

THE Melbourne Anglican

SEPTEMBER 2024, No 639



Retired, but not from gospel work

Greg and Jocelyn Lay spend their days maintaining buildings, cooking meals, even helping to preach or run children's ministry. It's a busy retirement for the pair! But as Bush Church Aid nomads their goal is to support field workers and others across rural Australia. During their time travelling, they believe God has protected and guided them.

Story P24-25.



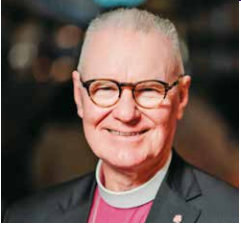
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Pray our schools ignite a passion for faith and service

■ Archbishop Philip Freier

I have been very encouraged by my participation in several Anglican school events in recent weeks.

Most recently, Melbourne hosted the Anglican Schools Australia national conference. The organisers chose Melbourne as a way of expressing solidarity with the Victorian Anglican schools as many of them absorb the cost of a newly imposed payroll tax by the state government. This means now that for some schools more is paid to the Victorian government through this new tax than is received from the state through grant funding.

Across Australia there are 160 Anglican schools educating 180,000 students. Anglican schools are significant employers with 30,000 staff supporting the learning of these students. The ASA conference brings together chaplains, principals, members

of school governance boards as well as an increasing representation of bishops from across the country. The focus of the 2024 ASA conference was “Embracing our Anglican Identity”. The Conference attendees had the opportunity of learning from some of our Victorian Anglican school students who had participated in student voice forums over the last three years.

In mid-June I participated in one such forum held at Melbourne Girls Grammar that involved students from a wide variety of our schools in the diocese. It is very moving to hear these students speak about their Christian vision and how they have been nurtured in it by their schools. I think that we have an inspiring new generation of changemakers who are well engaged with their Christian faith through their school experience. This is a great outcome of the work and planning of many people, of course, but it is important to single out the work of

the school chaplains for appreciation.

Every second year the Anglican schools from the Province of Victoria join together at St Paul's Cathedral for a joint service. Even though the cathedral hosts many schools for their individual celebrations, there is something that is very powerful when students and teachers as well as their chaplains and principals join together for this act of corporate worship. The schools had joined with Anglican Overseas Aid in an awareness and fundraising project that will address some of the impacts of poverty that prevent student participation in schooling in Kenya. Each school brought along a pilgrim staff and carried the statement of their donation in a pilgrim purse slung from it (one of the symbols alongside the Bible and a pastoral staff in the coat of arms of the Diocese of Melbourne). At the end of the service, I was given my own pilgrim staff and my wife Joy given a pilgrim's purse for our journey of pilgrimage beyond the Diocese of Melbourne.

We are in a curious time in the cultural history and public discourse of our nation where the media mostly attributes “privilege” and other attributes of elitism when referring to our schools. Any entity that is collectively educating 180,000 students is clearly making a significant contribution to our community. This is not just through the formal aspects of education but also through igniting a passion for faith and service that I see so alive in the students I meet. Please pray for our schools, their students and all who work in them.

Vacant Appointments as of 16 August 2024:

St Silas and St Anselm, Albert Park [from October]; St Alfred, Blackburn North; Christ Church, Brunswick; St Michael, North Carlton; St John, Camberwell; St Matthew, Cheltenham; Redemption Church, Craigieburn; St Mark, Emerald; St Oswald, Glen Iris; St Alban, Hamlyn Heights; St Mary, North Melbourne [from October]; St Thomas, Moonee Ponds; Ormond Anglican Parish; St Aidan, Parkdale; Pascoe Vale-Oak Park; Mullum Mullum, Ringwood; St Luke, Vermont; St John, Wantirna South; St Thomas, Winchelsea

Appointments:

ALLEAUME-ROSS, The Revd Dr Kathleen Mary Anne, appointed Parish Minister, St Stephen, Richmond, effective 13 October 2024

CAROLANE, The Revd Canon Christopher John Robert, appointed Assistant Minister and Canon Emeritus, St Paul, Cathedral, Melbourne, effective 6 August 2024

MCNAMARA, The Revd Michael Ian, appointed Area Dean, Deanery of Whitehorse, effective 2 August 2024

MUDD, The Revd Scott John Donald, appointed Vicar, Anglican Parish of Gisborne, effective 8 October 2024

VUN, The Revd Canon Yee Hin [Robert], appointed Assistant Minister and Canon Emeritus, St Paul, Cathedral, Melbourne, effective 6 August 2024

WANG, The Revd Yue [Michelle] Wang, appointed Extension as Vicar, St David Moorabbin, effective 12 January 2025

WINDOW, The Revd Canon Jane Elizabeth, appointed Assistant Minister and Canon Emeritus, St Paul, Cathedral, Melbourne, effective 6 August 2024

Permission to Officiate:

HEAD, The Revd David Rodney, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 31 July 2024.

JACKSON, The Revd Jonathan, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 31 July 2024.

NYIETH, The Revd Daniel Bol, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 8 August 2024

TONGIA, The Revd Siosifa Mafi Tongia, appointed Permission to Officiate within the Diocese of Melbourne, effective 30 July 2024.

Resignations:

VUN, The Revd Canon Yee Hin [Robert], Canon Missioner, St Paul, Cathedral, Melbourne, effective 1 April 2024

WATKINS, The Revd Sophia Elizabeth Stanley, Vicar, St Silas and St Anselm, Albert Park, effective 13 October 2024

Obituaries:

HARRADENCE, The Revd Peter, 27 July 2024

Clergy Moves



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

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Head of Communications – Penny Mulvey
pmulvey@melbourneanglican.org.au

Editor – Elspeth Kernebone
ekernebone@melbourneanglican.org.au

Journalist – Jenan Taylor
jtaylor@melbourneanglican.org.au

Journalist – Hannah Felsbourg
hfelsbourg@melbourneanglican.org.au

Advertising – ads@melbourneanglican.org.au

Design & Layout – Ivan Smith
ads@melbourneanglican.org.au

Subscription Enquiries
tma@melbourneanglican.org.au

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The Reverend Canon Dr Rhys Bezzant will be the next principal of Ridley College.

Picture: supplied

‘That’s what makes my heart beat’: New Ridley principal’s top priority

■ Jenan Taylor

Ridley College’s new principal hopes the college and the Church will work well together to continue bringing the good news of Christ to the world.

The Reverend Canon Dr Rhys Bezzant has been appointed the next principal of Ridley College effective 1 January 2025.

Canon Bezzant believes that by working together the college, parishes and ministries can better recruit, train and send future ministers.

He said parishes needed leaders formed after God’s own heart to be effective and faithful to God’s task of bringing the good news of Christ to the world.

“Humanly speaking, the church rises or falls according to the quality of its leadership. And theological colleges exist to form leaders for parishes and for our witness in the world,” Canon Bezzant said.

“A theological college can do many things, but training leaders for pastoral ministry must be central to its identity and life!”

Canon Bezzant said despite never ever seeing himself as a career academic, he was thrilled at the appointment.

After being ordained a priest in 1997 in the Melbourne diocese, Canon Bezzant

worked in many churches including in Heidelberg and Carlton.

He said even now his heart still beat as a pastor.

“I’ve done well in the academic zone, but I am a pastor at heart. I love mentoring, I love preaching, I love talking to people.”

He believed having this kind of heart in lecturers and leaders was critical for a theological college, because its role was to train people for church and mission service.

Canon Bezzant said his pathway to leadership was uncomplicated.

He grew up in a non-Christian household but became a Christian at age 13, and has never looked back.

Being a Christian was the best way of being human, and introducing people to Jesus was the greatest privilege, Canon Bezzant said.

For him, the church was his family, in that he found his deepest relationships there.

Canon Bezzant counted former Ridley principal Peter Adams and Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students chaplain Peter Leslie as his most inspirational mentors.

“They have consistently spoken into my life, encouraging my faith and obedience, and nurturing my sense of calling to

Christian ministry,” Canon Bezzant said.

“They were honest about their own experiences living as Christians, and gave me a positive example of joy, singleness, and applying the Scriptures to all areas of life.”

He said staying in academia and not going back to a parish was something he had to decide again and again.

Canon Bezzant said he loved mentoring, and it would become an even higher priority given his job was to find and recruit future ministers for Melbourne and beyond.

He said he wanted to mentor people who were thinking of attending Ridley and nurturing their sense of vocation so they could sense what it might mean for them to be in ordained ministry.

Canon Bezzant said he was aware many parishes found it difficult to raise up clergy or any Christian workers, but he wanted them to persevere.

“I preached in many different churches last year on Matthew chapter nine where Jesus says, ‘Pray the Lord of the harvest to raise up [workers] for the harvest’, and that’s what needs to happen,” he said.

“Churches need to work hard to raise up the next generation of ministers. That would be glorious. That’s what makes my heart beat.”

Shutdown 'makes mockery' of University's Indigenous commitments

■ Elspeth Kernebone

Dozens of people have expressed outrage at the University of Divinity's decision to close its School of Indigenous Studies in an open letter directed to the institution's leaders.

The letter warns the decision "makes a mockery" of the university's stated commitment to Indigenous theological education, and demonstrates deep disrespect to Indigenous theologians, elders and community members.

A University of Divinity representative said the institution remained committed to its strategic goals around Indigenous theology, but was seeking a sustainable model.

The university announced it was disestablishing the School of Indigenous Studies in budget adjustment advice issued on 17 July, less than three years it established the school.

Open letter initiator and SIS academic committee member Joanna Cruickshank said it was incredibly shortsighted to disestablish such a rare and highly productive institution as the School of Indigenous Studies.

Associate Professor Cruickshank said the school's disestablishment in the same month as the closure of Indigenous college Wontulp-Bi-Buya was a sign of how completely unprepared churches were to engage meaningfully with the Indigenous people whose stolen lands they lived on and benefited from.

She said Indigenous theological education was a first principles issue, which churches should commit to regardless of whether it was profitable or convenient. She said the church had just gone staggeringly backwards, as every other Australian institution moved forward with steps to better understand Indigenous knowledge.

"The fact that [the School of Indigenous Studies] been shut down is something that should absolutely stop us in our tracks," Associate Professor Cruickshank said.

"Every church in Australia is built on and benefiting from stolen Indigenous land. Every year millions of dollars of that land is sold to fund things that the churches think are important. If we wait for Indigenous theological education to be profitable [before funding it], we're going to be waiting a long time."

More than 60 people signed the



letter, including many academics at secular universities around Australia. It is addressed to the University of Divinity's vice chancellor, chancellor and council members.

The letter said the decision to renege its commitment to support the School of Indigenous Studies made it clear that for the university, Indigenous people, their knowledge, and the quest for justice in Australia, were not core business.

University of Divinity vice chancellor James McLaren said the institution was committed to its strategic goals around Indigenous theology, but needed to identify a sustainable model.

"The message is 'You're not wanted, we don't care about you, and you can continue to have inferior theological education, because that's all we fund'"

Anne Pattel-Gray

Professor McLaren said the School of Indigenous Studies was not able to achieve the funding targets that had been set.

He said the reflection now was that the school was unsustainable but its scope as an entity had grown since its establishment, when asked why the university started a School of Indigenous Studies if it was unsustainable.

He declined comment on why the university had let the School of Indigenous Studies grow if the growth was unsustainable.

Professor McLaren said the school had secured funding at its beginning, but as the school grew its aspirations grew, and it was not successful in seeking large scale grants.

"You have to monitor, you have to review, and that monitoring and that reviewing has indicated from the council's perspective that [the School of Indigenous Studies] model is not viable, it's not sustainable," he said.

"The council remains committed to the principle, it remains committed to the strategy. What we now need to do is to identify a more appropriate model, that is sustainable."

Professor McLaren said it would be inappropriate to speak on behalf of other people when asked what message closing the School of Indigenous Studies would send to Indigenous Christians.

Professor McLaren said the closure did not signal broader funding uncertainty for the University of Divinity.

He said the university was still working out the details of a new model to realise its principles around Indigenous theology, going back to colleges working in collaboration with connections they had with Indigenous communities.

Former School of Indigenous Studies head Professor Anne Pattel-Gray said the school's growth had been approved by leadership of the University of Divinity.

Professor Pattel-Gray said she put funding proposals to the university, which made no progress, and was then told in June to raise \$750,000 as soon as possible.

She said the school's closure was brutal for Indigenous staff and students, with four staff members made redundant.

"We're all traumatised. We're still trying to overcome the trauma this has inflicted upon us. We've been thrown away like trash, humiliated, discredited," Professor Pattel-Gray said.

"The message is 'You're not wanted, we don't care about you, and you can continue to have inferior theological education, because that's all we fund'"



Picture: iStock

Draft laws spark six-day week warning

■ Jenan Taylor

A religious sector trade union has warned the Melbourne Anglican diocese might be liable for workers' compensation claims if draft Victorian laws pass.

Its executive officer believes expecting clergy to work six days a week is driving a shortage of faith workers in Australia.

The Faith Workers Alliance urged the diocese to end the expectation of a six-day working week for clergy and take steps to normalise a five-day working week, in a submission on clergy working conditions.

FWA executive officer the Reverend Chris Bedding said a consistent pattern of working six full days would likely be indefensible under anticipated new Victorian regulations about psychological safety.

He said working more than five days a week could lead to workplace hazards including bullying, which could cause psychological harms including depression and sleep disorders.

Victoria's proposed regulations' objectives include promoting the importance of psychological health and safety in the workplace.

Employers will be obligated to identify psychosocial hazards, such as violence and poor support, eliminate the associated risks, and put in place prevention plans.

Mr Bedding said overwork was a problem for most parish clergy because they were deeply committed to their calling, yet there was no facility to set boundaries around the amount of their labour.

He said clergy across the Australian faith sector reported being exhausted and feeling unsafe in their workplace because the load and expectations were unsustainable.

"It may have a certain historical assumption about the kind of person who is a vicar."

Andrew Bowles

Mr Bedding said this was causing a recruitment and deployment crisis for faith workers in Australia.

He said enforcement of the proposed laws could arise when there was a workers' compensation or unfair dismissal claim, or even if someone was investigated for their ministry practice.

"They could claim they'd been working six days a week for years and consequently have a psychological injury. Working such unreasonable hours could potentially be

their argument," Mr Bedding said.

He said two days rest and recreation per week was a reasonable provision for modern clergy given they were expected to complete tasks, achieve goals and be assessed on performance and work standards.

The Reverend Andrew Bowles said a five-day working week reflected a more contemporary view of ministry.

Mr Bowles proposed a review of clergy working hours at the 2023 Melbourne Synod.

He said a six-day working week as an employment condition assumed facts about the life of the worker.

He said this included their family situation, and ability to give time to the life of the church.

"It may have a certain historical assumption about the kind of person who is a vicar," Mr Bowles said.

"Many people now have lives structured differently to what they were in previous generations and have different calls on their time, rhythms of life and schedules to take into account."

He was interested in how the diocese would fulfill its obligation to provide a healthy and safe working environment under the planned laws, and believed it needed to investigate whether clergy working conditions were safe or not.

Turning up the dial on evangelism

■ Hannah Felsbourg

A new podcast aims to encourage and equip Christians to share their faith within their communities.

The Hope25 podcast is a part of a national evangelism project within the Anglican Church of Australia focusing on evangelism from Easter Day to Pentecost Sunday in 2025.

Hope25 project officer the Reverend Dr Christy Capper said the podcast aimed to encourage Christians to share their hope in Jesus amid society's hopelessness.

She said Christians' hope was unique because it came from knowing the God who entered our world as a human and understood our experiences.

"It's not a hope that everything is going to be fixed ... it's a hope that God is bigger than everything that goes on," she said.

Dr Capper said she wanted the podcast to connect people with ideas for evangelism that would speak to them.

She said podcasts were often easier to digest than



Hope25 podcast host the Reverend Dr Christy Capper.

Picture: supplied

something like print media, particularly for young people.

They also facilitated a more personal conversation and gave listeners an idea of the people behind the ideas being shared.

Dr Capper said one of the guests she interviewed for

an upcoming episode was missiologist Cathy Ross.

Dr Capper said Dr Ross highlighted the importance of Christian hospitality and sharing the love of Jesus by inviting people into our homes. Topics covered in previous episodes

included finding ways to share faith naturally and the power of storytelling to connect with others and understand Jesus' atonement.

The Hope25 podcast can be found at bit.ly/Hope25Podcast.

Three friends, three weeks, three conversations about God?

■ Hannah Felsbourg

A campaign aims to challenge Christians to transform everyday interactions into spiritual conversations.

City Bible Forum's Dive Deeper initiative challenges believers to have conversations that point toward God, the Bible, or Jesus with three friends over three weeks.

Since the campaign started in 2022 there have been more than 270 conversations logged through their website, and organisers hope to see many more.

City Bible Forum worker Russ Matthews said the campaign aimed to equip Christians to speak about the most important thing that has happened in their lives in a natural way.

He said all believers had unique mission fields made up of the people around them

who might not otherwise come to know the gospel.

"We're all called to actually go out and evangelise or talk to people about their faith ... what most people don't realise is that they're planted right in their ministry field," he said.

Mr Matthews said Dive Deeper went back to the basics of how Christians should be discussing their faith with those around them.

He said rather than just giving gospel presentations, it was about building relationships to enable further spiritual conversations.

"To see other Christians all of a sudden see the value that they can have and the impact that they can have within that is actually quite encouraging," he said.

City Bible Forum worker Amy Isham said the challenge also taught her to enjoy and

find value in the other less deep levels of conversation.

She said spiritual conversations could be as simple as asking questions about the other person's beliefs.

Signing up for the campaign provides access to curated audio and written content to help believers engage in spiritual conversations.

The Dive Deeper website also features a short quiz to discover personal evangelism styles, offering personal stories and tools to support believers' journeys.

Participants can log their spiritual conversations on the website and view a selection from a growing catalogue of shared experiences.

The campaign runs between 1 and 20 September. More information and resources can be found at divedeeper.org.au.



The Reverend Stephen Delbridge (right), with his mother Zoe Delbridge, and brother Chris Delbridge. Picture: supplied

Goodbye after two decades of service

■ Jenan Taylor

The Reverend Stephen Delbridge showed God's love to patients and families in spinal injury units, cancer clinics, intensive care rooms and other hospital wards across Melbourne for 22 years.

Healthcare chaplaincy offered him the chance to embody God's presence as he sat with them in the moments of their greatest need.

"Whose work was I doing? God's work. Whose hands and feet? God's hands and feet. Where is God to be found? With the poor and the suffering," Mr Delbridge said.

He was devastated at having to stop providing this care after the diocese ceased funding the hospital chaplaincy program at the end of 2023.

A thanksgiving service in July farewell-ing Mr Delbridge from his role gave him a chance to reflect on his work.

He said hospital chaplaincy was the emphasis of his ministry life.

It enabled him and other healthcare chaplains to help the suffering and the poor know that God cared for them, Mr Delbridge said.

He remembers first becoming involved in ministry at Cabrini during his curacy at St George's Malvern, and becoming captivated by the chance to sit with people who were in difficult spaces.

"I've had some significant losses and struggles within my own family, and sitting with people in hard places just really

motivated me," Mr Delbridge said.

"I was parish priest for five years and enjoyed it, but organisation of the parish ministry never captured my sense of what my ministry was. Whereas when I did hospital ministry, I felt fully alive. I felt really engaged, and just wanted to do more of it."

A passionate storyteller, Mr Delbridge's tales of those he spent time with flowed.

There were the distressed patients and families with whom he shared heartfelt conversations, every encounter uniquely important, he said.

"It was a privilege to be allowed into that space to sit with them in those circumstances, whether that was in a cancer ward, or intensive care with someone who had a bleed on the brain," he said.

"It might be a young person, or an old person, it didn't matter."

There were the half dozen or so weddings he performed while in hospital – each one beautiful and distressing because someone was dying, Mr Delbridge said.

A highlight was how the medical staff he and chaplaincy colleagues worked alongside saw them as honorary staff members for their caring efforts.

Yet Mr Delbridge struggles to find language for one of the most powerful experiences of his time as a hospital chaplain, the pandemic.

COVID upended everything.

"Many people died alone, and it was beyond dreadful. There are very good reasons to have conversations about it,

but it is actually very hard to do so," Mr Delbridge said. "We pray to God that we don't go back into that place again."

The Reverend Dawn Treloar described Mr Delbridge's ministry as touching the lives of countless people.

"People who have been facing the death of loved ones, people adjusting to new ways of living and understanding their lives, people who are struggling to see any light in their current situation," she said.

"Stephen has gently walked into their lives, journeyed with them for a time and shown them God's love by being present with them."

Mr Delbridge hoped to see hospital chaplaincy valued because it showed that people's spirit was valued and cared for.

Hospital chaplaincy was not always about their faith, but rather about their spirit, he said.

This spirit or sense of self needed to be cared for so patients could get better faster, and in a better way.

"There is scientific and medical evidence that when people feel cared for spiritually, they have better medical outcomes," Mr Delbridge said.

"When people are lonely, lost, abandoned, or have no sense of being cared for, they can have worse outcomes even if they get the best medical care in the world. If it doesn't come with human care, the care of the human spirit, then that's not holistic. Holistic care cares for the person, not just medically, but spiritually."



St John's Toorak ministers Wendy Crouch and Peter French.
Picture: Hannah Felsbourg

Help for ministers caring for struggling

■ **Hannah Felsbourg**

Anglican ministers are calling for improved education for church workers to tackle one of Australia's biggest health issues.

St John's Toorak ministers hope to equip church workers to better care for themselves and others when approached by people struggling with their mental health.

They ran a recent seminar to address the growing need for mental health training among ministers.

Vicar the Reverend Peter French said he hoped attendees could now better care for people experiencing mental illness through greater knowledge.

The seminar aimed to improve understanding of common issues like depression and anxiety, as well as less common ones like psychosis, for better support.

Dr French said at churches like St John's that were open during weekdays, ministers frequently encountered people seeking help.

People often came to church services looking for assistance, God's help, or a faith perspective on their issues.

Dr French said the seminar balanced guidance on spiritual support with practical help, including both prayer and referral resources.

The seminar also addressed self-care and boundaries for pastoral workers, emphasising the importance of mental wellbeing for those who care for others.

St John's assistant priest the Reverend Wendy Crouch said ministers needed greater awareness about mental health issues so they could respond to them appropriately.

She said mental health issues were the primary cause of health problems in Australia and so were also common in the church community.

She said there needed to be more mental health training in theological colleges, especially for those proceeding to ministry positions.

Dr Crouch said in ministering to those

with mental health issues it was crucial to balance spiritual and practical responses.

She said while faith could provide comfort, ministers should be able to recognise when to refer individuals to others, including mental health professionals.

She emphasised the need for ministers to understand their limits, mandatory reporting requirements, and available referral resources.

Dr Crouch said it was important for ministers to practice self-care and recognise signs of burnout and compassion fatigue.

She said clergy must take time for themselves to manage their own mental health effectively, enabling them to better support their parishioners.

"We have a responsibility to inform ourselves, to educate ourselves and to learn ways of addressing these issues as they present to us as ministers," Dr Crouch said.

If this story raised issues for you or someone you know, support is available from Lifeline on 13 11 14.

We can prevent abuse in the Church: Visiting theologian

■ **Jenan Taylor**

Melbourne Christians learnt how to better prevent sexual abuse in the Church at a recent presentation about faith and justice.

Surviving God: A new vision of God through the eyes of sexual abuse survivors aimed to equip Christians to read and understand Scriptures in ways different to the patriarchal approaches taken in many churches.

Presenter Korean American theologian the Reverend Dr Grace Ji-Sun Kim wanted

people to recognise how patriarchal approaches might influence interpretations of God and lead to un-Christian behaviour.

She warned sexual misconduct would keep happening in churches and communities without deep consideration of the lens through which people viewed their faith.

An abuse survivor herself, Dr Kim said people could prevent predatory sexual behaviour if they knew what to look for and how to talk about it.

She said her approach was based on

intersectional theology which considered where racism, sexism, unjust economics and other injustices intersected.

She said it recognised that women of colour and other marginalised people were more likely to encounter injustices such as sexual abuse.

Dr Kim said it was never easy for them bring the misconduct to light because often the communities they belonged to felt ashamed if it was revealed.

Dr Kim spoke at St Peter's Eastern Hill on Friday 26 July.

Merger to help reach people for Jesus

■ Hannah Felsbourg

Vicars of a newly merging parish hope to revive their churches and reach their communities for Jesus.

St George's Monbulk, St Martin's Belgrave Heights and Upwey/Belgrave will merge into the Parish of Upwey, Belgrave and Monbulk from 1 October.

Joint vicars the Reverends Jerome and Vivianne Dias said the renewal process would be challenging but could deepen community connections.

Mrs Dias said the merger aimed to consolidate finances and governance for efficiency, while each church would retain its unique identity and worshipping community.

She said they were considering how best to serve each church location and support them in mission.

They hoped an op shop in Belgrave and a Mainly Music program in Upwey would provide outreach opportunities for volunteers from the church to connect with the wider community.

Mrs Dias said she prayed for the congregations to be on fire with the love of God, and for God's spirit to ignite fires in the hearts of those who were yet to know Him.

"I want to see our people growing in confidence to bear witness to Jesus in their



Joint vicars the Reverends Jerome and Vivianne Dias.

Picture: supplied

context, and I want to see God at work through those conversations," Mrs Dias said.

"I want to see their people come to be in awe of God and come to love Jesus."

Mr Dias said there were challenges ahead with small congregations and limited funding for things that need upgrading or fixing in the parish.

However, he said sometimes people

could get so fixated on what they did not have, they missed out on fellowship with the people around them.

"I'm hoping that we can have times of really connecting well with each other in the months and year ahead, of real deep fellowship," Mr Dias said.

A special launch service will be held at Holy Trinity Upwey on 6 October 2024 at 10:30am.

Event brings 'glimpses of hope' for tackling men's violence

■ Jenan Taylor

Christians will be equipped to create a future without violence against women at an upcoming national conference.

The *Ten Commitments* conference aims to inspire church leaders and members to prevent domestic violence and care for survivors, as violence against women continues to escalate.

It comes as thousands of people across Australia rallied for an end to gender-based violence.

Conference organisers from the Anglican Church of Australia's Families and Culture Commission said the focus would be on hope despite the despair and grief at the mounting death toll.

National program manager the Reverend Tracy Lauersen said it was important there was a sense of hope because it motivated people to feel they could make a positive difference.

She said the opportunity to gather and

discuss effective responses to the problem would encourage churches to feel they could create a different, and safer future for women.

Ms Lauersen said the conference would feature a range of subject experts including Our Watch chief executive Patty Kinnersley and clinical psychologist Dr Leisa Aitken.

She said there would also be workshops which showcased local church initiatives, training programs, pastoral care and prevention strategies.

Keynote speaker Dr Aitken said she would explore the positive effect that good theology could have in creating the psychological experience of hope that motivated action to reduce family violence.

She said glimpses of hope as to what arrested men's violence were essential to keep people moving forward with their work of prevention.

Workshop presenter and Canberra-based psychologist Ruth Holt said it was

important to work towards change and avoid getting stuck on describing the problem.

Ms Holt said her workshop would focus on giving Christian hope to people who supported survivors at the frontline and faced challenges working in that space long term. She aimed to equip them to be aware of their own needs to avoid the high risk of burnout.

Ms Lauersen said there would be presenters from Catholic, Lutheran and other churches, and the conference was open to people from a variety of denominations this year.

The *Ten Commitments* conference will take place on 2 and 3 September at St Jude's Carlton.

For more details and to register, see tencommitments.org.au/conference.

If you or anyone you know needs help, please call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732).

In an emergency please phone triple zero (000).

The blacksmithing youth minister forging

■ Hannah Felsbourg

Rob Nansen is children's and youth ministry coordinator at St Mark's Spotswood and founder and director of Jesse's Stump Blacksmithing & Bush Furniture.

Here he shares about his work, and how he sees God at work through it. Mr Nansen's story is part of a series profiling workers in different areas, engaging in God's work in the world.

How did you end up in the position you're in?

I studied social work and worked on an outdoor education program where I taught teenage boys blacksmithing and bush furniture making. I enjoyed it and kept it as a hobby for 12 years. And then I ran a blacksmithing session at a camp and had a ball. My wife suggested I do holiday programs, and I eventually ran my first workshop at Dromkeen in Riddells Creek. Now, I partner with community centres and host sessions at my home workshop. I started at St Mark's two years ago. The main parts of my role are running both the Sunday morning program and youth group.

How do you see your work fitting into the big picture of God's work in the world?

A guy came from Freestyle Dance Ministry, ran a dance workshop, and shared his testimony. At the next activity we had, I asked the young people, "What did you think of his testimony?" A year eight boy said it didn't sound plausible. It made me realise you can't assume where these kids are at with their faith. I want that space to be able to explore, "What are all the other implausible beliefs going around our society and how are we going to decipher what we are going to take on board?" When we think of God's work in the world, we often think of external

missionary work, but the work we're doing is missional in a sense because these children are a harvest field within.

Has there been much overlap between your blacksmithing and youth ministry work?

When I started Jesse's Stump it was separate to my social work in the past. After a while I thought, "How can I bring it together?" We put on the website things like mentorship, and I throw in talks to do with resilience. I can use the hammer blows in blacksmithing as a metaphor to represent life struggles that can shape us into something beautiful in the end. As the youth group at St Mark's was developing, a parent asked about activities running over the school holidays. I ran a blacksmithing workshop and now it's a regular event.

"I want young people to have robustness so that they can stand against peer pressure."

How do you see God at work through your work?

The phrase safe space keeps coming back to me. Some of the young people I'm working with are a bit introverted or shy. Sometime church culture can be aimed at adults and adult sensibilities. Young people need spaces where they feel like they can be themselves and do their own thing. I'm trying to create a safe space where they can support each other and have a voice to me and my team of volunteers.

On one of the family camps I ran they wrote a list of issues they were carry. They're carrying a lot of heavy stuff. A lot

of worrying, trying to get everything right, not making mistakes ... their little shoulders are weighed down. So, if I can create a safe space where we're not just filling their heads with theology but that they're in a supportive community, that's going to be a real protective factor.

When I first started, one young person would sometimes feel overwhelmed on Sunday mornings and cry, wanting to go back to her mum. I gave her non-verbal strategies like flashcards with traffic light colours to express how she's feeling, but now she just puts her hand up and uses her voice to speak up more. She's shown a lot of progression.

There's also started to be more personal sharing. I'll often start the session with a check-in, "How are we out of 10, and why?" I'll usually go first to role model that. That's giving them a chance to share what's going on in their lives. A few of them have shared significant things like a health concern about a parent, a concern about a sibling's faith journey, and school friendship issues. Instead of them sitting there being taught from top down, there's cross support happening.

What fruit do you hope to see in your context? What is your dream for this ministry?

I think of my own experience of youth group. I didn't grow up going to church, so I didn't have the Sunday School experience, but my youth group experience was amazing. It was a safe space for me when I didn't have that in many other places. I got a faith out of it but also good role models. It changed the direction of my life.

My dreams are to try and replicate that. I would love to see the young people get that sort of anchor in their lives and keep it going for their whole lives. I want them to

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strong foundations



St Mark's children's and youth ministry coordinator Rob Nansen at his forge.

Picture: Hannah Felsbourg

have a thinking and robust faith, not a light fluffy faith where they just go to church because that's what their family does. In our Australian society, there's an increasing hostility towards religion. So I want young people to have robustness so that they can stand against peer pressure.

What encourages you in your work?

Getting to know the young people and seeing them come out of their shells. Just having fun with them. Watching my helpers interact with the young people as well. We learn from each other when we watch each other, with different styles and skills and knowledge. Also, meeting with other people

in a similar role.

Sometimes in group workshops there is one kid who scared of the fire and then an hour into it, they've gotten over the fear. I might hold the tongs for them and help ease them into doing it themselves. Through doing something it builds your confidence. You can see with your eyes, "Wow, I've done that." It's like you prove to yourself that you are capable. That's something I love to see.

What's one thing you'd like Christians in Melbourne to know about your work?

When I was 12 and my mum started taking me to a Christian youth group, I was a boy

who was from a broken home and was pretty lost. My family was a little lost as well. Because of the youth group I went to and the dedication of the youth leaders, it's a cliché, but I was lost and then I was found. There are a lot of lost people out there and we don't want to be complacent or comfortable in our own enclaves. I want to encourage people to keep that in mind. Christianity is something too precious not to share.

This story forms part of a profile series on ministry workers taking part in God's work in the world. If you know of someone with an encouraging story, let us know at tma@melbourneanglican.org.au.

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The Reverend Amy Brown.

Picture: supplied

Priest steps up for rights

■ Hannah Felsbourg

A Melbourne Anglican priest plans to trek nearly 50 kilometres across New Zealand to raise awareness for women and girls in disaster zones.

Mt Eliza generations minister the Reverend Amy Brown is joining the Trek for Rights 2025 as part of a fundraising campaign for UN Women Australia.

It will take her on a five-day journey in intervals between Christchurch and Queenstown from 18 to 22 March.

Miss Brown said her participation aligned with her faith, as Jesus came to give freedom to the oppressed and she believed he would grieve at the current state of the world. She hopes to raise awareness about effective use of funds to help women and girls overseas and educate herself and others about the work of UN Women Australia.

Miss Brown said the trek would be a physical and mental challenge, requiring her to train for mixed terrain walking in preparation. She said was pushing herself to raise at least \$3000 for the charity within three months. Miss Brown encouraged others to support her through donations, social media engagement, and prayer.

More information is available at bit.ly/AmyBrownTrek.

Renewed gift leads praise

■ Greg Lockrey

When the doors at St Mark's Camberwell opened in 1928, there was a small pipe organ of 792 pipes made by Fincham & Sons.

As the parish grew, the organ proved to be too small, leading to several upgrades. Rebuilt in 1990, a larger instrument with 1900 pipes was named after REV Church, organist from 1925-62.

Past organists led choirs of up to 45 adults and boys from Camberwell Grammar. Recent decades brought changing musical styles, and less choral music, but the organ remains a key part of our services.

In 2018, St Mark's received a bequest for major organ maintenance. After a careful review, Australian Pipe Organs was contracted to undertake repairs and cleaning, upgrade electronics, and slightly enlarge the organ in 2023.

The renewed instrument is brighter, and gives a stronger lead to singing, to the glory of God. We give thanks for our benefactors.

Please join us to hear the result at a free recital in the church at 2:30 pm on Sunday 15 September, by Melbourne and international organist Rhys Boak. The program ranges from JS Bach to modern French works.



St Mark's Camberwell.

Picture: supplied

Seeking to reach young Australians for Christ ... online

■ Jenan Taylor

A new evangelism project aims to share Christ's message where many young people are likely to gather – TikTok, YouTube and other social networks.

The Anglican Parish of St Matthew's Glenroy and St Linus' Merlynston hopes its project will counter some of the spiritual influence people face from groups and individuals unconnected with the Church.

Titled *A Minute with Rev Rob*, the project comprises short video clips in which parishioners discuss their faith and experiences of God with vicar the Reverend Rob Koren.

Mr Koren said the parish wanted to act on Jesus' commission to baptise people wherever they gathered, and recognised today this included internet platforms. He said members decided to pursue



The Reverend Rob Koren.

Picture: supplied

evangelism on social networks as research showed many young Australians accessed them for spiritual growth.

According to a 2022 McCrindle report, about 46 per cent of Generation Z Australians turned to TikTok at least once a

week for help in their spiritual life.

Mr Koren said the parish feared people might be spiritually influenced by inauthentic organisations and individuals.

"We just want to give an alternate viewpoint that's centred around our Anglican tradition. An approach that's not just from someone promoting themselves, but grounded in reality, and Christ-centred," Mr Koren said.

Congregant Ian Mack said he participated to testify how his faith made his life richer, and more connected to God and others. Mr Mack said it was important Christians be present in spaces spiritually curious young people were attracted to, if they wanted young people to consider their perspectives. He hoped the program encouraged people to go into a real church and see if there was a connection between them and Jesus.

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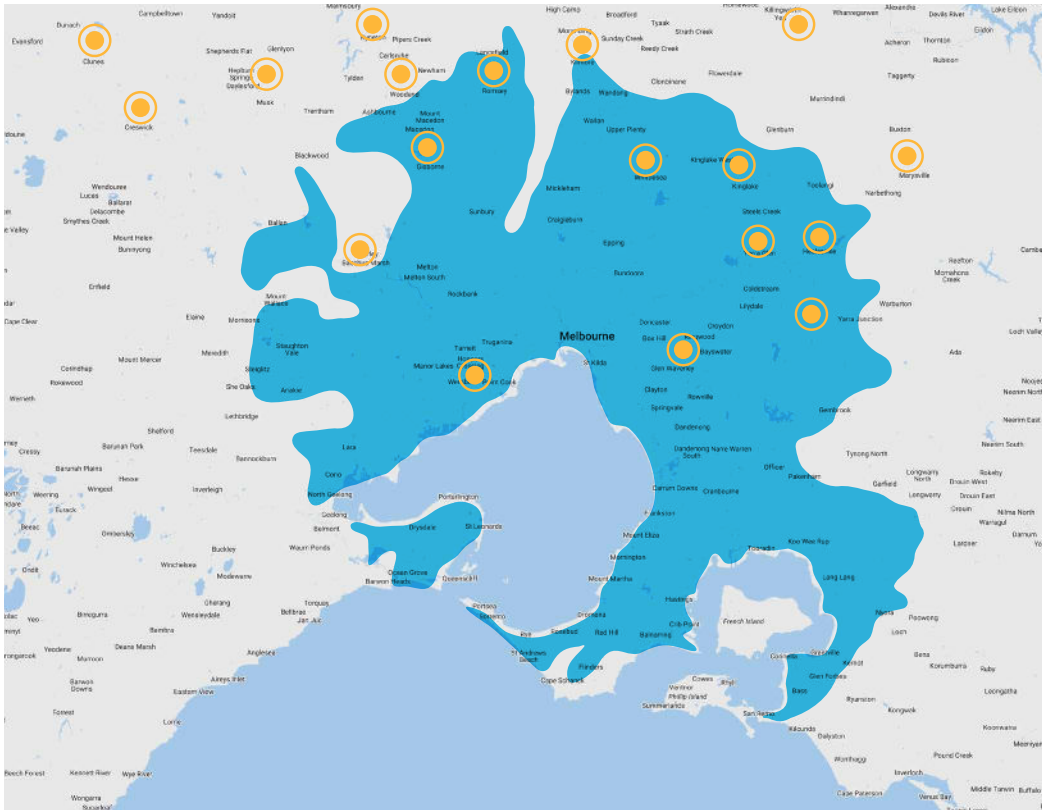


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Adelaide consecrates a new bishop

■ **Hannah Felsbourg**

The Right Reverend Sophie Relf-Christopher has been consecrated as assistant bishop of the Adelaide Diocese.

She is the second female bishop for the Anglican Church of Adelaide and one of the youngest bishops in Australia.

In her new role, Bishop Relf-Christopher aimed to make the Diocese of Adelaide faithful, connected, and courageous.

She expressed confidence that the church could address contemporary challenges and hoped her ministry would be marked by compassion and a focus on justice.

“The Church is called to advocate for the oppressed, to share the hope entrusted to us, to encourage one another,



Bishop Sophie Relf-Christopher was recently consecrated. Picture: supplied

and uphold the cause of the downtrodden,” she said.

Archbishop of Adelaide Geoff Smith praised Bishop Relf-Christopher’s commitment

to God’s mission and her pastoral skills.

He said he was delighted at her appointment, highlighting her record of accomplishment

in leading a growing parish and her gift for communication.

Bishop Chris McLeod said Bishop Relf-Christopher’s youth would bring fresh eyes and new thoughts to the role, potentially challenging established perspectives.

Bishop Relf-Christopher was ordained in 2011 and has served as parish priest at St Jude’s Brighton for eight years. Since 2022, she has also been the Archdeacon of Sturt.

Before her ordination, Bishop Relf-Christopher taught film and television production at UniSA and worked on student equity initiatives. She is married to Paul and has two sons.

Bishop Relf-Christopher was consecrated at St Peter’s Cathedral on 15 August.

Queensland diocese apologises to LGBTIQ+ people

■ **Elsbeth Kernebone**

Brisbane’s archbishop has apologised to the LGBTIQ+ community for harm and hurt caused to them by the Anglican Church in Southern Queensland.

The diocese apologised to sexually and gender diverse people for times the Church had not accepted who they were, or had denigrated or excluded them. The apology also named the criminalisation of LGBTIQ+ sexuality and conversion therapy.

A video of Brisbane’s Archbishop Jeremy Greaves delivering the apology was released in early August, after the text was endorsed at Southern Queensland’s synod in June.

Listening committee chair Dean of Brisbane Peter Catt said he was struck by how generous the LGBTIQ+ community had been in response to the apology, in encouraging and generous statements.

Dr Catt said it was important to apologise to the LGBTIQ+ community as a core gospel value was allowing people to flourish, which the church had been preventing in its persecution of the group. Dr Catt said telling this community it wasn’t right to be who they were had caused tremendous spiritual and psychological harm.

The apology began by saying the Anglican Church of Southern Queensland

recognised and rejoiced in the image of God, as expressed by people of every race, social circumstance, gender identity and sexual orientation. It also included an acknowledgement of the pain caused to LGBTIQ+ people by not being able to marry within the church.

It apologised for times the diocese had not accepted sexuality-diverse and gender-diverse people for who they were; had denigrated them, unjustly excluded them from baptism, holy communion, holy unction and the community of the Anglican church; isolated them or subjected them to mistreatment; and had not spoken up to protect them from violence and exclusion.

It included an apology to the family members and friends of sexuality-diverse and gender-diverse people.

It undertook to pray together in humility, walk together in following Jesus Christ, recognise the diversity and ministry of each person who volunteered and worked in and for the Anglican Church of Southern Queensland, listen to sexuality- and gender-diverse people, and stand with them against injustice and marginalisation, and live into the expectations outlined in the *Faithfulness in Service* and *Being Together* documents.

Dr Catt said the diocese didn’t include

marriage within the apology – as it was a national church issue, and the diocese would not be able to behave differently in that respect after the apology.

Archbishop of Brisbane Jeremy Greaves said the apology was an important step in the journey of reconciliation and healing, but wasn’t the end of the conversation. He said the church’s next step was to work out what it needed to change for the apology to be meaningful. This would mean bringing together people who had listened and gathered stories, to think about education, theological resources, and to work with parishes on being a safe and welcoming place for all.

“I’ve had a number of direct responses from people both who’ve said, ‘I’ve waited all my life to hear something like this.’ But others who are understandably skeptical, but who’ve said ‘This has been a long time coming, and the proof is in the pudding,’” Bishop Greaves said. “This is why the next piece is the really important piece, which is how we lean in to the apology.”

The Southern Queensland synod voted in 2022 to request the diocesan council develop an apology to the LGBTIQ+ community and their families for hurt and harm caused by the church, in consultation with that community.

We urgently need hospital chaplaincy

What an inspiring story about the Reverend Sam Lo's hospital chaplaincy ministry in the August's *Melbourne Anglican*!

We must give thanks that the Roman Catholic religious order responsible for St Vincent's Private Hospital still sees the critical importance of hospital-based chaplaincy. And that the order is happy to have an Anglican ordained woman not just ministering there but coordinating a team of 17 chaplains across the hospital.

What a tragedy that our diocese has all but abandoned this vital ministry bringing God's love to vulnerable people. I hope and pray that the members of Diocesan Council that made the terrible decision last year to defund this important and longstanding Anglican ministry find the time to read and ponder Mrs Lo's story.

That decision has brought great shame to our church. The diocese urgently needs to reinstate this ministry in full in obedience to the biblical command to care for God's little ones.

Muriel Porter
Camberwell



The Reverend Sam Lo.

Picture: Elspeth Kernebone.

We must reinstate this commitment

Diversity, equity and inclusion is an important expression of our belief that we were all made equally in God's image, and we are commanded to love God and our neighbour, despite our differences.

A recent article in the *Irish Times* announced that corporate America is preparing to reassess, and in some cases eliminate DEI initiatives

with the prospect of a new administration reinstating Donald Trump's executive order restricting DEI.

Matthew 15:21-28 tells of the Canaanite woman who challenged Jesus' ministry solely to the Jewish people, prompting a shift to a broader ministry. This was a turning point in Christ's ministry and DEI could be for the church's ministry to all peoples. As Walter Breuggeman says,

we are discerning that God's love, justice, freedom, mercy, and faithfulness cannot be contained in our self-imagined categories of chosenness and privilege.

Perhaps it is timely to restate our commitment and specific actions to address diversity, equity and inclusion?

I see that Anglicare, for example, says on its website that "Being a diverse and inclusive organisation goes to the very heart of our work." How are we showing what is at our heart in our parishes, diocese and community? How will our faith bring about healing? How do we help keep diversity, equity and inclusion alive?

The Reverend Bruce Everett,
Deacon in Charge
St Philip's Collingwood

Thank you!

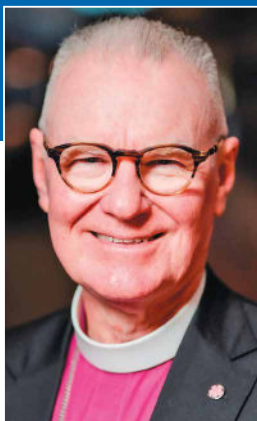
A large thank you to the Reverend Professor Dorothy Lee for her article *Praying the daily office is vital for our church's health in June's Melbourne Anglican*. Such a pertinent, informative and insightful piece; it should be compulsory reading for all who have the responsibility, privilege, challenge and joy of guiding public prayer. And supportive reading for those of us who at times can scuffle with prayer, not to mention a counter to the "we only pray when we want something" line.

Dr Jane E Sullivan OAM

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Is our society allergic to God? Why are we reluctant to discuss spiritual matters?

Join cartoonist **Michael Leunig** in conversation with Anglican **Archbishop Philip Freier** at The Edge, Federation Square, **Wednesday 2 October, 8.30am-10am.**

This is a free event.





I want this ministry acknowledged as vital for our church

Picture: Dreamstime

■ Dawn Treloar

“Seeing you again helps me to stay positive when I get re-admitted to hospital.”

She tells me about her health issues, her family and how she is managing with being in hospital again. I listen ask appropriate questions and hold her story.

“Can we spend some time in prayer?”

This interaction occurred recently with an 86-year-old woman who had regularly attended her parish church until she was no longer physically able to get to church. She now only receives communion when in the Royal Melbourne Hospital. She prays faithfully every morning and night and misses fellowship with other Christians.

“Thank you so much for this Memorial Service. I have learnt so much about grief and being here with others who are grieving has helped me. Hearing about the grief process has helped me better understand what I am experiencing and it was all so respectful and beautiful. Thank you.” – This was feedback after an RMH Memorial Service for the families of those who have died while inpatients.

The face of healthcare chaplaincy is changing. In hospitals Anglican chaplains are now just known as members of the Spiritual Care Team. There are also fewer specifically Anglican Spiritual Carers embedded in our hospitals due to funding cuts by the state government, hospitals and the diocese.

It is within this context that I look forward

to healthcare chaplaincy being discussed at Melbourne’s upcoming synod. The working group that was established by last year’s synod to report on this area to Archbishop in Council and synod has worked hard to clarify the current situation and plan for the future.

Giving funding limitations we hope to encourage people to consider leaving an endowment that could help build up a corpus of money. This would enable the diocese to provide embedded Anglican chaplains, or Spiritual Carers, within at very least Melbourne’s three trauma hospitals: the Royal Children’s, Royal Melbourne and the Alfred.

There are 144 public and 81 private hospitals in Victoria. We, the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, have 14 chaplains in major Melbourne and Geelong hospitals and multiple in smaller public hospitals, health services and residential aged care. None of these are paid by the diocese. Two are funded by donations from the Melbourne Anglican Foundation and one by grants through a hospital foundation.

In an ideal world this important ministry would provide an Anglican presence in all major hospitals. Realistically it would be great if there was an embedded full-time Anglican presence in the three trauma hospitals.

As we plan for the future of healthcare chaplaincy in the diocese the focus has shifted to training clergy and laity in the skills needed to provide sensitive and

appropriate care for people in hospital and aged care facilities.

The evolving role of coordinator of healthcare chaplaincy is to encourage those currently embedded within our hospitals, look for alternate means of providing embedded Anglican chaplaincy and maintain awareness of the need for chaplaincy to those who are hospitalised or in residential aged care. This means lobbying hospitals, government for funding, and ensuring those in need of Anglican spiritual care have their needs met in a timely manner.

My goal is to see healthcare chaplaincy acknowledged as a vital part of the ministry of the Anglican Church to those who may never walk into a church, and to faithful Anglicans, some of whom have been unable to get to church for years due to infirmity.

If you or a loved one are in hospital or a residential aged care facility you need to approach their nurse and ask for a member of the Spiritual Care Team to attend – if a specific religious ritual is desired please make this clear to the staff so they can facilitate it.

There is little more sacred than to spend time in prayer with those who are struggling with their own or a loved one’s physical unwellness – to witness the pain or stress lines on their face dissolve as their bodies relax and their soul connects with God.

The Reverend Dawn Treloar is coordinator of healthcare chaplaincy for the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.

Supervision is expensive. Why should we

■ **Kate Beer and Richard Trist**

As all ministers become required to take part in professional supervision, many church members are asking “Why?”

It’s an extra cost, budgets are tight. Understandably, many want to know “What will this achieve? How can we defend this extra expense ... especially for a part-time lay minister?”

Whether ordained or lay, full time or part time, there is little doubt that ministry is a demanding calling. Authors Peter Hawkins and Robin Shoheit write that by the very nature of the role, those in helping professions like ministry are at constant risk of importing distress, disturbance, fragmentation and need. How do pastors and lay ministers contain it all? Expected to maintain an ever-deepening capacity for the needs of others, alongside whatever challenges their own lives may already hold, there is little doubt of the need for support. Wellbeing surveys of clergy bear out what we already know.

But what sort of support mechanisms will be most effective? We want to suggest that professional supervision, of the type normally practiced in helping professions such as counselling, social work and psychology, is unique in its capacity to meet the specific needs of clergy and lay ministers.

Why professional?

It has been said that if a church worker is not getting professional supervision, they are getting it unprofessionally!

Whether in the daily debrief with their spouse, or an ill-thought word in a conversation, meeting, or sermon, what cannot be contained leaks out, unconsciously, and sometimes with serious consequences. Those hurt most may be the very people the

ministry had intended to serve. What clergy and lay ministers need goes well beyond provision of an appropriately bounded space for reflection and professional disclosure. Critically, clergy and lay ministers must also be supported to grow their capacity to provide reliable containment to the broad range of confidential matters they handle daily. For this task, supervisors must be trained specifically in ways that go well beyond the general ministry experience of someone “older and wiser”.

“Studies are showing the adoption of supervision is having a far-reaching impact for the good of the church, leading to growth, learning, support and healthier ministers and ministries.”

Why independent?

In many occupations the term “supervision” is synonymous with line-management. However, in the so-called helping professions the term is used to speak of an independent, consultative relationship between worker and an external supervisor who is neither the supervisee’s trainer nor manager. Far from “snooper-vision”, as someone called it, external supervision is practiced for the sake of those being served by the worker. Critically, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended that to be effective, religious ministers need

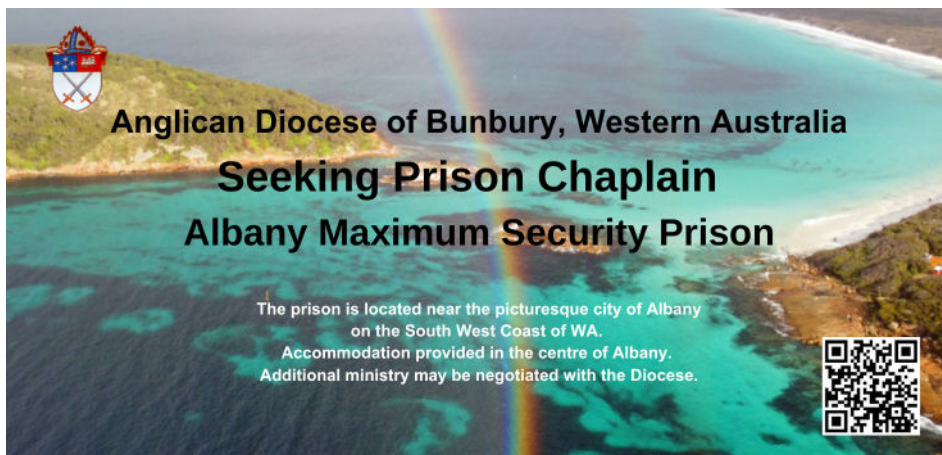
oversight “with a trained professional or pastoral supervisor who has a degree of independence from the institution within which the person is in ministry”. The accountability of this sort of supervisor is not to a boss such as a bishop or Board of Management, but rather to the ethical and theological frameworks in which the work or ministry is being undertaken (e.g. Faithfulness in Service). Professionally recognised supervisors are also accountable to an independent ethical code for the supervision they offer.


Why supervision?

The discipline of spending structured intentional time reflecting on experiences past, for the sake of a better future, has always been seen as essential for Christian ministry. Likewise, the idea of doing such reflecting with another is not new. “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another” (Proverbs 27:17). However, a benefit of professional supervision lies in its ability to bring clarity and focus from different viewpoints. In *Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook* authors Jane Leach and Michael Paterson explain the three necessary characteristics of supervision:


- **Formative** – an educative aspect offering knowledge, equipping and resourcing.
- **Restorative** – providing a compassionate place for processing demands and “recharging” emotional and spiritual energy.
- **Normative** – attending to issues of wellbeing, boundaries, and professional expectations.

In mandating supervision, the value of other modes of support is not dismissed. In different seasons of their ministry career, a ministry worker might complement supervision through using counselling, spiritual direction, coaching or mentoring.



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Is supervision effective?

Studies are showing the adoption of supervision is having a far-reaching impact for the good of the church, leading to growth, learning, support and healthier ministers and ministries. In a pilot study of clergy in the Diocese of Sydney, more than 90 per cent agreed that professional supervision (either one-to-one or in a group) was helpful for their ministry and personal wellbeing, leading to a greater ability to be reflective and self-aware. Seventy-five per cent of participants indicated that it developed their ability to be resilient.

Another survey of clergy undertaken in the Diocese of Newcastle included the following responses:

"[It] has helped me to 'stand back', see the big picture; [it] has helped me to deal with

difficult situations and people ... provided a sounding board and reassurance I am doing OK!"

"Given me tools for a different approach. Helped me to grow personally and professionally. One cannot harbor self-delusions, arrogance, theological infallibility ... when one allows oneself to be subject to the insightful scrutiny of another."

Supervision offers ministry professionals much more than just another something they must do. Rather, professional supervision interrupts unhealthy patterns, while supporting restorative, reflective practices which cultivate deepening competency.

While only the ministers go to the sessions, supervision serves the whole body of Christ. Supervision strengthens safety and

containment, enabling a greater fulfilling of the call of God. As clergy and lay ministers engage with supervision, they are offered the chance to connect, reflect and choose how they will respond moving forward. This is no less important for the part-time youth minister dealing with a distressed teenager than it is for the full-time cleric. Supervision grows capacity for the heart of all ministry leadership: "...to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Ephesians 4:12).

Kate Beer is a lecturer in Practical Theology at Ridley College, currently program lead for the Graduate Certificate of Professional Pastoral Supervision. Richard Trist is adjunct lecturer in Professional Pastoral Supervision and chaplain to the Anglican Institute at Ridley College.

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Why should Christians care about species

In this article, Professor Michael Clarke, explores species extinction from a Christian perspective, drawing on his 40 years of experience in conservation biology.

On Thursday 19 September, St Paul's Cathedral is partnering with ISCAST–Christianity and Science in Conversation on the topic of “Species Extinction: Who Cares? Why?”

Jesus said, “Consider the birds of the air...”

Well, we would if we could, but unfortunately, we've lost some.

For example, our exquisite Paradise Parrot is extinct, due to the actions of humans. No one can “consider” a Paradise Parrot in the wild, now or ever. And it's not just birds Australians are world leaders in mammal extinctions, losing more mammals than any other nation on the planet. We also have the dubious honour of being the first nation to lose a mammal due to climate change, the Bramble Cay Mosaic-tailed Rat. We are in the sixth major extinction event in the planet's history. But unlike the previous five, this tsunami of extinctions is of our making. Do we care? And if so, why?

As a biologist I might be tempted to draw comfort from the fossil record that shows that extinctions are the rule, not the exception. The vast majority of organisms that have inhabited this planet are now extinct. So why should one species (ours) really care which other species persist with us on the planet at this time in the earth's history? It is challenging to find an evolutionary explanation for why our species should care. I can assure you that devoting much of my career to preserving endangered birds has not enhanced my Darwinian fitness – that is, my capacity to attract mates and leave more progeny. In fact, I'm sure if I surveyed my fellow conservation biologists, I'd find they have contributed fewer offspring to the global gene pool than the average human!

So, if not for some evolutionary advantage, why do we care if a species becomes extinct?

Having put this question to science students and colleagues over the past 30 years, it is clear from their answers that their motivations for caring come from beyond science. Their assessment of the extent of the extinction crisis may be informed by science but their motivation to act comes from somewhere else. And in a way, by the very nature of the scientific method, it should be that way. Science is about discovering how the world is, but agnostic in regard to how it should be. As Einstein put it in *Science and God: A Dialogue*, “I do not believe that a moral philosophy can ever be founded on a

“If I am to ‘love my neighbour as myself,’ then I can’t walk past on the other side of the street, hoping someone else will clean up the ecological mess we’ve all contributed to.”

scientific basis. ... The valuation of life and all its nobler expressions can only come out of the soul's yearning toward its own destiny. Every attempt to reduce ethics to scientific formulas must fail.”

The answers to four key questions provide insights into the diversity of beliefs that motivate people to care (or not) about extinctions:

- Are humans viewed as part of nature or separate from it?
- Do humans have any accountability or responsibility to a higher being, ancestors, spirit, power, entity, or force beyond humanity?
- Do non-human organisms have intrinsic value separate from their utilitarian value to humans? If so, to whom?
- Do humans have any responsibility to act in the best interests of future generations of humans, and if so, why?

Five core principles of my Christian faith are relevant in answering these questions and whether or not I should care. My faith teaches me:

- We are part of nature. Yes, we have a unique relationship with the Creator, but the Bible also affirms we are made of the same stuff as the rest of nature – dust (Genesis 2:7 and 3:19). Christians have a legacy of doing great harm when we lose sight of this mystery and behave with arrogant superiority based on a position of privilege, rather than one of grace, gratitude and humility (Psalm 8:4-6).
- The earth belongs to the Creator, not us. We know the Creator cares about the land



- (Leviticus 25:4). Creation is not merely the backdrop to a human drama. We are very fortunate tenants, not owner-occupiers (Psalm 24:1, Leviticus 25:23). Going on our recent form as tenants, we should not be assuming we'll get our bond back, if we ever find another planet to live on!
- Part of being special among creation is that God has given us, of all species, a particular responsibility to be faithful stewards of this gift (Genesis 2:15). Caring for nature is not an optional elective a Christian should be deliberating over – from the beginning it's been part of every human's job description.
- A core tenet of Jesus' teaching was “love your neighbour as yourself” (Mark 12:31). Who is my neighbour, ecologically? What I do, and how I care for creation where I am, can potentially affect many neighbours for good or for bad, near or far, human and non-human. If I am to “love my neighbour as myself”, then I can't walk past on the other side of the street, hoping someone else will clean up the ecological mess we've all contributed to.
- Finally, the eighth commandment, “Thou shalt not steal,” does not leave any doubt

extinction?



The endangered migratory Swift Parrot is facing extinction due to logging and climate change. Picture: iStock

“Our neglect can’t be concealed behind some misplaced optimism that God will bail us out at the end of the age – lethargic bystanders, preoccupied with life after death, to the exclusion of life on the planet, here and now.”

that shirking our responsibility to care for the garden, exploiting the planet and depriving others of its bounty, is stealing from our neighbours and future generations. My generation’s greed and negligence are intergenerational theft.

Our neglect can’t be concealed behind some misplaced optimism that God will bail us out at the end of the age – lethargic bystanders, preoccupied with life after death, to the exclusion of life on the planet,

here and now. When it comes to caring for humans, we know it is not a zero-sum game, choosing between giving medical care and sharing the gospel. Christians (and Jesus) see no issue with working to preserve human life, even though we all die. So, should not creation care – including species preservation – also be seen as one of our Christian obligations, even if God plans to restore this earth? Christian hope is not for redemption from the world, but for the redemption of the world. Jesus’ life and resurrection taught us God’s Kingdom is coming “on earth, as it is in heaven.”

We are called to work towards that kingdom. The main challenges in that work are moral, rather than scientific. We know what we need to do. We have the opportunity and responsibility to confess our past failures and commit to being wiser stewards of the extraordinary gifts the Creator has entrusted to us.

Professor Mike Clarke is a conservation biologist and former head of the School of Life Sciences at La Trobe University. He is an ISCAST Fellow and member of the Banyule Network of the Uniting Church. Details of the ISCAST event can be found online at: bit.ly/ISCASTextinction.

TEN WAYS

to support species preservation and planetary health

- Support greater investment globally in the education of girls, one of the most beneficial actions for nature through its impact on population growth and equity.
- Lobby all levels of society to take substantial individual and collective action to reduce emissions and conserve nature through stopping habitat loss and fragmentation, reducing threats posed by pests and weeds and committing to repairing the damage caused by past mistakes. This means governments, institutions, businesses, NGOs and churches. Business as usual is not an option.
- Eat a more locally sourced, sustainably produced diet, which does not involve loss of native vegetation
- Walk, cycle, take public transport. Transition away from fossil fuel-based land travel.
- Minimise air travel, pay for carbon offsets, and try to ensure they are genuine.
- Minimise home energy use, and shift to renewables.
- Reduce, reuse, recycle.
- Invest wisely with banks, shares, super funds whose values align with your own.
- Volunteer with groups conserving nature, such as Landcare, Friends Groups, Bush Heritage.
- Inspire hope, rekindle a spirit of optimism grounded in faith in a gracious Creator.

‘Go for it’: Greg and Jocelyn are taking to

■ Hannah Felsbourg

It was in 2015 at Lighting Ridge where Greg and Jocelyn Lay met farmers who were forced to kill the last of their cattle which they could no longer afford to feed.

The region had suffered drought for three tough years. A mine had shut down for lack of water to extract opals, and nursery plants were left to wither and die.

Coming from Melbourne, it was a revelation for the Lays to see firsthand what people from rural Australia were going through.

The Lays assisted the church in assembling food baskets for those in need and organised a breakfast and other outreach events for those staying at the motor camp.

Unprompted, envelopes with \$50 notes began appearing on their windshield. Campers wanted to contribute to assisting struggling farmers.

Ministry workers in remote areas often support communities dealing with hardships like drought or floods but have limited access to resources due to geographic limitations.

The Bush Church Aid Nomads scheme connects Christian travellers with field staff and the churches they serve, enabling them to aid those workers in ministry on their travels.

BCA Nomads coordinators Greg and Jocelyn Lay aim to equip other nomads like themselves to offer their services to field workers in times of need.

Nomads provide hands-on assistance and offer emotional and spiritual support

to field workers and others across rural Australia.

Some of their contributions are to maintain church buildings, cook meals, and assist with preaching, children’s ministry, and other church initiatives.

Remote churches in towns with mostly tourists or fly-in fly-out workers struggle to build a stable community of believers to bolster them in ministry.

“You don’t have to have special gifts and talents and training and things. Anyone can do it.”

Jocelyn Lay

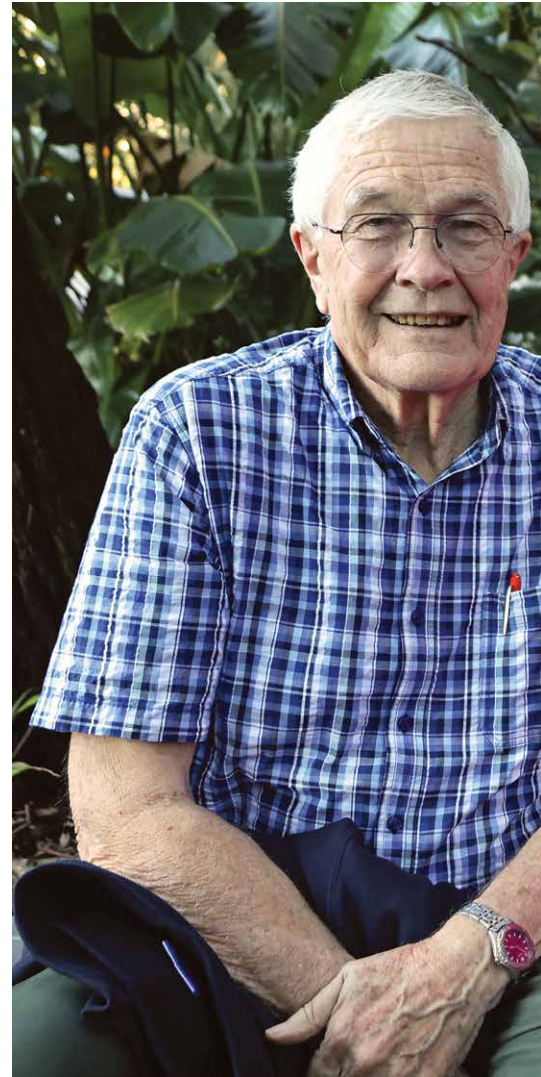
The Lays maintain friendships with many of the field staff they have met, supporting them through video calls to encourage them to continue in their gospel work.

Even nomads who no longer travel now uplift field workers through prayer, providing them with continued spiritual backing.

Many of the BCA nomads are retirees who want to travel around Australia but want to have a meaningful purpose behind their journey.

The work is entirely voluntary, with no financial benefits, yet they find immense reward in their ability to serve others.

Despite the challenges nomads face,



such as the costs of travelling in the outback and navigating different state requirements for police checks, the Lays remain dedicated.

They have been travelling as nomads

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne has no tolerance for any form of abuse, harassment or other misconduct. All concerns and reports of abuse and misconduct must be reported.



ANGLICAN
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Reporting Child Abuse in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

1 If a child is in **immediate danger** at any point **CALL 000**

2 All suspicions or reports of child abuse must be reported to:
Police
Child Protection
Kooyoora Professional Standards (see below)

What is Child Abuse?
Abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to:
Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Family Violence, Sexual Abuse, Grooming and Neglect.

Who can report neglect and abuse of a child under the age of 18?
Children, Parents, Staff, Volunteers, Anyone.

What sorts of things must be reported?
All child safety concerns must be reported:
• Disclosure of past and present abuse and harm
• Allegations, suspicions or observations
• Breaches of the Code of Conduct

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• West (Rural) **1800 075 599** • West (Metro) **1300 664 977**

KOYOORA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS 1800 135 246

the road to serve God in retirement



Bush Church Aid Nomads coordinators Greg and Jocelyn Lay.

Picture: supplied

since 2012 and believe God has protected and guided them along the way.

While driving to Coober Pedy, a strong head wind caused their diesel to run out sooner than expected and they had to

stop at a layby about 90km from their destination.

There were two other trailer campers stopped at the site and one of them had some spare diesel the Lays were able to

buy to get them back on the road.

The other nomad couple they were following pulled into the layby and realised the wind had ripped their caravan door off.

They flagged down a road train and the driver told them where he had seen it on the road. They found it and continued to Coober Pedy where it could be repaired.

The Lays believe it was through God's intervention that fuel was available to purchase, and the caravan door was recovered as it may have been forever lost if they had not stopped.

When the Lays became BCA Nomads coordinators in 2019, they developed a system allowing nomads to see the specific needs of field staff in each location on a map.

Their flexibility and willingness to help wherever and with whatever is needed have become hallmarks of the BCA Nomads' service.

Mr Lay, with a background in IT, has assisted with technical needs, while Mrs Lay has contributed by painting and tidying up church grounds.

Even before joining the nomads the Lays went to Marysville to assist after the town was affected by bushfires in 2009.

"I was just a housewife, and I thought, 'What can I do to help?', but there's always things you can do," Mrs Lay said.

"You don't have to have special gifts and talents and training and things. Anyone can do it."

When asked what she would say to anyone who was thinking of becoming a nomad, Mrs Lay's response was, "Go for it."



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Tuesday 17 September

South East Bendigo (Flora Hill) 12–2pm
Bendigo Young Adults Dinner 6pm (\$20)

Wednesday 18 September

St Mary's Sunbury 12–2pm
St James' Ivanhoe, Dessert & Coffee Evening 7.30–9pm

Thursday 19 September

St Paul's Warragul Anglican Church 12–2pm

Lunch
only \$27
per person

Younger generation rises to the call for

■ **Hannah Felsbourg**

Bible translation workers in the Northern Territory are empowering Indigenous communities to understand the nature of God by bringing the Scriptures to life in their heart languages.

Translator David Strickland and translation teachers Father Mark Woloszyn and Hannah Harper are helping Indigenous communities reconnect with their heritage and faith.

"As a Christian I have a passion for God's word. It's changed my life. It changes my life. And I did yearn to have that available for more people," Mrs Harper said.

Father Woloszyn and Mrs Harper are training the next generation of Indigenous Bible translators at Nungalinga College in Darwin.

They collaborate with four Indigenous teachers to help their students build first language and English literacy skills, along with competency in biblical texts.

Father Woloszyn said Indigenous people were taking ownership of the translation process, and the younger generation was rising to the call.

There are now second and third-generation Indigenous translators who have a deep commitment to preserving their languages and beliefs.

Living remotely and making a long-term commitment to the work are significant challenges faced by many Indigenous language translators.

Father Woloszyn and Mrs Harper want Indigenous people already in remote communities to have the opportunity to try translation work without a long-term commitment. They desire more people to join this work, as more translators and better support for them will achieve greater reach, transforming individuals, families, and communities.

Making the Bible available in people's heart languages affirms their identity and the way God made them.

Hearing God's word in their heart language resonates on a deeper level with people and makes the message more clearly understood than hearing it in a second language.

"It's important that people understand what God is like and what God has done from His Word. And also, perhaps just as

importantly, what God is not like," Mrs Harper said.

The need for Bible translation efforts is ongoing. Mrs Harper and Father Woloszyn say God's blessing, pastoral care, and prayer support are vital for their work to continue.

Over 20 years of translation work

Translator David Strickland has spent over 20 years on Bible translation work. His motivation: millions of people do not have access to the Bible in their heart language.

He believes this is vital work to give access to God's word to Christians in remote areas to strengthen their faith.

Since starting an Anmatyerr language project in 2002, he has collaborated with others to translate about half the New Testament.

The Bible Society has printed the translation as a mini-Bible, and it has been made available online in both text and audio formats to provide greater access.

The translation process is lengthy. Each passage must be checked with fluent speakers to ensure accuracy and cultural relevance, but these speakers are not always available.

THE
**Melbourne
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Apology from the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne to GFS Melbourne Inc.

For more than 15 years, the Diocese has been in a dispute with GFS Melbourne Inc. (originally known as The Girls' Friendly Society) over land in North Melbourne, on which the Edith Head Hall Hostel was built and operated. The dispute related to the issue of for whom the land was held in trust. After the commencement of litigation, a 1917 declaration of trust was found by the Diocese. This declaration was unknown by any party. The Diocese apologises for not having knowledge of this 1917 declaration of trust before. In hindsight, upon the location of the 1917 declaration of trust, the Diocese now acknowledges GFS Melbourne Inc. acted reasonably in commencing the proceeding and asserting its interest in the Edith Head Hall land.

The dispute has now been resolved. Both parties have acted honestly and in good faith at all times. The Diocese apologises to GFS Melbourne Inc. for the significant hurt, financial cost, inconvenience and stress caused by its ignorance of the declaration of trust. The Diocese accepts full responsibility for this. The Diocese wishes GFS Melbourne Inc. well and values its important ministries and wishes to continue in strong fellowship together.

Bishop Paul Barker

God's word

Mr Strickland always loved language. He felt called to Bible translation and joined Wycliffe Bible Translators.

After receiving training, he joined an SIL program in the Northern Territory and collaborated with David Blackman on an existing Alyawarr language project.

Through his journey Mr Strickland's faith and patience have been met with unexpected blessings, both in his work and personal life.

He was single when he moved to the Northern Territory to become a translator. He thought it was unlikely he would find a wife working in the desert. But he did.

He met his wife, Ming Fang, when he was in transition between two language projects. After getting married they still needed to find a place to live.

God provided for him when Finke River Mission, with which he was collaborating, stepped in to buy a house where he and Ming Fang could stay.

Mr Strickland is planning to retire soon and stressed that more workers were needed to continue the important work of bringing God's word to remote communities.



Bible translation workers Ming Fang and David Strickland.

Picture: supplied

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Our News

Anglican Healthcare Chaplaincy Campaign:

Thank you to all who donated to our Anglican Healthcare Chaplaincy campaign. We are excited to announce that this has been our **most successful fundraising campaign yet** and to reaffirm our commitment to funding this vital ministry.

Youth Grants Round:

We are currently hosting a Youth Grants round, accepting **applications for funding** of up to \$20,000 for programs that empower and uplift young people within our parishes. If you need funding for a youth project, begin your application by scanning the QR code.



A fresh encounter with John's gospel

■ Hannah Felsbourg

An epic Bible reading at St Jude's Carlton invites attendees to encounter Jesus in a powerful and immersive way.

John's Gospel will be read aloud in full, allowing people to experience the entire book and notice the threads running throughout.

The event is part of a series of free public readings Simon Camilleri will deliver across Melbourne, Brisbane, and Sydney churches in September 2024.

Mr Camilleri said he was excited to present the entire gospel story for people who may never have heard it before.

"John's gospel especially is written so that you may believe ... it's an invitation for people to hear the whole story and be convinced that Jesus is the Messiah," Mr Camilleri said.

Mr Camilleri said hearing a book of the Bible read in full helped listeners see the larger story and themes that ran through the whole book which might otherwise be missed.

He was excited to see what God would reveal to people and for Christians to be enriched by immersing themselves in a substantial portion of God's word.

"When we break it up and just take little chunks we can be in control of the story," he said.



Public Bible Reading's Simon Camilleri.

Picture: supplied

"Whereas when we sit under hearing the whole thing, then it becomes more like us riding this big ocean. The story itself takes us on a journey."

Mr Camilleri said he hoped people would be inspired to read books of the Bible publicly in full more often.

He said he wants to equip the Church to be able to train and inspire those involved in the ministry of public Bible reading

through his Public Bible Reading project.

He was also open to other churches contacting him for a reading as part of his tour.

More about Mr Camilleri's readings and coaching can be found at publicbible.com.

Mr Camilleri will deliver an epic reading of John's gospel at St Jude's Carlton on 14 September between 2pm and 5pm. This is a free event.

Anglican couple's work takes centre stage in new film

■ Hannah Felsbourg

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised the following article contains names of people who have died.

An upcoming Australian film aims to highlight the successes of Aboriginal people and the legacy Christian service has had through their lives.

Finding Miss Almond will recount the story of Isabel Smith (née Almond) and the Reverend Percy Smith, highlighting their work to equip young Aboriginal people to thrive.

The couple founded St Francis House, a home for Aboriginal boys which enabled them to move to Adelaide from remote areas for greater education and employment opportunities.

Screenwriter Mark Smith said through the film he wanted people to understand

the legacy of the boys of St Francis House and his grandmother Mrs Smith's role in their journey.

He said Mrs Smith became a surrogate mother to the boys staying at the home, particularly those who did not know where their mothers were at the time.

Her personal and deep care helped the boys flourish in an environment where government funding and formal support for Aboriginal people were lacking.

Mr Smith said the film highlighted how the children at St Francis House overcame significant challenges to become senior public servants, academics, police officers and more.

He said St Francis House impacted multiple generations, with descendants of the original residents becoming renowned activists, artists, and athletes.

Residents of St Francis house included academic and activist Gordon Briscoe,

activist and soccer player Charles Perkins, and athlete and artist John Moriarty.

Mr Smith hoped the film would prompt viewers to reflect on Australia's past with Aboriginal people and some of the positive contributions the Church had made.

He said he wanted the film to spark conversations among viewers about Aboriginal affairs to bring them into the focus of the Australian public.

In doing so he also wanted to encourage governing bodies to fund and support the telling of Aboriginal stories in the future.

Finding Miss Almond is in pre-production. Accomplished film actor and director Mark Webber is sourcing funding and collaborating with Mr Smith on the script.

They hope to begin filming later in 2024.

More information can be found on the Live Heart Productions website liveheart.com.au.