end of a fascinating chapter of history and present testimony from Chinese Christians, he concludes: "Christianity in China is a long, long story. Nothing is harder to predict than its future" (p300).

The chapter I found most difficult was the one about literature and film where he argues that "Popular culture has turned against God" (p171). I agree that much contemporary literature and film is "violent, nihilistic and depraved" (p172). He reviews the place of art in popular culture, which "should seek the truth and give hope and meaning". Sheridan argues that art can convey Christian truth and permeate the culture. This reminds me of the

Russian Nobel Laureate Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn who when asked why Christianity was not extinguished in the Soviet Union replied that they forgot to ban (the Christian writers) Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky.

I appreciated his comments about Tolkien but on the whole, he writes about 1950s and '60s books and films with Christian values and misses a significant, though controversial 21st Century series: the *Harry Potter* books. Read carefully, these books deal with contemporary issues, including spirituality, suffering and death, and the redeeming power of sacrificial love. J.K. Rowling has spoken about how her Christian faith influences her writing.

In summary, Sheridan's *Christians* should be read by all who are concerned about our culture and future. His Epilogue gives a thumbnail sketch of Peter's devotion, weaknesses, mistakes, fear, repentance, courage, faith and perseverance. Then he encourages us by writing: "Jesus didn't remove their difficulties and challenges, he gave them the strength and vision and purpose" (p354). The final note is one of hope. "Christ is risen."

Bishop Ian Palmer is the former Bishop of Bathurst, now living in Victoria.

Exemplary account of New Norcia's religious women

A Bridge Between: Spanish Benedictine Missionary Women in Australia by Katharine Massam (ANU Press, 2020)

reviewed by Philip Harvey

RELIGIOUS ORDERS are intrinsic to the history of Australian settlement. Yet accounts of the different orders vary wildly in coverage. The Josephites, for example, and their founder Mary MacKillop (St Mary of the Cross) enjoy a wealth of study, while the Carmelites have no official in-depth published history. The genre ranges from HQ histories with little to say beyond names, places and dates, through to copious reference works such as the Jesuits' biographical dictionary.

Prominent in this literature is New Norcia, the Spanish Benedictine monastic town that has flourished in Western Australia since 1847, the year Melbourne became a city. But

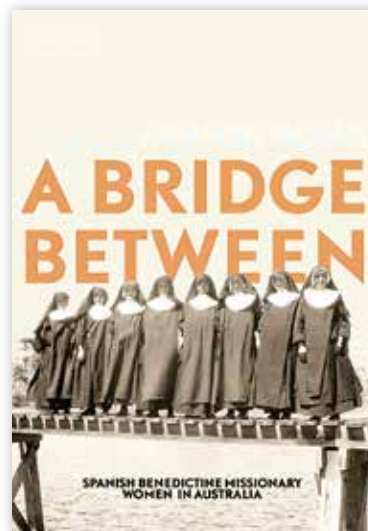
this new book is no conventional history of that place. Katharine Massam has worked in depth with the sources, many previously unknown, much translated from Spanish, to piece together the women's side of the story. Gender, race, language, hierarchy, nationality, law and canon law, rules of orders and cultural styles – all of these social factors are at play as each new wave of sisters arrives from Spain, and elsewhere, to work in a mission field focused on the Indigenous population.

Her history spans the 20th century, from the arrival of the first nuns in 1904 to the commemorative return visit of the last sisters in 2001. Teresians, Josephites and then Benedictine nuns operate the New Norcia school, then the orphanage, working alongside but separate from the main foundation of Benedictine men. Personalities, ambitions and conflicts are handled with a cool detachment and insight. Massam makes the story

highly readable, indeed dramatic, through her sympathetic reading of all kinds of people, whether abbots, bishops and other superiors; monks, nuns and other church folk; Indigenous men, women and children, living in a world that has changed radically from anything they had ever known. The tensions are identified between rapid social change and lives regulated by prayer, instruction and compassion. The many photographs in colour and black-and-white give a challenging and inspiring parallel narrative to her words.

The style, scholarship and substance of *A Bridge Between* show it is time for historians to look anew at the world of the religious orders, in the light of the social upheavals in the world going on around them, and their own charisms borne out of time and experience.

Massam's history appears at the other end of the life cycle of most of the orders in Australia.



The days are over of regular yearly vocations to join orders with, in many cases, a sense we are looking at closing chapters. Hers is a new kind of exploratory writing about the orders, but also Christianity in general in Australia. It is an exemplar. She deals directly with main issues of racial assimilation,

separation of Aboriginal children and cultural dominance. The text keeps a firm account of transgressions and misunderstandings while moving into the necessary space of naming and reconciliation. Her sensitivity to all sides, her ability to ask questions that affect lives, her determination with the documents show how to treat such complexities while speaking to their truths.

Similarly, she casts her wizened eye on the internal management processes of the Catholic Church, showing how the beneficence of key figures, grit and some grace, and even a spot of luck can make the difference to productive outcomes. Nor does she shy away from describing the sometimes precarious nature of the sisters' existence when these variables are not all in place.

Philip Harvey is a Melbourne poet, essayist, reviewer, editor and librarian.

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On **Tuesday 26 October 2021** at **6.30pm** (with refreshments from 5.45-6.15pm)
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RSVP by 19 October to Anne Dowling: phone: 03 9304 2926 • SMS (text): 0429 869 457 • email: wsml@uacpallottines.org.au

Partisan US Christians a schism-in-progress

One Faith No Longer: The Transformation of Christianity in Red and Blue America by George Yancey and Ashlee Quosigk (NYU Press, 2021)

reviewed by Mark Durie

ONE FAITH NO LONGER offers a fascinating autopsy of a schism-in-progress: the separation of American Protestant Christians into theological progressives and theological conservatives.

The thesis Yancey and Quosigk pursue is that two branches of American Christianity are going their separate ways, and the divide now runs so deep that "we come to the conclusion that it is no longer useful to consider progressive and conservative Christians as members of the same religion". Hence the book's title.

To be sure, there are multiple institutional manifestations of this division, for example the recent splitting of mainline white Protestant American denominations including Episcopalians. However, what is more interesting



is the authors' compelling discussion of what underlies these institutional changes.

The authors argue that the contemporary fracturing involves a "battle between contrasting systems of meaning". On the one hand, "progressive Christians value a humanistic ethic of social justice that downplays the notion of an exclusive truth". Progressives define their in-group in terms of a shared

political vision, working to alter society to make it more just for all, including for people of diverse sexual and gender identities. In this project, the empowering of the marginalised requires acceptance of non-Christian beliefs, and a more flexible and inclusive theology.

On the other hand, conservative Christians find their purpose in obedience to a supernatural God revealed in the Bible: they stress the moral authority of the Bible, emphasising the uniqueness of Christ and rejecting universalism. They define their in-group in terms of shared conservative theological beliefs, relying on a more rigid and traditionalist theology, which the authors call a "historical theology emphasising biblical doctrines".

A key insight of this study is that this divide applies right across the denominational spectrum. The progressive-conservative theological divide is arguably a more potent and deeper divide than any of the long-standing distinctions between Christian denominations.

One Faith No Longer also brings

into sharp focus the insight that contemporary debates in America over sexual and gender identity are but the tip of the iceberg of differences between American Christians.

One incident the authors discuss that illustrates the divide was a request from the Presbyterian Church (USA) to change the words of the hymn *In Christ Alone*. The second verse reads: "Till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied." In step with their progressive outlook, which emphasises love over judgement, Presbyterian hymn book compilers wanted to change these lines to: "Till on that cross as Jesus died, the love of God was magnified." However, hymn authors Getty and Townsend rejected the request, showing an uncompromising commitment to historically defined theological doctrines. The progressive hymn book compilers were disappointed, as they believed that the proposed alteration was very minor. In contrast, the conservative songwriters found the "wrath of God" to be an integral part of

Christian faith, to which they felt a duty to hold fast.

The contrast between these two Christian world-views is explored in light of the positions Christians take on Muslims and Islam.

One important piece of the puzzle in this study is that it is progressives who are experiencing the greatest decline in church attendance, a fact that has been well documented in America by many studies, over decades. Furthermore, the mainstream denominations that have been undergoing division are the ones declining the fastest.

America is not Australia, and I could discern many differences of detail in our situation, yet as I read, I couldn't help thinking that Australian churches are being challenged by a virtually identical divisive trend. It is identical, not because of any outside American influence, but because Americans and Australians have both been shaped by the same long-term Western cultural trends, going back to the Enlightenment. I also

Continued on page 23

Poems, fine illustrations connect biblical world to Australia

Stammerings by Roslyn White (self-published, 2020)

reviewed by Graham Scott

CREATION DIDN'T stop on the shores of the Mediterranean. One of our poets who has explored this area of connection with the sacred in Australia is Roslyn White in *Stammerings*.

We look for signs and sayings that help us make sense of the world. Like Roslyn White, we work in fits and starts, stammering our way to understanding. This makes her latest book of poems a likely catalyst for all of us grappling with the life we have right now. White's poems use the spiritual context of nature to hold a mirror up to our searching.

In *Stammerings*, White gives us the big picture stuff, musings and interwoven ideas that move us.

These poems are very good. But her speciality is in the miniatures. It is in her precise descriptions that bring the natural world to life that her work shines. We see life through her eyes and we understand ourselves better because of the experience.

Stammerings is divided into eight sections. The first two set the scene in the natural world where the spiritual and the mystical are waiting. The next three – Desire, Gratitude and Desolation – show White struggling to reconcile the drives and messiness of humanity with the complexities of today. Some of these are formed poems. *Candles of Mystery* and *Feather glow*. But whoever would have thought you could illuminate the human condition with a poem on *Broad Beans*? Or *Pencil Case*? Both are little gems.

Poems like these make the

last three sections on Love – Conceived, Embodied and Surrendered – the strongest part of the book and her strong Christian foundation grounds them all. We know the story of Mary and the Annunciation but *The Knowing Place* invests the moment with the blessings of nature, and in *Mothers in Waiting*, Elizabeth's pregnancy is given a sympathetic update:

*No baby App,
Google list of names
no mothers group or ultrasound
were there for you, Elizabeth,*

Roslyn White can be disconcerting at times. She changes the point of view in her poems so that biblical incidents we know so well are seen from the position of those most touched.

The Marriage of Cana has a sardonic servant musing on the experience: *There are no words to describe this wine./History's finest.*

Lavish gift./If he could do this with water/what could he do with me?

The crippled man let down from the roof in front of Jesus tells us what it was like: *All hope for invisibility lost,/embarrassed, I land at his feet./His are the only eyes I see. In them/I read the deeper purpose of the day.*

And Nicodemus tries to explain what happened to him when he and Joseph dressed Jesus' body for burial: *My eyes accustom to the darkness./Aloe and myrrh almost overwhelm my grief./I feel lost, bewildered, frightened and undone./ Nothing can hasten or/hinder the work of love./I stay. I wait.*

But it is not only biblical people who change our point of view. White uses her own experiences to ask the "What if?" question.

Fingers Spread takes her own baptism, *The waters were chilly in the river/the day I waded in aged*

seventeen, to ask: What was it like for you, Jesus/was the water chilly or refreshing?

And *I'd be there on the shore to meet you/with a handmade quilt to make you warm./it would be more beautiful than Joseph's coat/stitched with love,/filled with feather down gathered for you./Just right for your swag.*

Here is a book of poems that will give you a delicious insight into how the Christian spirit moves in Australia. They are insightful, quirky, surprising and challenging but above all they show the warm welcoming way that Jesus moves in Australia. And you will want it just for the illustrations by Fiona Pfennigwerth anyway.

Stammerings was self-published as a fund-raiser for Tear. Inquiries about obtaining a copy can be made at rosjoywhite@gmail.com

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Reminder of Christian history, warts and all

Bullies and Saints: An honest look at the good and evil of Christian history by John Dickson (Zondervan, 2021)

reviewed by Ian Hore-Lacy

THIS IS A VERY THOUGHTFUL and scholarly review of world history from a very frank Christian perspective. It is more plausible and informative than any other account I have seen. And for someone who failed their diploma of theology in Church history in his 20s, it's hard to put down!

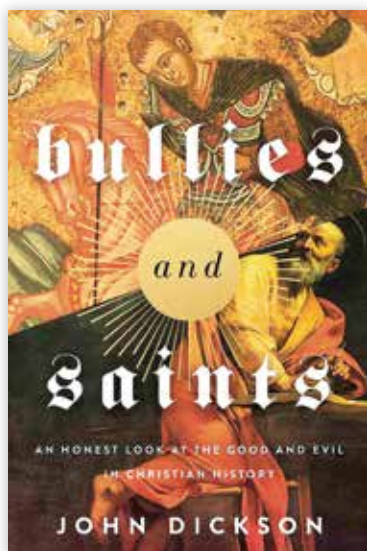
There is an obvious parallel with the book and video from the Centre for Public Christianity, *For The Love of God – how the Church is better and worse than you ever imagined*, which Dickson had a major hand in. He recounts in the first chapter how he was appalled and ashamed to film the account of the Crusaders' massacre of thousands at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem for that project – "one of the greatest atrocities in religious history ... Any triumphalist feelings I harboured about the historic Church died that day". This book makes no excuses for the low points in the Church's history, when it was the bully, in complete contrast to its Lord.

The steady build-up of Christian influence post-Constantine to Ambrose's time in the late

4th Century is most clearly seen in the establishment of hospitals, then education. Dickson documents the maintenance of these values through the Middle Ages, which were thus by no means Dark Ages. Then their manifestation in Europe from the 1400s.

The author occasionally reminds us of "Christ's most distinctive melody lines", which keep recurring over two millennia despite the bully episodes. "Jesus wrote a beautiful composition. Christians have not performed it consistently well. Sometimes they have been badly out of tune." But the Church has mostly kept the score in sight, and the composer should be judged by the composition rather than the Church's patchy performance.

The Crusades are presented as a profound evil that blemishes Christian history. "They stand as a symbol of the violent Dark Ages and of the Church's all-too-human capacity for dogma, hatred and violence toward enemies." But the larger and longer picture is much better. From the Middle Ages onwards, Dickson's narrative describes how the political and religious accounts of history interrelate, and documents how modern historians have a clearer view of the political and territorial factors driving the 16th and 17th Century European wars.



Fresh light is shed on the Spanish Inquisition without excusing its excesses.

The "religion causes war" trope is examined thoroughly and found wanting despite the Crusades. Both the Thirty Years' War from 1618 and Irish Troubles had other drivers, and the performances of Hitler, Stalin, Mao and Pol Pot provide contrast.

In the latter chapters, the profound evil of clerical child abuse overshadows much of the good heritage but then there is assessment of the positives of Christian values in society, largely based on the writings of atheists or at least unbelievers. We are reminded of how much we should be thank-

ful for. In his review of the book, atheist historian Tim O'Neill commends Dickson "for his accuracy, care, fairness and honesty", writing that this is "a worthy and thoughtful book for any reader, Christian or otherwise".

At the same time, the clear Christian basis of the values that have underpinned Western civilisation, and that are now seen simply as secular values, is well documented through many centuries. "It is clear that 'love of enemies' and 'the image of God' drove much of what was unique in the history of Christianity, as even the most begrudging historians and philosophers will acknowledge."

Dickson draws our attention to the major contrast between extrinsic and intrinsic religiousness, as noted by several quoted authors – the former being judgmental and often prejudiced, the latter being rooted in Church community. This latter shows up in altruism, generosity and social support as well as building social capital more broadly. This is most clearly seen in the Western notion of intrinsic human value.

This book provides a timely and very readable reminder of the Christian legacy over two millennia and how it is increasingly at odds with several contemporary trends that fracture society rather than

affirming intrinsic human value according to a "moral logic" arising from the gospels. Accordingly, it provides incentive to affirm the "melody lines" of Christian values in social and political life today, as well as reminding us that the Church is not immune from evil. As the closing paragraph of *Bullies and Saints* reminds us:

"Violence has been a universal part of the human story. The demand to love one's enemies has not. Division has been a norm. Inherent human dignity has not. Armies, greed, and the politics of power have been constants in history. Hospitals, schools, and charity for all have not. Bullies are common. Saints are not."

Ian Hore-Lacy is a founding Zadok board member (1978-98), author of *Responsible Dominion: A Christian Approach to Sustainable Development* and now Senior Adviser for the World Nuclear Association. He is co-author of *Down to Earth Discipleship*, a pastoral "book" on the web at www.downtoearthdiscipleship.com

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Partisan US Christians a schism-in-progress – Continued from page 22

pondered that what is different about Australian Anglicans is that the balance between progressives and conservatives varies so much from diocese to diocese.

Although I broadly recognise and indeed accept Yancey and Quosigk's arguments and conclusions about the drift towards two separate religions, I am aware that

there are Christians who do not fall comfortably into either camp. There are theological conservatives whose hearts beat for social justice, and theological progressives who hold a high view of the authority of scripture and value the catholicity of Christian tradition. Such people could well find the looming divisions all the more painful because

they will be asked to choose sides.

As someone whose sympathies lie more on the conservative side of this divide, I do feel a considerable sorrow about how it has come to this. The Anglican Church in Australia is attempting to hold itself together across a chasm that has been yawning wider and wider for decades. Present efforts to try to

bridge the divide seem doomed to be too little, too late.

One Faith No Longer makes for sobering reading. How long can Christians, who have come to be so divided in their epistemology, fundamental purpose, identity and understandings about authority stay together under the one roof? If American Christianity is anything

to go by, in Australia shared historical institutional identities will not prove to be "sticky" enough to hold our sundering church together.

The Revd Dr Mark Durie is Senior Research Fellow at Melbourne School of Theology and former vicar of Oaktree Anglican Church, Caulfield.

Emergency visits a reminder of Jesus' empathy

by Clare Boyd-Macrae

BECAUSE I'M a Christian, lots of life experiences make me think about God.

Two five-hour visits to the emergency department in a big public hospital left me grey with fatigue, and I wasn't even the patient. Waiting in what we used to call Casualty when I was nursing is like being on a long-haul plane flight, but without the excitement. After not very long, your hair feels dull and greasy, your skin starts to sag and the reading matter you brought has long since ceased to hold any interest.

The youngest of our adult children has had dozens of visits to this hospital. She is perfectly capable of Ubering to the hospital, but if we can possibly be there, we are. These soul-destroying waits are bad enough with family beside you.

She's very unwell, but there are always those worse off, and of course, they take priority. We sit in plastic chairs and



a word for all seasons

watch the infirm limping and staggering in. Heavily pregnant women are bleeding and they shouldn't be. They are terrified they might lose their baby. There isn't much privacy in public hospitals and you soon learn exactly what is wrong with everyone who walks through those doors.

One woman is clearly "on" something – pacing the room, talking incoherently, stroking her big belly, emitting angry vibes. Another two are sitting quietly but wearing their masks half-mast, noses out. An Indian couple with a two-week-old baby are there for the long haul, setting up camp in the corner of

the waiting room with bottles and blankets.

One young woman in particular breaks our hearts. She is unsteady on her feet, wavering in pain, clutching her hot water bottle. Like my girl, she has endometriosis. "Please, please, just give me a hysterectomy," she begs the triage nurse. "Please. Please."

We know there will be a lengthy wait and at the end of that the long-suffering staff will do what they can for everyone who turns up. We know that for many, there will be no quick-fix, just a patching up and sending home till next time.

All I can think of, sitting

there, mesmerised by the passing parade of suffering womanhood, is that this is like a scene from the Gospels. Jesus was often besieged by crowds of the ill, those in agony, the disturbed, the poor, the desperate, those who couldn't afford fancy physicians. And he looked into the eyes of each one, seeing the person behind the pain, seeing what they really needed, touching and connecting.

Two evenings in emergency in one week made me freshly aware of the depth and universality of human suffering. It reminded me of Jesus' compassion, the time he took with each aching body and heart. Each time I am in casualty, I am reassured that the closest picture we have of God is of someone who was intimately involved in the suffering of those He encountered. I think of Jesus and am reminded why I follow the God He embodied.

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



Spirit Words

"There are very few who realise what God would make of them if they abandoned themselves entirely into His hands, and let themselves be formed by His Grace."

Saint Ignatius of Loyola

Dramas from the 1980s drive *The Newsreader*

by Wendy Knowlton

TELEVISION STATIONS encourage us to embrace newsreaders as trustworthy guides through turbulent times. And when she faces the camera and stares down the lens, Helen Norville (Anna Torv) is a star. Perfectly presented, calm and exuding gravitas, she brings order to the chaos and drama of 1986 as the space shuttle Challenger explodes, Lindy Chamberlain is released from jail and the Russell Street police station becomes a terror target. Off air, however, Helen is teetering on the brink of disaster. Frequently upstaged when her male colleague, Geoff (Robert Taylor) snatches significant headlines, and berated by belligerent news director Lindsay Cunningham (William McInnes), she is a woman struggling to be meaningful. Valued for her glamour but dismissed when she pitches more than puff pieces, the fight she is constantly forced to display takes its toll.

Torv makes this prickly “war-zone on two legs” a fascinating jumble. Feisty but fragile, Helen’s world



Helen (Anna Torv) and Dale (Sam Reid) offer each other support in the ruthless world of the newsroom.

collides with the sweetly ambitious Dale Jennings (Sam Reid) when Cunningham offers him a daily update – live at the desk if he can “manage” the “difficult” newsreader. In a different series, Dale would be the conniving Eve to Helen’s Margo Channing, but despite the meticulously labelled bookcase of video tapes, commemorating his fledgling career, Dale genuinely cares about more than personal

ambition. Reid gives him an innocent awkwardness, but also a strong inner core. When he inadvertently precipitates a shattering showdown between Helen and Lindsay, Dale follows up. Finding Helen barely conscious after too many pills, he steps in, and the surprising friendship that results prompts Helen to let down her defences. Whilst Dale offers her compassion and non-judgemental support, she can give

him the benefit of her experience, and the perspective he needs after his first disastrous live bulletin. In contrast to the ratings-driven Cunningham, who looks back longingly at Vietnam because the war was “good for telly”, Helen and Dale see the importance of people, as well as statistics.

This is a series that works on many levels. It is a nostalgic look back at the events that shaped those

times, it’s a window on the adrenalin of the news industry and it’s a study of relationships and the rival tugs of allegiances and ambition. The most powerful emotional moments are conveyed by facial expression – the agony of Dale’s mother, watching his onscreen meltdown or all that is obviously seething through Helen’s mind as she stares, basilisk-like at the camera after yet another betrayal. This reflects the devastating realisation that plays out on the faces of Christa McAuliffe’s parents as the Challenger shuttle, supposed to make their school teacher daughter the first civilian in space, disintegrates. In a work environment where age, race and gender may be the justification for rejecting, ignoring or insulting someone, consciously or without thought, and the best ways to deal with a driven woman are believed to be domination, intimidation or sedation, the real tension lies in whether the ratings or human connection will triumph in the end.

The 6 part series is currently screening on ABC TV and available on iView.

New *RFDS* series celebrates Australia’s high flying heroes

by Beryl Rule

WITH THE Royal Flying Doctor Service as its focus, *RFDS*, the new 8 part TV series on Channel 7, would find it hard to go wrong. Dealing with 300,000 people a year, the service has a rich source of true human interest stories to draw upon. Panoramic views from the air highlight a desert which “goes on forever,” in the words of main character Eliza Harrod, and underline the challenges of landing and taking off from outback runways which have may need to be cleared of kangaroos or emus, and lit by kerosene-soaked toilet rolls.

As a result of her doctor husband’s involvement in a sex scandal, talented English surgeon Eliza Harrod (Emma Hamilton) leaves both her marriage and her London career and, accompanied by her teenage son, goes to Broken Hill

to take up the position as SMO of RFDS. Her predecessor held it for 30 years, and sceptical members of the flight crew take wagers that Eliza will last for a few months or less.

On her first day of active service she is confronted by the necessity of performing a craniotomy (drilling into a patient’s brain) in the small space of a moving aircraft, using an improvised tool and following by video the instructions of a neurosurgeon. He explains that if the drilling is inaccurate the patient will bleed to death, but if left untreated he will die anyway. It is a test of nerve as well as skill, with her new colleagues watching.

Despite her inexperience of the Australian environment, as SMO, Eliza has the sole responsibility for deciding, when calls for help clash, which one should be answered first. The pressure is enormous



Emma Hamilton as Dr Eliza Harrod, SMO of the *RFDS*.

and there is little time for reflection. Hamilton presents her as a vulnerable character but one who can show a steely professionalism when necessary.

RFDS is at its most absorbing when it is concerned with the daily work of its medics, rather than their private lives. The attraction between Eliza and one of her

subordinates, Flight Nurse Peter Emerson (Stephen Peacocke) may be a necessary TV drama ingredient, but since he seems incapable of articulating emotion or working out how to deal with it, it suggests Eliza is needy rather than discriminating.

Emerson’s suspicions about the fate of his brother Nate and sister-in-law Rhiannon raise questions about the dark side of life on the land, with Justine Clarke in a welcome appearance as the *RFDS* base manager Leonie, giving an informal but very moving eulogy.

There is plenty to entertain in *RFDS*, and it does give insight into the contribution made to outback life by those whom executive producer Julia McGauran describes as our “true heroes”.

RFDS is on Channel 7, Wednesdays at 8.30 pm, and streaming on 7plus.

Bad boy Val Kilmer reflects on a life and career punctuated by disappointment

by Tim Kronert

ONE TELLING sequence of this intriguing documentary sees actor Val Kilmer greeting fans at a convention. He signs autograph after autograph, with patience and good humour. He assents to repeated requests to sign as *Iceman* – a reference to one of his most famous roles, in Tony Scott’s action epic *Top Gun*. He does this, in fact, until he becomes physically ill from exhaustion – once the onlookers have been ushered from the room.

Kilmer recently had surgery for throat cancer which has left him visibly sick and with limited speech. This film (streaming on Amazon Prime) is his reckoning with his sometimes controversial life and career – he is reputed to be a very difficult man to work with. One of



Val Kilmer. Official Trailer YouTube.

its strengths is a wealth of candid video footage captured over the years by Kilmer himself. Its other is the intimacy and honesty with which Kilmer examines where he

has come from, where he has been, and where he now finds himself.

It’s a life and career punctuated by disappointments. An early leading role on Broadway is relegated to second and then third billing as stars of the moment Sean Penn and Kevin Bacon join the cast. The childhood dream of being Batman butts up against the professional difficulty of playing him in Joel Schumacher’s maligned *Batman Forever*. Working with his hero Marlon Brando on *The Island of Doctor Moreau* is a deeply disillusioning experience.

Kilmer, in his telling, remains stalwart, asserting himself via his underdog status. On the set of *Top Gun* he leads a faction in the cast against stars Tom Cruise and Anthony Edwards. In doing so his third-tier character gains a tangible,

memorable tension in opposition to the film’s heroes. And he is able to channel some of his outsider energy into his tour de force turn as The Doors front man Jim Morrison, in Oliver Stone’s biopic of the band.

In reflecting on his life, Kilmer has identified family as one of its cornerstones. His son Jack, also an actor, narrates the film, giving voice to his father’s ruminations. Their relationship is sketched wordlessly, with footage of the two swimming together, or resting upon each other in the back seat of a moving car. In a scene where Kilmer is dressing for an outing with his daughter, he can barely contain his excitement.

This theme dovetails with the film’s preoccupation with mortality. The death at a young age of Kilmer’s younger brother, with whom in childhood he’d participate

in skilfully made movie parodies, looms large. In a sense Kilmer carried the boy’s spirit with him into and throughout his career. In the modern day the film captures, too, Kilmer’s grief following the death of another, much admired family member.

These events play into his reflections on his own mortality, viewed from the vantage of failing physical health. They lend an elegiac quality to a film that is, on its face, self-serving. Kilmer, an archetypal Hollywood bad boy, is revealed as deeply human, deeply vulnerable. His powers of speech stripped from him, even his late career triumph in a one-man show about Mark Twain is now lost to him. The *Iceman* ebbs.

Streaming on Amazon Prime video.