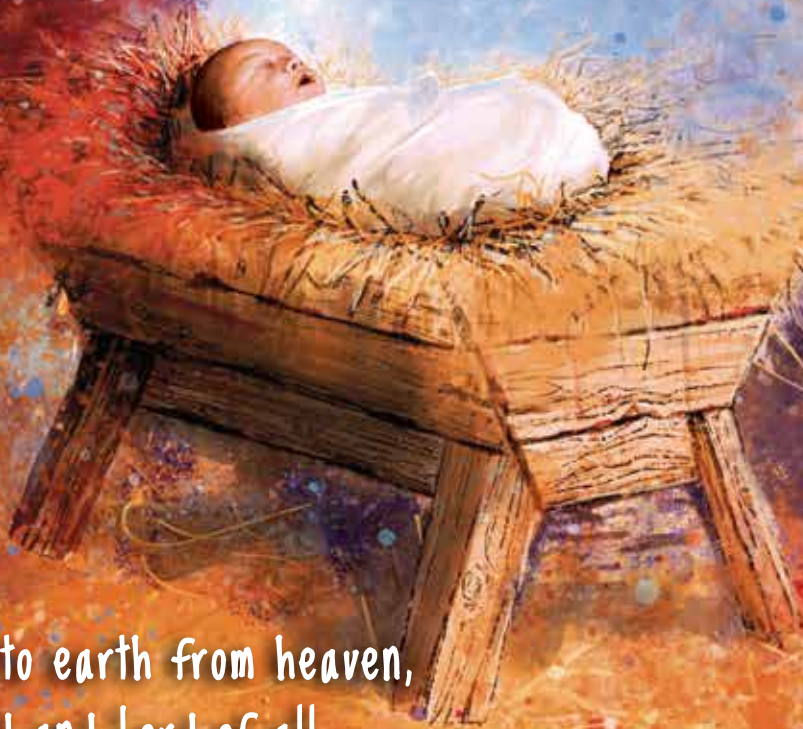


# THE Melbourne Anglican

DECEMBER 2022, No 620



He came down to earth from heaven,  
Who is God and Lord of all,  
And His shelter was a stable,  
And His cradle was a stall;  
With the poor, and mean, and lowly,  
Lived on earth our Savior holy.

*Once In Royal David's City.* Words: Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander

MAV  
SMITH



**P7**  
God's path  
clear for  
Lydia



**P21**  
Wise priest,  
chaplain left  
mark on many



**P24-25**  
Faith casts  
light on  
genetic code





# On our doors, at our tables, we can share God's gift to us

## ■ Archbishop Philip Freier

**Our Advent pilgrimage to Christmas calls for us to prepare our hearts for the celebration of the incarnation of the Messiah.**

We can make this pilgrimage in different ways. In churches where an Advent wreath is used to evoke a theme of hope, faith, joy and peace we can carry that reflection into our own homes and light a candle throughout the weekdays that follow. As we light a candle in our own place, the prayer of the previous Sunday can be prayed as we move deeper into that spiritual grace that is commended for our reflection that week.

Even stepping outside, contemplating the night sky, and praying "Lord what gift do I bring to you?" may serve to evoke the Journey of the Magi as an inspiration for your own pilgrimage. I've been told that people used to rely on hearing the Collect for the Sunday before Advent "Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people" as a prompt to make their Christmas puddings. However we connect words and actions, it is clear that our Christian faith is an embodied and not



Picture: iStock

just an abstract conviction.

This is hardly surprising as the Incarnation of our Lord is God coming amongst us, "taking the form of a servant, assuming human likeness" (Philippians 2:7). In that passage, we are encouraged to "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus". Our gift of imagination, our use of symbols and associating them with the language of prayer is a powerful means for us each to enter fresh spiritual experiences within the familiar yearly round.

If the enthusiastic adoption of Halloween by many Australians is anything to go by, there is an openness to symbolic enactments in our community. It may be that the Advent wreath can become that kind of reminder in our neighbourhoods that Christmas is coming but even more so that "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father". On our doors or at our table there is the opportunity that we can, through word and symbol, share the hope, faith, joy and peace that is God's gift to us in Christ.

I hope that you will come to a joyful celebration of Christmas. With the psalmist we will, "Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous things". Jesus was born into a broken world and lives for the restoration of all that is marred by those old sins that have broken the heart and peace of humanity. Violence and hatred among them, have long beset our world. "The Lord remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God." (Psalm 98)

Have a blessed and holy Christmas.

## Clergy Moves

### Vacant Appointments as of 15 November 2022:

St Eanswythe Altona/St Clement Altona Meadows; Bellarine Gateway; St Stephen, Bayswater; St Martin, Belgrave Heights; Parish of Box Hill; St Edward, Blackburn South; St Bartholomew, Burnley; St John Chrysostom, Brunswick West; St Faith, Burwood; St Mark, Camberwell; St Catharine, Caulfield South; St Alban, Coburg West; St Luke, Cockatoo; St Philip, Collingwood; Darebin South; St Mark, Dromana; St Margaret, Eltham; Christ Church, Geelong; St Stephen, Greythorn; Holy Trinity, Hampton; St Augustine, Mentone; St Aidan Noble Park; Pascoe Vale-Oak Park; St Matthew, Panton Hill; St George the Martyr Queenscliff and St James Point Lonsdale; St Mark, Reservoir; St Stephen, Richmond; All Saints' Carlotta Tye Memorial, Selby; Christ Church, South Yarra; Christ Church, St Kilda; St Luke, Sydenham; Parish of Upwey/Belgrave; St Thomas, Upper Ferntree Gully; St John, Wantirna South; St Paul, Westmeadows; St Matthew, Wheelers Hill; Christ Church, Whittlesea with St Peter's, Kinglake; St Thomas, Winchelsea with Holy Trinity, Barrabool and St Paul's, Deans Marsh

### Appointments:

**BELLHOUSE, The Revd Kathryn**, appointed Assistant Priest, St Peter Eastern Hill, Melbourne, effective 17 April 2022  
**CRAVEN, The Revd Hannah**, appointed Lecturer, Ridley College, Melbourne, effective 10 November 2022  
**MCNAMARA, The Revd Michael Ian**, appointed Incumbent, St James, Ivanhoe, effective 14 February 2023  
**NYIETH, The Revd Daniel Bol**, appointed Assistant Priest, St George, Ivanhoe, 10 November 2022

### Resignations:

**SODERLUND, The Revd Benjamin Olof**, Incumbent, St Augustine, Mentone, effective 19 January 2023 to take up an appointment in the Diocese of Canberra-Goulburn.

**SOLOMON, The Revd Sandra**, Assistant Priest, St Matthias, Mernda, effective 18 December 2022  
**THOMPSON, The Revd Lachlan**, Assistant Priest, All Saints, Kooyong, effective 30 December 2022  
**WILLIAMS, The Revd Peter Victor**, Chaplain, Peninsula Health Network, effective 18 October 2022

### Retirements:

**CRISPIN, The Revd Gerald**, Priest-in-Charge, St Matthew, Wheelers Hill, effective 25 November 2022  
**HALLYBURTON, The Revd Bruce**, Priest-in-Charge, Parish of Upwey/Belgrave, effective 29 November 2023

### Permission to Officiate:

**LOHMEYER-COLLINS, The Revd Philippa**, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 10 November 2022  
**SOLOMON, The Revd Sandra**, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 10 November 2022

### Obituaries:

**PORTER, The Revd Dr Brian Meredith**, 29 October 2022.



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

## THE Melbourne Anglican



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Parishioners celebrate St Mary's Sunbury's new church and community spaces.

Picture: supplied.

## Congregation and community to unite

■ Maya Pilbrow

**Parishioners at a Sunbury church have celebrated the opening of their revamped church and new community facilities.**

The renovations at St Mary's Anglican followed decades of planning to address the changing needs of the congregation and the wider Sunbury community.

The building project opened on Sunday 23 October and had been in the works for more than 20 years, according to vicar, the Reverend Gavin Ward.

The new facilities include a 400-seat auditorium, a café with a commercial

kitchen, secure play areas for children and temporary accommodations for those experiencing homelessness.

Church warden and building project director Noel Sprague said the area needed that type of facility.

Mr Sprague said the St Mary's congregation included many young families as well as people who used mobility devices such as wheelchairs and motorised scooters, who had outgrown the old church building.

Mr Ward said services were previously held in a historic bluestone church, which remained an integral feature of the church grounds. But the building had become

unsafe and inaccessible, he said.

Mr Sprague said parishioners had wanted for many years to expand the hall at the rear of the church but lacked funding to do so until receiving a sizeable bequest from parishioners Jack and Anne Telford in 2014.

He said the \$1.25 million bequest was supplemented by funding and loans from the diocese, and more than \$800,000 raised by parishioners. Mr Sprague said the commercial kitchen, play areas and accessible parking made the venue ideal for events.

Mr Ward said that with space for more people, St Mary's hoped to grow its congregation.

## Barriers to women in parish ministry set for investigation

■ Kirrallee Nicolle

**A disparity between numbers of ordained women and men in parish ministry means a lack of role models for women with a sense of calling, Melbourne clergy say.**

Archbishop in Council was recently charged by synod with investigating the disparity in numbers of men and women clergy in full-time, stipended roles.

Mover of the motion Archdeacon the Venerable Jill McCoy said she believed that since women were underrepresented as vicars, young women who had a sense of vocation in the church might not see many role models in ministry. Ms McCoy said many women were not seen by people in their parishes as potential clergy.

She said she had also noticed women tended to study part-time or online during their training, tended to be further advanced in their studies before they entered the vocational discernment process and were less likely to be offered full-time paid curacies. She said this would affect how they functioned as they began their curacy, because they had a different experience base.

Ms McCoy said though 2022 marked 30 years of the ordination of women as priests in Australia, it only signified one generation of women as ordained clergy.

The motion requested the findings of research into the disparity be reported to synod in 2023, including investigation into reasons why the average age at women

was higher than men.

Ms McCoy's motion was based on qualitative research by Colin Reilly. Mr Reilly said his study found that across all Australian dioceses which permitted female clergy to be vicars, ordained women tended to be stationed in parishes further from the central cathedral than men. It also showed on average, women were ordained at an older age than men, and tended to take parishes in more difficult socio-economic areas.

The Reverend Canon Professor Dorothy Lee said she believed theology was behind the disparity between men and women in ministry, saying complementarianism was the one big obstacle to women taking a full role in leadership in the church.



## 4 OUR STORIES

### EVERYDAY SAINTS

*The Melbourne Anglican* has launched a podcast. *Everyday Saints* will feature the stories of people of faith from Melbourne and beyond. Tune in to hear the spiritual journeys of people from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, viewpoints and perspectives.

Producing journalist Kirralee Nicolle said she hoped the podcast would provide an opportunity to really listen to other Christians' stories.

You can find the first four episodes on our website at [bit.ly/EverydaySaints](https://bit.ly/EverydaySaints) or on Spotify at [bit.ly/EverydaySaintsSpotify](https://bit.ly/EverydaySaintsSpotify).

Tune in to hear from voices including University of Divinity vice-chancellor Professor Peter Sherlock, Texan Instagram personality Kate Boyd, Lutheran missionary to Russia Leif Camp, and head of the School of Indigenous Studies at the University of Divinity Professor Anne Pattel-Gray.

### STRUGGLES CONTINUE

**The level of governmental support for lower-income people remains inadequate, according to representatives from state and national Anglicare organisations, speaking after the release of the Albanese government's first budget.**

Anglicare Australia executive director Kasy Chambers said she was disappointed, but not surprised to see that there was no cost-of-living recognition for people on welfare payments.

Anglicare Victoria chief executive Paul McDonald, said the government's budget priorities showed a lack of commitment to fixing issues like affordable housing and inequality.

But both Mr McDonald and Ms Chambers agreed there were many promising outcomes from the budget, including changes in terminology.

### COMFORT, PURPOSE IN HEALING

**At least one Belmont church member has felt refreshed in his sense of purpose through a healing service at St Stephen's Anglican.**

Brett Gear said his involvement with the healing service had given him a better understanding of God, and a greater awareness of His presence.

Mr Gear was baptised at St Stephen's as a child, but drifted away from his faith during his teenage years. Aged 36, life's ups and downs led him to return to worship.

St Stephen's assistant priest the Reverend Elizabeth Bufton said participants had seen God move in amazing ways during the service. Ms Bufton said healing was ultimately about having a relationship with God, and she was hopeful participants were beginning to feel that.



Karen Strickland with her sons Ethan and Edward at their recent citizenship ceremony. Picture: supplied

## Dreams lead footwear designer to find Jesus

### ■ Kirralee Nicolle

**New faith has helped a recently-baptised parishioner at St John's Cranbourne let go of anger and stress.** After a stressful workplace experience, a series of dreams led Karen Strickland to St John's.

Ms Strickland said the catalyst for her decision to follow Jesus began with COVID-19, which led to increased stress in her workplace.

The footwear designer, originally from the United Kingdom, moved to Melbourne with her husband and two sons in 2015 after a job offer from a large retail store. Ms Strickland said when the pandemic hit, her involvement in design tasks decreased, she was often in back-to-back meetings, and she became very unhappy.

"During COVID, it all just bombed," Ms Strickland said. "The atmosphere in the office just became toxic. There were a lot of people crying. I was like 'I just want to leave, I don't want to be in this job anymore.' I didn't want to stay in that environment. I'd never been quite so depressed."

Ms Strickland said with her husband's income as support, she left her job. She sought solace in nature to escape the constancy of technology and found herself having unusual dreams. In these dreams her grandmother, a Christian, would appear. Ms Strickland said the dreams left her with

the strong sense that she needed to find a church.

"It wasn't anything in particular," she said. "I would be in an open space and she would just be there. It was kind of unconscious."

Ms Strickland said the dreams gave her the impression that there was more to life than just the hustle and bustle of a career.

"I suppose I felt like I needed to come to a church to feel that peace," she said. "I wanted to learn more about God and Jesus."

Ms Strickland said she grew up attending a Church of England parish at Easter and Christmas, so was drawn to the Anglican church. Through attending St John's, she found different connections those in her workplace.

She said through a mentor at St John's, she decided to pray and ask Jesus for salvation in June. When Ms Strickland told vicar the Reverend Sam Bleby of her salvation experience, he suggested she get baptised.

Ms Strickland said her new faith had helped her to let go of anger and better handle stress, helping both her marriage and her search for a new workplace.

"I feel really happy and blissful in my life at the moment," she said. "Letting go – it lifts you and it frees you."

"I find now that I don't want to hold onto resentment or hate or anger towards anybody. Accepting Jesus into your life allows you to do that."

# 'We all could have been Mahsa'

■ Maya Pilbrow

**Community solidarity and support from public figures has driven the longevity of the worldwide protest movement over human rights that erupted after a young woman's death under suspicious circumstances in Tehran, according to young Iranian Australian activists.**

Two young parishioners at the Anglican Emmanuel Iranian Church Dandenong, Hasti Shirkhodaie and Mikael Radfar, said non-Iranians were growing more aware of the ongoing crisis in Iran.

The 16 September death of Mahsa Amini, a young Kurdish Iranian woman, while in the custody of Iran's morality police after being arrested for noncompliance with the country's compulsory veiling laws, has spurred protesters in Iran and around the world to take to the streets in defiance of the Islamic Republic's theocratic government.

According to Amnesty International, the protests, now in their third month, have shown little sign of slowing down, despite brutal crackdowns from Iranian authorities. The movement has centred on Iran, but support in the form of rallies and protests as well as waves of hashtags on social media have occurred the world over. This has included protests in Melbourne's CBD, with hundreds shouting "women, life, freedom".



*Demonstrators at the Free Iran rally in Melbourne.*

*Picture: Masi Photography*

Ms Shirkhodaie and Mr Radfar said the rallies were attended by people from many different communities within the Iranian diaspora and from outside it.

Ms Shirkhodaie said the scale of the protests was unprecedented throughout the 43-year history of the Islamic Republic. Mr Radfar said the turnout from protestors outside of Iran was impressive, and that he hoped the Iranian regime would take notice.

While acknowledging the protests had been led primarily by young women,

Mr Radfar said ethnic and religious minority communities had united in a way that strengthened the movement.

Ms Shirkhodaie agreed, saying the protests originated as both a women's movement and a Kurdish movement before becoming a full-fledged revolution. She said this had brought together many different Iranian communities across ethnic and gender lines.

"We all could have been Mahsa," Ms Shirkhodaie said.

## Children's, youth ministry 'unsustainable' without change

■ Jenan Taylor

**Significant changes may be needed for children and youth ministries to remain viable in the Melbourne diocese.**

October's Melbourne Synod ratified a proposal to establish a Children and Youth Ministry steering committee, and legislation for a permanent standing committee.

Mover of the motion the Reverend Dr Graham Stanton said that without a culture shift children and young people's ministries were unsustainable.

A review by a Children and Youth Ministry Working Group established in 2021 found support for such initiatives was precarious, and the weak state of many ministries for young people would decline further without stable governance.

As Ridley College Centre for Children and Youth Ministry director, Dr Stanton said the motion's aim was that the committees

would provide support for the diocese's children and youth ministry consultant and fix the governance structures. He said although the motion was about culture changes at the administrative level, for a shift to happen there also must be grassroots changes. But he said structures were needed to create a context in which these changes could thrive, which would itself take time.

City on a Hill Geelong youth minister the Reverend David Chiswell said many churches were constantly facing under-resourcing of children's and youth ministers, and financing challenges, but culture also played a significant role. He said in his graduating class at Ridley, maybe only two people had seriously considered youth ministry as part of their role. Mr Chiswell said part of the problem was that in Melbourne no one seemed able to see themselves as a full-time youth minister, partly due to a lack

of vocational training but also the culture of churches. He said many talked it down as a kind of lesser ministry, from which you graduated.

St Thomas' Burwood youth minister the Reverend Joshua Millard said one of the stranger aspects of the culture was that children and youth ministry was assigned largely to volunteers, with few resources.

Mr Millard said these volunteers were usually given groups of teenagers to lead in a Bible study or youth group and then it would be assumed or expected that they would know what to do. He said youth ministry was like teaching, and therefore being appropriately resourced and trained was essential.

Melbourne diocese Children and Youth Ministry consultant Brian Holden said he hoped a steering committee would help the diocese be proactive when it came to children's and youth ministry.



# Islamic partnerships key in Alexandria

■ Kirralee Nicolle

**The first primate of a new African province says he hopes to see improvements in issues of poverty and unrest in the region.**

The comments came during a visit to Melbourne by primate the Most Reverend Samy Shehata, Archbishop of Alexandria on the invite of Local Leaders International, an organisation which seeks to partner with churches across the world to provide support and dialogue between cultures.

"Our vision for the province is a living church for a better society," Dr Shehata said. "We are a church, and yet we see our mission and vision is to help the society to improve and to have more harmony."

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby gave the primatial cross to Dr Shehata in a ceremony at the 2022 Lambeth Conference. The Province of Alexandria is the 41st Province in the Anglican Communion. It was formed in June 2020 and includes the nations of Egypt, Tunisia, Somalia, Eritrea,

Ethiopia, Libya, Algeria and Djibouti.

Dr Shehata said a large focus for province leaders was on social and development work, as well as seeking to foster partnerships between the Muslim and Christian demographics. He said the Anglican church in Egypt had established a ministry partnership centre for Christians and Muslims to share knowledge and hear from scholars in both religions. Dr Shehata also said the Anglican church had a very good relationship with the Catholic, Protestant and Coptic Orthodox churches in Egypt.

He said challenges faced by churches in the province included extreme poverty, such as in Gambella in Ethiopia, where there were about 150 Anglican churches, and many people struggled to find clean drinking water and food.

Dr Shehata said he had been unable to visit Anglican churches in Libya for several years due to ongoing unrest. He said other countries in the Horn of Africa were also

facing ongoing political instability, and this caused challenges for the church.

Dr Shehata said economic shifts caused by both COVID-19 and associated job losses and the war in Ukraine had increased pressure on those experiencing poverty in the province.

But Dr Shehata said the Anglican church in Egypt was grateful to be experiencing more stability over the past few years after the Arab Spring.

"As Christians living in Egypt, we don't like the word minority," he said. "Christians were in Egypt from the 5th century. We know that Muslims will always be there and Christians will always be there, [and] we have the same history and the same destiny. So, in a sense, we don't like to be called [a] minority. But we don't want to feel that we can be divided on religious [grounds]."

Dr Shehata said God was doing wonderful work in the province, with new congregations and the blessing of being able to minister in different places and cultures.

## Church anti-violence activists aim for cultural change

■ Jenan Taylor

**Several Melbourne churches hope to spark cultural change and challenge perceptions of gender-based violence during this year's United Nations elimination of violence against women campaign, and beyond.**

The campaign encompasses 16 days of activism from 25 November to 10 December, International Human Rights Day.

Organisers at St Peter's Eastern Hill said this year their annual service to commemorate those who have died because of family and domestic violence aimed to raise awareness of people who were usually left out of public discussions about the issue.

The Reverend Faith Johnson said the church's Holding the Light service would also consider men, not as perpetrators but as victim-survivors of violence. Ms Johnson said their experiences were seldom a part of the global conversation, so they were often overlooked.

Ms Johnson said St Peter's service usually included presentations from people with lived experience and experts, and last year Melbourne diocese's family violence working group convenor the Reverend Tracy Lauersen had been among the speakers.

She said this time the service would

feature a teenager whose lived experiences, alongside that of his mother's, was helping to illuminate the scale of the issue, and its oversight.

Another speaker would be Matt Taylor from the Jesuit Social Services Men's Project.

Ms Johnson also said a bell would be tolled for all the known women who were victims of family violence in 2022, 40 as of 20 November, and people would be encouraged to light a candle for them and place it on a path leading to the altar.

St James' and St Peter's Kilsyth-Montrose is reaching out to the local population by taking its memorial service to them.

Vicar the Reverend Janice O'Gorman said the church would have the service in the Garden of Contemplation, a Kilsyth reserve that was dedicated to victims of gender-based violence.

"We've run a Holding the Light service every year, but after the pandemic, we feel people need a place where they can connect," Ms O'Gorman said. "We feel that the Contemplation Garden is a sacred space for the entire community so we decided to invite them to go there rather than being in church where some of them may not feel so comfortable."

Ms O'Gorman said the church was also seeking to build a relationship and work

with a local neighbourhood organisation that already had programs aimed at changing attitudes to domestic violence. She also said before the pandemic the church had occasionally run public seminars where issues important to the community were debated.

Ms O'Gorman hoped to initiate a seminar in the near future that focused on raising awareness about family violence as a further step.

St Mark's Forest Hill is among churches in the Diocese of Melbourne involved with a project that takes a whole of church approach to preventing rather than just responding to violence against women. Organiser Ms Frances Pratt said as part of the project she had shared statistics about family violence with the congregation and encouraged them to highlight that when they engaged with their friends and various networks in person as well as on social media about the matter.

Ms Pratt said that churches played an important function in helping to repair the community and that the project was a great opportunity for churches to learn how to do that. St Mark's is also one of several Melbourne churches drawing attention to the issue through billboards at the front of their properties during the UN campaign.

# Alone, far from home, Lydia relied on God



Lydia Thangadurai felt God wanted her to be ordained.

Picture: Supplied

## ■ Jenan Taylor

**Every Friday Lydia Thangadurai and her six siblings would gather in a circle around their mother in their small, rented home in Bangalore, India, and learn a passage from the Bible.**

By the time they were teenagers they had a good knowledge of the Scriptures.

Their mother also told them that God was the only one they could ever rely on.

For Ms Thangadurai who, at the time of printing, was set to be ordained as a priest on 26 November, those words resonated with her, particularly when she left India to study in Australia in 2006.

"That was the foundation that I have grown up with and that's what helped me survive here," she said.

Ms Thangadurai had two goals: to get a qualification so she could earn enough money to help her parents build their own house, and to learn how to help her youngest brother Thomas, who lived with a disability, to thrive.

Now an assistant curate at St John's Toorak, she recalls that those years as an international student were largely clouded by loneliness, and onerous visa requirements that often left her penniless.

She also pined for her family.

But the thought of her mother and father's unswerving trust in God, and of Thomas' needs, often made Ms Thangadurai swallow her despair and renew her determination.

During one particularly hard period Ms Thangadurai found St Paul's Cathedral and

would go and sit quietly there before and after long workdays at a fast-food outlet.

"I was always in the last pew, not engaging with anyone usually because I was too tired," Ms Thangadurai said. "But I felt safe, like I was in a circle sitting around my mother's feet."

She took along a work colleague who after a while suggested they attend the cathedral's morning teas.

***"[God is reliable is] the foundation that I have grown up with and that's what helped me survive here."***

Lydia Thangadurai

Gradually Ms Thangadurai became involved with the cathedral, eventually becoming an altar server, lay deacon and vergier.

She also made several friends among the clergy, lay assistants, and congregants.

"Church became a big family for me, because everybody was just so carefree. I felt like I fitted in," she said.

But Ms Thangadurai continued to struggle with the visa system and one day learned that her case was eligible for ministerial intervention.

Although her peers warned that few requests for ministerial consideration were successful, Ms Thangadurai listened to her heart. "I was relying on God, not the minister," she said.

The help of her newfound friends enabled Ms Thangadurai to obtain a visa extension.

Through the generosity of anonymous donors, she was also able to pursue an opportunity to study at Ridley College.

"It was like something that had been weighing on me lifted and left," Ms Thangadurai said.

She also discovered that she could realise her dream to help people with disabilities through ministering to them and became involved in one program.

It wasn't long before she was encouraged to consider exploring discernment.

Beset by continuous visa requirements Ms Thangadurai almost didn't go through with the discernment process until a mentor at Ridley insisted she continue.

The night before the selection interview she dreamt that her mentor was anointing her with oil and telling her that God would take care of her situation.

Buoyed by that dream Ms Thangadurai went into the interviews without giving a moment's thought to her visa status problems for the first time in a long time.

That same day she received good news about a temporary residency permit and soon realised that God had always wanted her to be where she now is.

"He really wants me to be ordained and this was the pathway he gave me," she said.

Ms Thangadurai's parents, her sister Selena, and Thomas hoped to join her here for the first time to witness and celebrate her ordination.

It will have been 16 years to the day she first arrived in Australia.





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Jeremy Maxwell and Reverend Lynda Crossley with the doll's house.

Picture: supplied

## Artist's dolls' house to aid homeless

■ Jenan Taylor

**A Mornington Peninsula parish is set to raffle an artist's dolls' house with funds to go to a local homelessness support service.**

The Anglican parish of All Saints Rosebud with St Katherine's McCrae will raffle the dolls' house and is collecting other items to help people who are aided by Southern Peninsula Community Support.

Priest in charge the Reverend Lynda Crossley said homelessness continued to be one of the area's most pressing social issues, and the raffle was a way for the parish to help address it.

Ms Crossley said the dolls' house was created by her aunt, the artist and writer Anita Sinclair, and who donated it to the churches. It was inspired by Ms Sinclair's childhood evacuation to Cornwall during World War II, where she was enthralled by an old fisherman's cottage.

SPCS chief executive Jeremy Maxwell said the organisation ran several programs including, its Southern Peninsula Laundry and Shower initiative or Splash program for people who were sleeping rough around the Rosebud area. This program is where the funds raised will primarily be directed to.

For more details visit [rosebudmccrae.melbourneanglican.org.au](http://rosebudmccrae.melbourneanglican.org.au).



Sixty-five year celebrations. Picture: supplied

## Auxiliary marks big birthday

■ Matt Scheffer

**The Bush Church Aid auxiliary group based at St James' Pakenham celebrated its 65th anniversary on Wednesday 26 October, with a worship service and fellowship lunch.**

BCA national director Reverend Canon Greg Harris gave the address to a congregation made up of friends, supporters and auxiliary members, using Jesus' words from Matthew 7, about building your life on the rock. He reminded listeners the reason BCA existed was to make Christ known in rural, regional and remote parts of Australia, so that people could build their lives on Jesus as the solid foundation.

Mr Harris encouraged the BCA auxiliary to continue its prayers and financial support, and invited every person to pray that the Lord would send more gospel workers into rural and regional parishes.



Esther Zhang speaks at the coaching program celebrations.

Picture Evan Englezos

## Celebrating 10 years of coaching

■ Evan Englezos and Carol Clark

**On Thursday 10 November, about 50 people joined in Choral Evening Prayer at St Paul's Cathedral to give thanks for 10 years of the diocesan coaching program.**

Dean Andreas Loewe reflected that the modern tool of coaching was already present in Jesus' ministry as he attended to people with thoughtful, challenging ques-

tions. Coaches and coachees shared stories of personal growth, ministries revived, and God's calling followed through sometimes stressful times. "Having a coach and being a coach has greatly encouraged me in ministry," said Reverend Karen Winsemius. "I've seen people have moments of clarity and identify where to move forward in ministry, just as I've had those moments too."

## From the editor



**The melody of that carol rings through my mind whenever I look at our front page.** It's such a joyful reminder that the God I trust is concrete and real. A tangible person, who began life like we all do, as a tiny, vulnerable baby. What a joy to remember that each Christmas!

On another note, we'd love to know what you think of the new look *Melbourne Anglican*.

Share your views in our reader survey at: [surveymonkey.com/r/TMAreadersurvey2022](https://surveymonkey.com/r/TMAreadersurvey2022).





# A child's early years shape their entire life. And so can your support this Christmas.

Here at the Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL) we know that the learning and experiences that happen during a child's first five years lays the foundation for their life ahead, influencing their future happiness, wellbeing and success. However many children are cut off from vital early learning services due to their families facing financial, cultural and structural barriers.

**Please give a gift this Christmas and help us continue our early childhood programs for families who might otherwise miss out. Your gift will help give children a brighter start in life by helping to:**

- Provide our supported playgroups, for children to develop and grow
- Engage children in early learning, ensuring none get left behind
- Support parents, empowering them to be their child's first educator

**This Christmas you can help give children the best start in learning and life. Donate at [bsl.org.au/donate-christmas-tma](https://bsl.org.au/donate-christmas-tma) or scan the QR code. Thank you**



**Debra Saffrey-Collins**  
Head of Chaplaincy and  
Diocesan Partnerships  
Brotherhood of  
St. Laurence

Here at BSL, we believe all young people, irrespective of their background and circumstances, should get the chance to achieve their educational goals, find a job and live a fulfilling life. And together, we can help them find their way into the working world. Without the support of committed and generous individuals, many of these programs that help achieve this goal wouldn't be possible.

We have been blessed by the kindness of parishes and individuals supporting people

in our community and empowering them to create better lives. Through your prayers and your generous gift to BSL, you are helping young people in your community to reach their potential and find decent employment. **Thank you.**

Every Blessing

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TMA22

**Donate today: [bsl.org.au/donate-christmas-tma](https://bsl.org.au/donate-christmas-tma)**



**Brotherhood of St Laurence**  
Working for an Australia free of poverty



# Music brings Solace to Port Melbourne

■ Kirralee Nicolle

**A Melbourne musician is seeking to offer parishioners at a bayside parish a glimpse of peace and calm amid the busyness of life.**

Pianist Galliano Sommovilla, along with guitarist Dave Miles, has begun playing 45-minute reflective musical pieces once a month at Holy Trinity Port Melbourne as part of a program called *Solace*.

Mr Galliano was raised in the Catholic Church but said he met the locum minister at Holy Trinity Bishop Philip Huggins about 30 years ago and wanted to help Bishop Huggins' work flourish.

"He's a lovely bloke, he's got a heart of gold," Mr Sommovilla said. "The idea [for *Solace*] was to bring people in to his lovely little church."

He said his dream was to see such performances in churches across the world, as it provided a non-judgmental, non-denominational space for people to feel as if they belonged.

"I just hope it makes people chill out a little bit," Mr Sommovilla said. "That's all I want."

"I play for 45 minutes straight [and] make it up as I go. People can come in,



Performer Galliano Sommovilla is starting a new musical venture at Holy Trinity Port Melbourne.  
Picture: Supplied

relax, sit quietly, listen and think."

Bishop Huggins said the performances came from an incredible vulnerability on the part of Mr Sommovilla.

"It's just astonishing," he said. "People are starting to come to it not just for the solace [of the experience]," he said.

"Rather than coming to me for what I can do for him, he's come with what he can do for the community."

To find out more about Galliano Sommovilla or the *Solace* events, contact him here: [galliano.com.au/contact.html](http://galliano.com.au/contact.html)

## Classical musicians locked in for church's 2023 offerings

■ Jenan Taylor

**A Mornington Peninsula parish's musical program is set to continue, attracting popular classical performers again in 2023.**

The Anglican Parish of Flinders with Balnarring's recitals feature established musicians and are held monthly at St John's Flinders.

Recitals coordinator John Barren said there were 10 performances in 2022 and 10 more were locked in for next year.

This year's line-up included classical guitarist Clancy McLeod, and the Peninsula Chamber Musicians, with the latter also set to be among next year's performers along with the St Paul's Cathedral choristers.

A former Australian Ballet School administrator, Mr Barren said he decided to organise the recital programs after retiring.

He said they started in 2005 with a performance by acclaimed musician Geoffrey Tozer on the church's grand piano, and evolved from there.

Among the many highlights since then, was a chamber version performance of *Handel's Messiah* by a group from the

Basilica of St Quirinus in Neuss, Germany.

"There were eight solo singers and 12 instrumentalists, and in our small church, it was powercharged," Mr Barren said.

He said finely tuned acoustics inside St John's were partially why musicians, including Slava Grigorian, enjoyed playing in the space.

Mr Barren said the local community was supportive of the church's offerings, and

non-churchgoers and parishioners alike were regular music patrons.

Vicar the Reverend Keiron Jones said people attending the performances frequently included visitors from all over Melbourne and beyond.

The church will kick off the music celebrations early in the new year when it also hosts the Inveni Ensemble in its gardens on 1 January as part of the Mornington Peninsula Summer Music Festival.



The St John's recital.  
Picture: supplied





Past and present members and leaders of St Alfred's GFS Blackburn North. Picture: supplied

# Thanking God for 140-year ministry

■ Helen Petering

**On Saturday 22 October, GFS Melbourne Inc. celebrated 140 years of ministry in the Diocese of Melbourne. Along with St Alfred's Church GFS celebrating 60 years of continuous GFS ministry in the Parish of Blackburn North.**

Over 150 people enjoyed good food, lively carnival games, memorabilia displays and wonderful reunions. Past and present GFS members from across Melbourne and the State of Victoria, their families, KidsPlus+ connected churches and friends reacquainted with old friends and made new ones.

At the Thanksgiving Service Reverend Karen Winsemius spoke of her time growing up in GFS at St Alfred's, where she began her leadership journey and represented GFS Australia as junior delegate at the GFS World Council in Seoul, South Korea. She encouraged all who attended the service, to not only look back and thank God for the ministry of GFS over the past 60 and 140 years, but also to look forward to where God is calling GFS to serve into the future.

Mary Elizabeth Townsend, the founder of the Girls Friendly Society in England in 1875, met an urgent need of young girls

and women at the time, who were finding life in large cities difficult, after moving from country villages to find work. Mary and her team were dedicated to caring, supporting and encouraging these young lives to flourish.

In the same way, the GFS leadership, since 1882, in the Diocese of Melbourne, has supported and encouraged girls and women by inviting them into loving Christian communities of faith. Here they are nurtured and empowered in their lives, as the gospel of Jesus is proclaimed. Throughout its 140 years of ministry, GFS has served in over 300 parishes across the diocese. We aim to continue to reach out and share the good news of Jesus with perseverance, enthusiasm, and faith.

GFS Melbourne Inc. now also supports parishes in the diocese by providing KidsPlus+ Children's Ministry Support Packages to nourish children's ministry, by helping local churches to employ a children's minister. In the past seven years, GFS Melbourne Inc. has supported 20 parishes and provided over \$530,000 in funding. We look forward to expanding this ministry to encourage and support children, young people, their families, and all associated with this ministry serving the Lord.

We give constant thanks to God for the ministry of GFS, not only in Melbourne but across Australia and in 33 countries around the world, and we pray He will sustain us for many more years to come.



Current St Alfred's leader Elizabeth Petering, first St Alfred's GFS leader Dot Steel and GFS Melbourne chair Debra Wadeson cutting the birthday cakes.

Picture: supplied

If you would like to be a part of this next chapter of GFS ministry in the Diocese of Melbourne, please contact Helen Petering, KidsPlus+/GFS Liaison Officer at [kidsplusgfs@gmail.com](mailto:kidsplusgfs@gmail.com) or 0427 673 256.



# Why this Sydney Anglican wants more priests at the races

■ Jenan Taylor

**Sydney minister the Reverend Colin Watts goes to the races most days. He believes some Anglican chaplains in Victoria should do the same.**

A full-time pastoral care worker for Australian Racing Christian Chaplaincy and Anglican priest, Mr Watts loves the jockeys' billowing silks, the thunder of horses' hooves, the spectators' roar.

But he also knows that often that spectacle obscures the challenges that people in the racing community face.

In March the Victorian Racing Integrity Commissioner announced an independent review into the racing sector's victim support and complaint processes. It came after industry bodies called for an inquiry into how claims of sexual and physical abuse, assault and harassment had been handled in the industry.

Strappers, trainers, stable hands, breeders, and their families regularly faced tough times, but jockeys especially endured multiple hardships, Mr Watts said. Each year of the 1000 or so jockeys throughout Australia, about 200 are injured, 40 per cent have a fall, which might put them out of work for months, and on average one or two die.

Job instability, low pay, irregular hours that put pressure on relationships, the prevalence of bullying, and horse injuries and fatalities, all weighed on them, along with the pressure of keeping weight down, and getting rides.

Mr Watts and his ARCC colleagues attended 331 race meetings, 27 funerals or memorial services, and had more than 1000 pastoral conversations and interactions from 1 July 2021 to 31 May 2022.

They work at racecourses around most

of the nation, except for Victoria and South Australia.

Mr Watts has been trying to engage chaplains for the industry in Melbourne for some time, but he's had little success. He believes concerns about the industry's gambling association may have played a role in that reluctance.

But Mr Watts, who has been a pastoral carer at racetracks since 2009, said the work was more about building connections.

***"The ideal is to be person to person ... to be a presence."***

Colin Watts

For him, doing that by phone, because of distance or because of restrictions like those imposed during COVID, usually complicated things.

"The ideal is to be person to person. That's the whole point of chaplaincy in general, to be a presence," Mr Watts said.

Catholic priest, and former interim racing chaplain Father Kevin Dillon, said the Catholic perspective was that racing was a high-risk area where injury and death happened regularly. Every year the Catholic Church runs a service to remember fallen jockeys, and a service for the whole sector on the Sunday before Melbourne Cup. Both were Catholic but many people in the industry attended, he said.

Indeed for many jockeys and their families, their faith was tremendously important because of the high-risk situation.

"Having a chaplain has been an important component of the racing community

for years. They are a point of connection, which is important for the people to whom chaplaincy is directed," Mr Dillon said.

Still, he said society was not as religious as it used to be, and that the number of people looking for chaplains had diminished.

He said it was hard to get a true picture of the current need for chaplaincy, without doing a comprehensive survey of the sector.

If one was ever done, it should also define what was meant by chaplaincy, whether spirituality and faith, or social welfare and mental health care, in order to discern what out of those elements people actually wanted supported, Mr Dillon said.

Victorian Jockeys Association chief executive officer Matthew Hyland said the Victorian industry's one chaplain who was Catholic, had always been well received. However, Mr Hyland said that the jockey body also had an independent welfare officer, and an assistance program which gave riders access to psychologists around the state, while the sector had a helpline for industry participants. Mr Hyland said the association was comfortable with the support networks in place.

Mr Watts said Victoria's Catholic chaplain did an excellent job, but that the racing community was big and he hoped to build a network of chaplains throughout the state, rather than relying on one person. He said the racing industry operated in Victoria every day throughout the year, not just around Spring Carnival time, and he wanted chaplains to be able to be called on and available at any time.

"I want them to be at the races, to be at the trackwork, to go out in the early mornings, and get to know the people, rather than just wait for things to happen to respond to them," Mr Watts said.



The Reverend Colin Watts.

Picture: Supplied



Marchers at the No One Left Behind rally.  
Picture: Jacob Andrewartha

# We must advocate now for refugees

■ Audrey Statham

It was taken as a sign of hope by refugee communities, advocates and supporters when the Labor party won the recent federal election that a more humane and compassionate approach would now be taken towards refugee policy and the treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum in this country.

Labor was quick to make good on one of the commitments it made concerning refugees in the lead up to 21 May. In August, the Labor government gave permanent visas to the Tamil Nadesalingam family from Sri Lanka who were finally allowed to go home for good to Bilolea, Queensland. However, they haven't yet honoured their other election promises to refugees.

The first promise was to grant permanent visas to refugees on temporary protection visas, known as TPVs and SHEVs. The second was to address the flaws in the "Fast Track" system established by the Coalition government for assessing people's claims for protection, and to implement a new efficient process for re-assessing the claims of people denied the right to fair and proper review of government decisions under the previous system.

The majority of those on temporary protection visas and those waiting for their claims for asylum to be assessed have been living in limbo for more than nine

years. About 19,000 people on temporary protection visas have been recognised as refugees. Yet they live in a constant state of uncertainty due to the temporary nature of their visas and without ability to reunite with their families.

***"[The rally] was an important opportunity to send a clear and urgent message to federal Labor that Australians want a more humane and compassionate country for refugees."***

Around 10,000 people whose claims were assessed under the Fast Track system are on bridging visas which include access to Medicare and work rights, but no eligibility for income support. This leaves them living in poverty, vulnerable to destitution and without dignity as they're reduced to dependency on charities which are overstretched.

Expectation was very high that Labor would make all the changes it had promised to make for refugees while it was in opposi-

tion in a timely fashion. It is now more than 200 days since Labor came to power, and yet refugees on temporary protection visas and people seeking asylum on bridging visas continue to be kept in limbo and in the dark about their future – apparently forgotten by Labor. In stark contrast to its election promises, this delay by the Labor Government appears callous and inhumane.

For that reason, the Social Responsibilities Committee of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne endorsed the No One Left Behind rally by Refugee Action Collective (Victoria) which took place on Saturday 5 November.

Hundreds of people including refugees, people seeking asylum and their supporters attended the rally. Speakers included Nazir Yousafi, the Victorian Afghan Associations Network, Nos Hosseini, Iranian Women's Association, Pauline Brown from Labor for Refugees Victoria and Samantha Ratnam, MP and leader of Victorian Greens.

It was an important opportunity to send a clear and urgent message to federal Labor that Australians want a more humane and compassionate country for refugees, and to call on Labor politicians to get on with the job of holding to the commitments they made to refugees.

Dr Audrey Statham is a member of Social Responsibilities Committee of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, and a parishioner at St Mary's North Melbourne.



# Proactive strategy on property vital

**During synod this year there was debate on church planting and also about churches that had to rent their premises for worship.**

I suggest we establish a proactive property unit within the Property Department to negotiate and purchase land from developers for church planting.

There would be a budget initially however the fund would become self-sufficient in time as land value would rise and land not needed could be sold.

Furthermore, when any church land and buildings were sold, those funds could be utilised for the sole purpose of getting churches that are renting their premises to have their own land. They would then need

to raise funds of their own to build a church, hall etc. What remained of the sale would be part of the fund for church planting.

There would be a committee and check and balances in place and general set of rules the unit would work within.

In future, no church in Victoria would ever need to rent their premises and instead of finding land when the need arises, we would now be proactively getting land before the need is there.

**Patrick Low**  
Safety Beach

## We need permanent deacons

Martin Hayden recently called for a mandatory three-year term as a parish priest for all ordinands. He notes that some ordinands have been called to be permanent or distinctive deacons, rather than transitional deacons preparing to be priests-in-charge of a parish. This is no recent occurrence, with deacons historically playing a distinct part in the mission and ministry of the church. Not just as administrators, but as St Laurence exemplified, serving "the treasures of the church" or, as Martin says, "looking after the flock".

As one of the recent deacons in the Diocese of Melbourne, I am licensed to two placements to provide this experience of serving and calling the flock – as an assistant curate with the parish of St Agnes' Black Rock as well as an honorary chaplain with the Brotherhood of St Laurence. I am supported in these learning roles by direct supervisors, clinical pastoral education training and other post-ordination training.

As the diocese handbook *The Distinctive Ministry of the Deacon* says: "Deacons are not apprentice clergy. They are emissaries of the Bishop and servant leaders in the *diakonia* (ministry of service) of Christ ... They work in many different fields and may often be found outside the mainstream of the church, at the boundaries, and in the ditches of society."

Martin shared the wonderfully diverse expressions of his father's ministry and, notwithstanding the increasing number of vacant parishes, I believe that the permanent deacons also support diverse expressions of ministry inside and outside mainstream church.

**Bruce Everett**  
Black Rock

## THE Melbourne Anglican

Your say is a forum for respectful dialogue about material published in *The Melbourne Anglican*, or issues affecting the church or society more broadly. Please email letters to [editor@melbourneanglican.org.au](mailto:editor@melbourneanglican.org.au). They must be less than 250 words, and include your full name, address and phone number for identity verification. Letters may be edited for clarity, length and grammar.

# Christmas

## with the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic

### HANDEL'S MESSIAH

featuring superb soloists:

Anna Voshege, soprano  
Fiona Campbell, mezzo soprano  
Nicholas Jones, tenor  
David Greco, baritone  
Stefan Cassomenos, harpsichord  
Andrew Bainbridge, organ

One performance only:  
Sunday 4 Dec at 5 pm

**Melbourne Town Hall**  
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### CAROLS IN THE CATHEDRAL

Anna Voshege, soprano  
The National Boys Choir of Australia  
Melbourne University Choral Society  
RMP Orchestra soloists  
RMP Brass and Percussion Consort  
City of Melbourne Highland Pipe Band  
Stefan Cassomenos, pianoforte  
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Friday 16 Dec at 8.30pm  
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**St Paul's Cathedral**  
Flinders & Swanston St, Melbourne

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Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra  
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# The whole of Scripture is our standard

■ Peter Adam

**I hope that *The Melbourne Anglican* continues to allow respectful discussion and debate, as I hope that all Melbourne Anglicans themselves engage in respectful discussion and debate!**

I am responding to articles by Dorothy Lee, *We all accept the authority of Scripture, where we differ is its interpretation*, and Bob Derrenbacker, *Matthew 19 speaks into divorce, not same-sex marriage*. My reply should be read in the context of articles by Fiona McLean, *What we should and shouldn't tolerate must be determined by God*, and Andrew Judd, *Our differences of interpretation reveal a deeper gulf*.

My claim is that the Holy Scriptures are not only one authority among many, but that they are the ultimate rule and standard of our faith, and that they must be taken as a whole entity, with each part read in context of the whole Scriptures.

Both Dorothy Lee and Bob Derrenbacker quote the Anglican viewpoint that Holy Scripture contains “all things necessary for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ”, words from the Thirty-Nine Articles used in our Ordinal. I agree!

However in the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia, Australian Anglicans also assert:

*This Church receives all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the ultimate rule and standard of faith given by inspiration of God and containing all things necessary for salvation.*

I take it that “ultimate rule and standard of faith” means an authoritative status superior to creeds, bishops, doctrinal statements, synods, tradition, experience, reason, theologians, scholars, contemporary thinking, contemporary feeling, contemporary social attitudes, personal opinions, tribal beliefs, and constitutions!

Dorothy Lee claims “As Anglicans we accept the authority of Scripture”. But we also accept the authority of governments, General Synod, diocesan synods, creeds, bishops, theologians and scholars. The issue of the interpretation of Scripture is important, but so is the question of levels of authority.

To assert that Scripture is the “ultimate rule and standard of faith” is to claim more than that it is *an* authority we all accept.

I believe that it is not only the interpretation of Scripture that we disagree on in many matters, but also the role of Scripture as “the ultimate rule and standard of faith”, as asserted in our constitution.

Everyone who is ordained commits to the constitution, as we do also every time we are licensed for a particular ministry. The constitution is not a dead letter, but a constant and public commitment before God for all who are ordained in the Anglican Church of Australia.

Furthermore, I am not convinced that: “We [Anglicans] all accept the authority of Scripture”. In his Presidential Address to Synod in June 2022, the Archbishop of Brisbane, Philip Aspinall, supported the following statement:

*The biblical presuppositions no longer stand therefore the moral rules based on those presuppositions and rationale no longer must be regarded as prescriptive ...*

## Anglican theological methodology

Bob Derrenbacker's article on Matthew 19, is full of useful information on that text, its context and background. However there is a distinction between strict exegesis of a Bible text in its context, and the task of theological and ethical reflection, which sees that text in the broader context of the whole of Scripture. The Christ of the gospels sees himself as the fulfilment of what we call the Old Testament, and his theological presuppositions are those of the Old Testament. He also clarifies the ways in which his later revelation should transform our reading and use of the Old Testament. He also promises more fulfilling revelation through his apostles. So we should recognise the Bible's cumulative evidence, as Bible themes are developed and clarified.

This process, called “collection” by the quintessential Anglican Richard Hooker in his *Laws of Ecclesiastical Authority*. As he explains, it is the means by which we deduce the doctrine of the Trinity, the co-eternity of the Son of God with his Father, and the duty of baptizing infants! This biblical theological accumulation is fundamental to Anglican theological method, and to Credal Christianity. Focussed exegesis has its place, but is insufficient for theological development. The wider context of the whole Bible is also relevant.

A classic contemporary example of this theological method is the use of “that they may be one”, from John 17:21, commonly

used to promote ecumenical unity. In context (17:20), this unity is between the disciples and those who believe in Christ through their message. It is unity between subsequent believers and the New Testament apostolic teaching. It is now used to promote contemporary unity, rather than a particular historical unity. But no great harm is done, as it fits into a wider Biblical narrative of the historical and contemporary unity of God's people.

Furthermore, in response to Derrenbacker, the context of Matthew 19 also includes Jesus' teaching on eunuchs [vv. 10-12], which includes celibacy chosen “for the sake of the kingdom of heaven”. Surely this context is relevant to the discussion of sexual identity and practice?

## We are created and judged by the Scriptures

The Archbishop of Canterbury Archbishop Michael Ramsey wrote of the constant need for the Anglican Church to relearn the gospel and test itself by Bible as the standard of the Reformation, and of Catholicism, that is universal and historical Credal Christianity.

*The full recovery of the doctrine of the Church is bound up with the return of the Gospel of God. Catholicism, created by the Gospel, finds its power in terms of the Gospel alone ... And if Catholicism is thus closely related to the Gospel, the Catholic is again and again driven back to the Scriptures ... ‘The Word of God,’ ‘sola fide,’ ‘sola gratia,’ ‘soli Deo gloria’ ... are Catholicism's own themes, and out of them it was born. But they are themes learnt and re-learned in humiliation, and Catholicism always stands before the Church door at Wittenberg to read the truth by which she is created and by which also she is judged.*

Jesus himself announced that he himself, as one of God's people, lived “by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4, quoting Deuteronomy 8:3).

A whole-hearted commitment to the whole Scripture as our “ultimate rule and standard of faith”, as outlined in our Constitution, is necessary to heal the wounds and divisions of the Anglican Church of Australia.

The Reverend Dr Peter Adam is Vicar Emeritus of St Jude's Carlton and former principal of Ridley Theological College.





# CEO MESSAGE

2022 has been another tough year. Families have been hit from all sides with the skyrocketing cost of everyday essentials – groceries, bills, petrol, rents and mortgages are as expensive as they've ever been. We are seeing many new families seeking help at our 16 emergency relief centres across the state who have never needed it before.

Often when I walk around the programs and spaces of Anglicare Victoria, I am inspired by our clients' quiet heroism and dignity as they grapple with the most difficult of circumstances and the creativity and commitment of our staff as they respond to the significant issues and circumstances of our clients in a variety of settings.

Whether in a foster home, across our residential care houses, or around the kitchen table in a family home, Anglicare Victoria is with our clients, fighting the hard battles or supporting the most vulnerable or finding a way through a crisis, all informed by an organisational culture of compassion and care.

There is always someone who needs our help. Maybe it is because they require our care and love due to being removed from their family, or are a family who has lost their home due to a catastrophic event, or are finding the pressures of home life are causing overheated emotions for everyone within the family. In all of these scenarios, you will find Anglicare Victoria, ever-present and ever-active.

**Together we work for better.**

**Wishing all TMA readers a happy and safe Christmas period.**

Paul McDonald



## "Anglicare Victoria Saved My Life"

Tamara\* 37, Mother of three and survivor of family violence.

### SUPPORT KIDS IMPACTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE

This Christmas, demand for our family violence services will spike. Every donation allows us to be there for kids and families who need immediate help and ongoing support to begin their journey to recovery after leaving traumatic circumstances.

At Anglicare Victoria, we work with people impacted by family violence every step of the way.

### PLEASE DONATE THIS CHRISTMAS

Help victims break free from violence and create better tomorrows for themselves and their children.



Scan the QR code to donate  
or to find our more visit  
[www.anglicarevic.org.au](http://www.anglicarevic.org.au)



# LONG-TERM RECOVERY WITH A SIDE OF GROCERIES

*"Last year, we were in isolation. Our family wasn't available, and I wasn't sure how to get support. Sally\* (an AV emergency relief worker) provided not just the basic needs but the emotional and empathetic care for my daughter and our pets. It was comforting to know that AV was around. It was above and beyond, and I can't thank them enough. Sometimes it's hard for people to ask for help, which I found, but once you do, you feel worthy. – Angela\*, a single mother*

Emergency Relief (ER) provides immediate help to clients in crisis. This year, AV's ER program continued to explore an evolution toward 'community hubs' that connect people to services that will build long-term independence, such as family violence or drug support services and financial counselling.

The demand for ER services increased during the pandemic, with some locations reporting a three fold increase in the number of new clients seeking support. A large proportion of the people AV helped had never experienced this level of hardship before, with cost of living, rent and mortgage stress common concerns.

AV has been trialling the integration of food relief and financial counselling for those in need. This financial capability model ensures clients' basic needs are met, their dignity is preserved, and they are empowered to take greater control over their financial situation and build independence. A financial counsellor is onsite at our Preston and Mission House (Fitzroy) food relief centres. ER workers identify clients experiencing financial hardship and refer them to a financial counsellor for individual support.

“

*"These people are really at the lowest ebb in their life, and if we're not here to help them, I don't know who's going to." – Chris de Paiva, Program Manager Diocese and Parish Partnerships*

Research teams conducted hundreds of client surveys at ER centres this year to better understand their needs and situation. Around 70 per cent had less than \$100 in the bank at a time when the cost of living had increased significantly. AV continues to advocate for the increase of Centrelink payments, which has been shown to reduce ER service demand, as demonstrated during Victoria's COVID lockdowns. Over the last year, 6355 Victorians were provided urgent assistance at 16 emergency relief sites statewide.



SCAN HERE

To hear how AV's emergency relief centre volunteers are supporting record levels of people experiencing hardship.





# COUNTING THE COST OF LIVING

*"I can't express how mentally, emotionally and financially tough the last couple of years have been. Just knowing you are there has meant so much. Really. Thank you so much. I wouldn't have been able to have financial conversations with the creditor and deal with everything else in my life without breaking."*

– Amy\*, financial counselling client

AV is Victoria's largest financial counselling provider in the state, with 40 financial counsellors working to improve the financial situation and education of more than 3500 people.

During the first six months of 2022, the rising cost of essentials became a constant source of concern. The price of rent, petrol, groceries, fresh produce, heating and cooling – not to mention school fees and birthday presents – meant high demand for Anglicare Victoria's financial counsellors.

Financial counsellors work with families and individuals to understand their financial challenges and find solutions. They also advocate for clients to help repay debts, work with utility companies and dig their way out of financial hardship.

*"This has literally given me a fresh start to life. And now I have tools to navigate the future with confidence."* – Will\*, financial counselling client



*"This year, we've supported more people with complex and severe mental health challenges. There's been a huge increase in people who otherwise would not be experiencing financial hardship but were impacted by COVID, like small business owners and those unable to work from home. There is considerable financial strain on people right now."* – Stephanie Bortignon, Program Manager of Community Services, East Metro

## WORKING TO EASE THE PRESSURE

The extra stress of financial hardship makes achieving personal goals difficult, particularly for people with complex needs such as mental health challenges, drug and alcohol use, or are victims of family violence. When our financial counsellors can successfully work with families to resolve money issues, they are empowered to move forward in all areas of their lives.

## BUDGETING THE BASICS

Our staff work to create a simple and effective budget with their clients which allows them to manage their money better and set financial goals. The aim is to give control back to people over their spending so they make essential purchases, pay off their debts and start contributing to their savings.

## A WAY BACK FROM CRUSHING DEBT

Our financial counselling team supported thousands of clients crippled by debt to regain their lives this year. This often means advocating for our clients and negotiating with utility providers, debt collectors and banks for an outcome that is manageable for the individual financially.

## FINANCIAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

In AV's eastern metro region, additional philanthropic funding enabled AV financial capability workers to visit schools to teach young people about finances and financial wellbeing.

## ADVOCATING FOR A BETTER SYSTEM

Anglicare Victoria is a member of the Stop the Debt Trap coalition, which is working towards reform of payday lending and the regulation of Buy Now Pay Later services, which have grown substantially in recent years.



# WORKING TOGETHER, FOR BETTER



Over the last year, more than **1850** staff working out of 93 locations across Victoria, committed to improving the lives of more than **30,000** Victorians

On any given night, AV has over **1000** kids in our care



## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE LIVE IN SAFE AND STABLE HOMES

Annually, AV provided care for more than

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## FAMILIES BACK IN CONTROL, STAYING AND GROWING TOGETHER

More than

**3000**

vulnerable families were provided support with parenting and early intervention programs, by our **family services** teams

More than

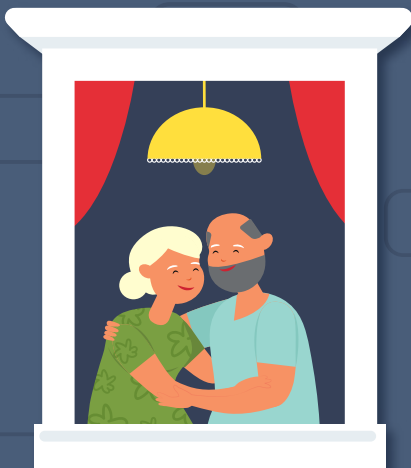
**3600**

parents were assisted and supported with parenting groups, courses and advice by AV's **ParentZone** program

AV worked to help the increasing number of victims of domestic violence throughout the pandemic, providing specialist **family violence** programs for more than

**2000**

people in need



## FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE MOVING FROM CRISIS TO RECOVERY

AV provided **6,355 Victorian families** in urgent need with emergency help, including groceries, clothing, medication and financial assistance.

More than

**3500**

Victorians' financial situations were improved with access to **financial counselling and education**



# Farewell to a legendary chaplain, faithful priest

■ Muriel Porter

**The Reverend Dr Brian Porter, who has died at the age of 83, was a faithful priest, considerable scholar, diocesan identity, and legendary school chaplain. He was also my husband for almost 50 years.**

Brian was born on 27 May 1939 in Caulfield. As a server at the family's parish church, St Agnes' Glen Huntly, he was mentored by a succession of fine priests, who tutored him in catholic Anglicanism, and fostered his priestly vocation.

His first career, however, was in teaching. After a few years teaching history and literature, he studied for the ministry at Cuddesdon Theological College, near Oxford, from 1966. (The Melbourne diocese then offered ordinands the opportunity to train in England). Ordained to the diaconate in Melbourne in 1968, he was rescued from an unhappy curacy when his boyhood headmaster, the Reverend Stanley Kurrle, offered him a history teaching position at The King's School, Parramatta, where he was then headmaster.

Priested in Melbourne in 1971, Brian returned to teach at King's, also becoming honorary associate priest at St James' King Street, Sydney, where I sang in the choir. After we married in 1973, we went to Cambridge, where he undertook a theology degree.

Returning to Australia in 1975, he was appointed Head of History and Assistant Chaplain at Canberra Grammar School, becoming the Chaplain in 1978. During our time in Canberra, our children Patrick and

Emily were born. We moved to Camberwell in December 1982, when he became chaplain at Ivanhoe Grammar School; after 15 years at Ivanhoe, he was appointed Senior Chaplain at Melbourne Grammar School. On retirement from Melbourne Grammar in 2004, he became part-time chaplain at Brighton Grammar School, a position he held for four years.

Throughout his school roles, Brian always generously functioned as an honorary associate priest in the parishes where we worshipped, and also contributed generously to the wider church. He was area dean of Heidelberg, chair of Chaplains in Anglican Schools Victoria, secretary of the Council for Chaplaincies in Tertiary Institutions, and research fellow and adjunct lecturer at Trinity College Theological School. In retirement, he was locum vicar in five Melbourne parishes, in some for lengthy periods.

Always a voracious reader of current theological works, he particularly loved his 25-year role as book review editor of *The Melbourne Anglican*. He edited a number of books, including *Melbourne Anglicans: The Diocese of Melbourne 1847-1997*, the official publication for the Diocese's 150th anniversary. Two books of his own work were published: *From the Chaplain*, a collection of his contributions to the Melbourne Grammar School weekly newsletter, and *Frank Woods: Archbishop of Melbourne 1957-77*, based on his doctoral thesis.

He was a strong, vocal advocate for the ordination of women, and was my greatest supporter through the difficult years of the



The Reverend Dr Brian Porter. Picture: supplied

women's ordination debate. He was also a strong advocate for the full inclusion of gay people in the ministry and life of the church. Generations of school boys, school staff and parishioners fondly remember his wise, insightful pastoral care, his fine preaching and liturgical leadership, and his warm friendship, as attested in the avalanche of messages I have received.

He died peacefully on 29 October at Karana Baptist Community, Kew, where he had been lovingly cared for since May 2020, when the progression of Alzheimer's disease made residential care necessary. Through the good offices of the chaplain, Samantha Lo, his priestly ministry remained active until the end as, with her assistance, he offered the blessing at the end of each Sunday service at Karana.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

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# Like Rachel, we must refuse to settle for

■ Scott Kirkland

A few weeks ago I had the chance to reflect on the parable of the unjust judge with some students who were leaving Trinity College after completing their course of studies. It is a strange parable in which God is presented as a judge who ought to be struck off the bench, with a faithful widow appealing to him for justice. As Luke presents this to us, this is about the need to continue to pray without losing heart (Luke 18:1-8). I thought I would extend those reflections here to think a bit about the practice of theological ethics in the present.

This past month we have been struck yet again with a crisis, another wave of flooding. Of course, I say “yet again” because it seems that the moments in which we are not facing a crisis are now the exceptional ones. Here we are, yet again, cleaning up, rolling out emergency services, fundraising, “responding”. Be it bushfire, flood, extinctions, pandemic, nuclear war, Indigenous incarceration, inflation, inequality, the crisis has become the norm. Anyone who has been in my classes will know that this is a rather familiar refrain from me.

It's not for nothing that my colleague

Professor Dorothy Lee has lovingly dubbed me the faculty Eyore. At the start of my introduction to theology unit we begin with the cry of Rachel for her children. This cry is cited by Jeremiah (31:15), where the prophet writes,

*Rachel is weeping for her children;  
she refuses to be comforted for her children,  
because they are no more.*

Rachel refuses consolation, for her children are no more. To refuse consolation in the face of great loss is an act of resistance. It is an act of resistance because it is a refusal to accept injustice, it is a refusal to accept that “it is what it is” as we so often say, it is a refusal to be consoled by anything other than resurrection. Refusal is hope.

I try to introduce theology and ethics through Rachel and through this refusal of consolation to help students see that there is no way of disentangling a relentless petition for justice and an absolute solidarity with the downtrodden from a resistance to any false god placed before us. What is the creed we say together other than the refusal to say anything less than that God is a criminal who died on a cross at the hands of an unjust imposter of a ruler, and we stand here as



Dr Scott Kirkland.

witness to his vindication, the judgement of his Father, resurrection.

The parable of the unjust judge presents us with, strangely, God as antihero, an unjust judge, and a widow. This widow, like Rachel, refuses to accept unjust judgement. She petitions the judge again and again, asking for vindication from her enemy. The judge gets fed up with dealing with her and offers justice.

Jesus concludes this parable by asking, “and yet when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”. What are we to learn here? This world is unjust, time is out of joint.

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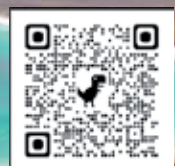
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# anything less than resurrection

As mentioned above, we face a cascade of crises about which we feel utterly impotent. As soon as one leaves, giving us a chance to respond, another arises to trap us in its present, in its urgency. Like the widow, our enemy seems to prevail without judgement being rendered. The forces of darkness – the powers and principalities – throwing people into poverty, destroying our planet, going to war for vainglory and twisted histories, it so often feels as though they are winning.

"And yet when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" When the Son of Man comes, he will vindicate the widow. He will vindicate the one who has refused to acquiesce, who has refused false consolation, who has refused to not mourn the loss of children, who has refused to stop praying. Prayer is an act whereby we appeal in the crucified and resurrected Son of God the Father, who is judge of the world, for justice. It is to do theology. It is to name the false gods for who they are, to confess the true God, and so in faith to live under the sign of the crucified, for the days are coming.

The exhortation I offered those students a few weeks ago, and which I offer you now, is to go forth and do theology like the widow, like Rachel. Refuse the false gods on offer,

refuse false hopes, refuse to settle for anything less than resurrection. Pray relentlessly. This will require you to think, it will require you to act, it will require discernment, it will require everything you have to not give in to those false gods and to continue to stand alongside the widow, the poor, the outcasts. The gospel asks for nothing less. For all that is comes from God, and it is only ours as we give it away.

I will leave you with a favourite quote from Simone Weil, an early twentieth century French theologian, philosopher and mystic:

*Creation is an act of love and it is perpetual.*

*At each moment our existence is God's love for us. But God can only love himself. His love for us is love for himself through us. Thus, he who gives us our being loves in us the acceptance of not being.*

*Our existence is made up only of his waiting for our acceptance not to exist. He is perpetually begging from us that existence which he gives. He gives it to us in order to beg it from us.*

Dr Scott A Kirkland is Stockdale Senior Lecturer in Ethics at Trinity College Theological School, Melbourne.

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# The code that reveals creation's wonder

As we continue our series on younger Christian scientists and their science-faith journeys, executive director Chris Mulherin, at ISCAST – Christians in Science and Technology, speaks with David MacPherson about his experience with Duchenne muscular dystrophy and his passion for science.

**CHRIS:** Hi David, it's great that you're happy to talk to us. I wonder if you'd introduce yourself briefly.

**DAVID:** Yeah, I've just completed four years at Monash University studying genetics and biochemistry and I'm looking forward to a PhD in genetics next year – I'm very passionate about science. I have Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a sex-linked male disease. For fun, I enjoy playing weekly wheelchair soccer.

**CHRIS:** Could you tell us a bit more about Duchenne muscular dystrophy?

**DAVID:** It's a genetic disease that you're born with. It can be inherited from the mother's side, or it can be a random mutation. It mainly affects about one in 5000 boys worldwide. As a medic, Mum was observing my movements from a very young age, thinking something wasn't quite right. I was diagnosed when I was about five.

**CHRIS:** And what does the future hold?

**DAVID:** In the past you wouldn't survive much past your 20s, but now the prognosis for DMD is much better – I for one am 23! Better physiotherapy and steroid medication help maintain muscle longevity. These days there are people with DMD living into their 40s.



David MacPherson. Picture: supplied

**CHRIS:** Tell us a bit more now about your science. You're a young scientist with a genetic disease, going into a PhD in genetics. In your PhD, are you doing something personal there?

**DAVID:** You could say my motivation for exploring genetics is, in part, through my firsthand experience of what genetic mutations can cause. For a PhD, you need to do something that you're passionate about, so a project on DMD would be a great motivator. PhD students have warned me that when the hard slogging of the project hits, you want to be able to say, "Yes, I still want to do this!" Monash Uni's disability student services will fund someone to be a lab assistant. They will be the hands and I'm the brain, so by and large I'll be the one directing.

**CHRIS:** So how did you become interested in science?

**DAVID:** At high school I had a really great

chemistry teacher – he was interesting, fun, and good at answering questions. I found myself enjoying this chemistry stuff where other people would say, "Oh, I hate this!" Then into university I became intrigued by the genetic code, "So let's give genetics a go," I decided.

**CHRIS:** Let me ask about your Christian faith. You've grown up in a Christian family, have you always been a Christian or do you see it as something that at some point you took hold of personally?

**DAVID:** In early high school it clicked that I was pursuing faith myself rather than through my parents. I was reading apologetics and wrestling with questions like, "Has this Christian thing got some truth?" "Do I really believe it?" I never had any sense that God wasn't real, but my faith needed to become personal.

**CHRIS:** Did you have to work through whether or not science challenged your faith?

**DAVID:** Probably a little at the early stages. I would ask, "Are there certain things about Christianity that I can't believe anymore?" I discovered that people like CS Lewis and many other Christian writers had tackled well these issues. I started to see that science and God work well together and that encouraged me more in my faith.

**CHRIS:** You obviously love science. How, as a Christian, do you understand the scientific enterprise?

**DAVID:** Science for me is exploring the wonderful creation of God and seeing the amazing, intricate things that happen at



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# for David

such a tiny molecular level. And I think, "Wow, isn't this creation amazing!" In this way, there's no conflict with science and God, it's actually a beautiful partnership.

But I've found science can't answer the harder existential questions, the sort of questions you have when you have a disability like mine, and you have to consider your lifespan.

**CHRIS:** Can you tell us more about those existential issues if you're happy to?

**DAVID:** More than the challenge of questions in science has been working out God's goodness towards me. I went through a phase of being angry at God and had many questions: "Why am I born with this disease that'll shorten my life?" "Could God love me if he allows me to be born with this?" "Does my life have any meaning if it's going to be shorter?" "How could you, God, let this happen to me? I've done nothing wrong". In my case DMD didn't even run in my family, it was just a random mutation. A bit like Job, I wondered, "Where, where are you God in allowing this to happen?". So, I didn't want to be friends with him at all at times.

But slowly, God turned me towards him. I realised my identity is in Christ and not in my own body, and whatever happened I could trust that God had a better plan for me. All this took a good while, but God got me through by his grace in the end.

**CHRIS:** So, what would you say to somebody who says, "Well I couldn't possibly believe there's a good God because I'm in a wheelchair, I have a short life expectancy?"

**DAVID:** It's a very tough question and a very personal one. For me, the most reas-



David MacPherson in the lab. Picture: supplied

suring thought is that for us as Christians this life on earth is a very short stop on the way to our proper home. Paul says, "Our sufferings here will be nothing compared to the glory we see with God". There might be suffering now but in the end he will get rid of it. I would also encourage others to explore how God, on the cross, has been through pain at a deep, personal level.

**CHRIS:** You talked before about wrestling with wanting God's friendship. Have you been through other types of questioning times?

**DAVID:** Having a progressive disease means you always have some days where you think, "Oh, I wish I could do this or that". I love watching sport but sometimes I wish I could do the sport. Playing wheelchair soccer has resolved some of that wistfulness. And then other general things in life that someone like me can't do, like driving a car. It's only human to have a down day; that's where faith in God keeps you going and, for

me, gives me a great hope and joy in my life that I don't think I could have without God.

**CHRIS:** Have other people in your life encouraged you?

**DAVID:** I've been seeing the same doctor since I was about five. He's been very supportive of my studies and always interested in how I'm going. It's been great to have continual medical care with the same person who's got to know me as an individual. And my parents have been brilliant at supporting me at home and caring for me from day to day and helping me get up and get ready for the day. And I have two really caring sisters as well.

**CHRIS:** Well David, it's been really interesting and encouraging talking to you. I hope it can encourage others, too. Thank you so much for being willing to share about your personal situation; it's something that many people might not have wanted to do.

**DAVID:** Oh, thank you for having me. It's been a pleasure.

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# From pumping iron to the priesthood

■ Kirralee Nicolle

**Waiting on the sidelines has never really appealed to the Reverend Tanya Cummings.**

For Ms Cummings, this desire to be in the centre of the action has taken her through parenting three children, working as a personal trainer, aerobics instructing, working as a children's pastor and verger and finally, training to become a priest.

"I think I get bored if I'm just sitting and watching other people do stuff," she said. "I'd rather play backyard cricket than watch cricket. I've never just been a spectator."

Having worked in parishes in Essendon and Dingley, in February this year Ms Cummings took up a new role as priest-in-charge of Mt Eliza Anglican Church.

Ms Cummings said church wasn't a priority growing up in her immediate family. Her experience of faith began with two key women.

"When I was a little girl, I had a grandma who was a Christian and she told me the stories of Jesus," she said.

When Ms Cummings was a teenager, she began to rebel. Her parents sent her to live with a Christian aunt in Port Macquarie, and she attended a youth group where she said the teenagers were on fire for Jesus.

"One night at a Bible study they asked if I wanted to make Jesus Lord and Saviour of my life, and I wanted what they had," she said.

When Ms Cummings returned to Melbourne, she said life became more challenging. Once she fell pregnant with her first child, the church began to draw her in again.

"I decided to really get my life sorted out and seek the Lord and find a church home to raise my kids in," she said.

The family settled at St John's Anglican in Diamond Creek. Ms Cummings took up positions as a verger and a children's pastor, among other roles in the parish.

Then, 14 years ago, she went through divorce. Ms Cummings said facing the end of an abusive marriage, she wanted clarity in her beliefs. She said she had felt a pressure to be perfect and to maintain her marriage despite all odds.

"It was a real shaking of my faith," she said. "I wanted to go to Bible college to find out if I was making God into the God I wanted him to be or if everything I believed was actually true."

"I was wondering why God allowed me to be in that situation."

With a yearning for mission,



*After a career in the fitness industry, the Reverend Tanya Cummings is now a priest. Picture: Supplied.*

Ms Cummings begged God to send her into mission work. She longed to work in Africa or the Northern Territory. Instead, God sent her to Doreen, a small town just north of Diamond Creek. St John's was launching a church plant in the area, now known as Plentylife, and she became part of the founding team.

"I felt a real call to church planting [and] local mission," she said. "I really prayed about it and sensed a yes from God."

Ms Cummings then became the second person in Australia to become a missional community development worker.

Through study at what was then the Bible College of Victoria and later became Melbourne School of Theology, and then at Ridley College, God led her to pursue ordination. But, to become a priest, Ms Cummings had to leave the fitness industry. She had worked throughout her years of parenting young children as an aerobics instructor, had run circuit classes and also

took on personal training.

"People say I used to keep people physically fit, and now I keep them spiritually fit," she said. "It was a bit of fun!"

When looking back at the challenges of life, Ms Cummings said she feels they have prompted her to have more understanding, grace and sensitivity toward those in her congregation. As part of her work, she has counselled other women who have experienced domestic abuse.

"Having real life experiences makes me more approachable and more easily able to support others in their life experience, because everyone has stuff," she said. "For me personally, it's showed me that God has me in his hand. He protected me and my kids, and I'm just amazed at his protection really."

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



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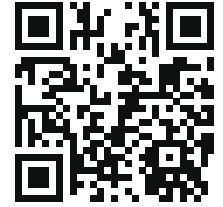
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# Leaders, you don't need to go it alone

■ Carol Clark

I recently remembered an encounter from my time as a consultant in a Sydney corporate communications consultancy. Despite being well qualified, I sometimes felt ill equipped to be working in a business context.

At the time I had a wise, experienced manager. One day after he'd helped me solve a sticky work issue, I said, "Tom, I couldn't do this job without you!" and he replied, "I feel the same – I couldn't do my job without you either". His comment surprised me as I had projected complete competence and confidence onto him as my boss. But to him it was natural that I should ask him for help, just as he would ask me for guidance on an issue when he needed it.

This encounter connects with another conversation I had – this one with an Anglican priest who shared that being a priest was one of the loneliest roles he'd ever had. I was surprised, having witnessed his skilful, enthusiastic leadership. He was indeed skilled but he also felt very alone – and now through his coaching he got clearer about the purpose of his priestly ministry while starting to share and learn from his experience of loneliness.

Leadership is particularly challenging in voluntary organisations like churches. We may lack resources or experience differences with parishioners and fellow ministers, even as we seek to love them. No one is fully prepared for the challenges that arise – strategic, relational, or spiritual – and we rely on each other's wisdom and support as members of the body of Christ.

To ask for this help requires a learning stance and the courage to learn in public – whether it's alongside colleagues or in more structured sessions of coaching and supervision. Of course, if we don't let ourselves ask for help, this too will be a



Picture: iStock

***The apostle Paul exhorts us to live (and lead) in a way that is worthy of our call – in humility, gentleness, and patience (Ephesians 4:2).***

Carol Clark

problem for our leadership.

But we don't need to journey alone as leaders. Through the coaching program offered by the diocese – and now through professional supervision – we can reflect confidentially on our ministry journey with a skilled guide. Coaches and supervisors will offer some input, but their role is primarily to help us reflect and problem solve: to find the way forward that resonates for our ministry context and extends us as leaders; to help us

understand our role in what happens.

Coaching focuses more on how we function and get things done in our roles, helping us to develop new ministry initiatives and make clearer strategic decisions for church growth and flourishing. Overlapping with this, supervision supports us in developing vocationally as wise "in touch" leaders: modelling ethical ministry and maintaining personal (including spiritual) well-being and for our people.

Through all these opportunities, we're invited to stay present to the work of the Holy Spirit in our life and vocation. The apostle Paul exhorts us to live (and lead) in a way that is worthy of our call – in humility, gentleness, and patience (Ephesians 4:2). In our disparate roles as prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers we're gifted and equipped to do the work of ministry, to attain maturity – not just for ourselves but to build up the whole body in love (Ephesians 4:11-13).

## Looking for the prayer diary?

You can find it online at [bit.ly/ADOMprayerdiary](https://bit.ly/ADOMprayerdiary)





# I want to talk to my colleagues about Christianity, where do I start?

Picture: iStock

## ■ Karen Morris

**Talking about Jesus with our friends seems an impossible task, even when we want to. We chat about the issues of the day, but never seem to engage at any depth.**

Evangelist Becky Pippert offers a very useful idea. I call it the conversation spiral. Pippert suggests that good conversations have the following pattern.

“General Questions” are those which lead to conversations which bounce around topics and are often just banter. These are the questions most people ask in conversation.

“Specific Questions” relate to the inner world of the person. They are questions about feelings, reasons for opinions or the impact of the topic on the person.

“God Questions” are obviously those that relate to the spiritual dimension of the topic. They are often connected to values, ethics, worldview or faith.

They could also be called external, internal and eternal questions, and I suggest you practice making up sets of three questions.

Here’s an example. Topic: Asylum Seekers.

- **General:** What do you think of the Australian attitude to asylum seekers?
- **Specific:** How would you want your children to be treated in this sort of case?
- **God:** How do we fix injustice in the world? Is there any way?

Developing sets of possible questions is a way of having deeper conversations, not because you’ll trot them out on demand, but because you’ll train yourself in a different conversation style.

Here’s another set. Topic: Celebrities.

- **General:** X (the latest celebrity) has lost their way. What do you think?
- **Specific:** Have you ever lost your way?
- **God:** Where do you go if you lose your way?

As you go through this week note the topics of your conversations. Spend 30 minutes writing down a set of three questions for each topic as a way of developing the skill. Next week, notice the openings for specific questions and God questions and use them if you can.

Given that it’s nearly Christmas here’s a suggestion for conversation:

- **General:** What are your family traditions at Christmas?
- **Specific:** Where did those traditions

originate? How do they impact you?

- **God:** What spiritual aspects of Christmas appeal to you?

The only problem with these questions is that you might have a deeper conversation! And then what will you do? Do you have a way of explaining the central ideas of Christianity one minute? Can you answer, succinctly and without jargon, the question: “What do Christians believe?” This is obviously the next step.

Learning how to answer this question is vital. There are many outlines of the gospel you can learn. In *Evangelism in a Skeptical World* Sam Chan outlines a few and suggests his own.

I think our culture is very visual and so I use a diagram to explain the gospel. You can find my training video here: [bit.ly/3dSB4dF](https://bit.ly/3dSB4dF).



Notice that I haven’t explained every possible thing about the gospel, just the bare minimum: Jesus lived, died and was resurrected for my sin! If that statement is true, it changes everything, both for you and your friend and they need to know it!

**Is there a curly question you’d like us to address?**

You can let us know by using the QR Code and filling out the form found at:



Karen Morris loves telling people about Jesus, and is keen to help others do the same. She ministers as an evangelist with the Monash University Christian Union and in her community.

# Prurient series adds little to sad story

■ Tim Kroenert

Netflix surely gets plenty of mileage from its true crime content. This ranges from the salacious, such as Ryan Murphy's *Dahmer*, to the procedural, for instance the Indian production *House of Secrets*.

Despite its sensational title, *Capturing the Killer Nurse* is a surprisingly sober, victim-centric look at the crimes of serial killer Charles Cullen. His story gets a double hit on the streaming giant, portrayed also in the A-list Hollywood vehicle *The Good Nurse*. And that's just the tip of Netflix's true crime iceberg. Clearly, whether in documentary or narrative form, it's a genre that captures eyeballs.

*Vatican Girl* falls toward the salacious end of the scale. This is despite its patient pacing and the time it gives to the family of its titular victim, Vatican City resident Emanuela Orlandi, who disappeared in 1983 and was never heard from again. Her siblings spent decades searching for her, and their pain and unrelenting hope resound in the modern-day interviews. But the mystery of Emanuela's disappearance is clouded by international intrigue, the incursions

of organised crime, and Dan Brown level Catholic conspiracies. The series tends to leer over these shadowy spectres, at the cost of real human connection.

*Vatican Girl* is divided into four episodes. The first introduces us to Emanuela and her family, relates the day of her disappearance and the first weeks of the investigation. Early leads include indications her kidnappers were terrorists who intended to hold her to ransom, pending the release of Mehmet Ali Ağca, who two years earlier had shot Pope John Paul II. This sets the abduction against the backdrop of a vaster international conflict, between the West and Soviet Russia, and the Pope's determination to return Catholicism to his homeland of Poland.

The second focuses on the one-time mistress of a notorious crime boss. She claims to have kept Emanuela at her home for a period of time, before handing her off to an anonymous but purportedly high-ranking Vatican official. There are implications this crime boss held some financial sway over Vatican powerbrokers. Episode three features extended interviews with a man who claims to have been

Emanuela's abductor. Absurdly, he insists on wearing a bandana on his face for anonymity. His identity is part of public record, and his account has long been considered to lack credibility.

The fourth episode delves into the question that hangs over all these scenarios: Why Emanuela? Regardless of their ultimate objectives, why did her kidnappers single her out? Here, a former childhood friend appears in pixelated silhouette to reveal Emanuela had been subject to sexual advances from a cardinal. Is this why she was seen by her kidnappers as a valuable pawn? And why the Vatican itself has been so evidently opaque with just what it knows and doesn't know about the girl's disappearance? Clearly this is horrifying if true.

The problem is the series has no concrete answers. It's replete with conjecture and shady maybes. What's more it adds little to the story than what is already public record. As such it feels a little empty, even prurient. Eyeballs for Netflix, but what justice or peace for Emanuela and her family?

Streaming on Netflix.

## Try the No-obligation 'Taster' Program

'Taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusts in him.' Psalm 34:8

Who should attend the "Taster" class? Anyone who:

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- Is curious about the bible
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- Wants to be equipped for ministry



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### UPCOMING EVENTS & SERVICES

<b>Wednesdays</b>	1pm	Lunchtime Concert Series (see website for upcoming concerts)
<b>Sun 11 Dec</b>	4pm	Christmas Carols Service Preacher: The Dean
<b>Tues 13 Dec</b>	6.00pm	Festival Eucharist to mark the 30th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women as Priests Preacher: Archbishop Kay Goldsworthy AO
<b>Sat 24 Dec</b>	3pm	Children's Christmas Service
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	6pm	Christmas Carols Service Preacher: The Dean
	9pm	First Eucharist of Christmas Preacher: The Dean
	11pm	Midnight Mass Preacher: The Dean
<b>Sun 25 Dec</b>	8am	Holy Communion (BCP) Preacher: The Precentor
	10am	Choral Eucharist Preacher: The Archbishop

### REGULAR SERVICES

<b>Sundays</b>	8am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	10am	Choral Eucharist
	4pm	Choral Evensong
<b>Weekdays</b>	12.15pm	Holy Eucharist
	5.10pm	Choral Evensong or Evening Prayer

The Cathedral is open Monday to Friday 10am – 5pm | Saturdays 10am – 3pm.

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