



P5
30 years for
Australia's
Biggest
Morning Tea



P14
A proposed
Human Rights
Act for Australia



P18
Clash of Clans
and a faith
journey

The Gippsland Anglican

Published in Gippsland Diocese since 1904 July 2023



The St Paul's Traralgon Year 7 common space was decorated by the newly formed Student Harmony Advisory Committee

Compassion and conversations National Reconciliation Week at St Paul's Anglican Grammar

■ Paula Walland

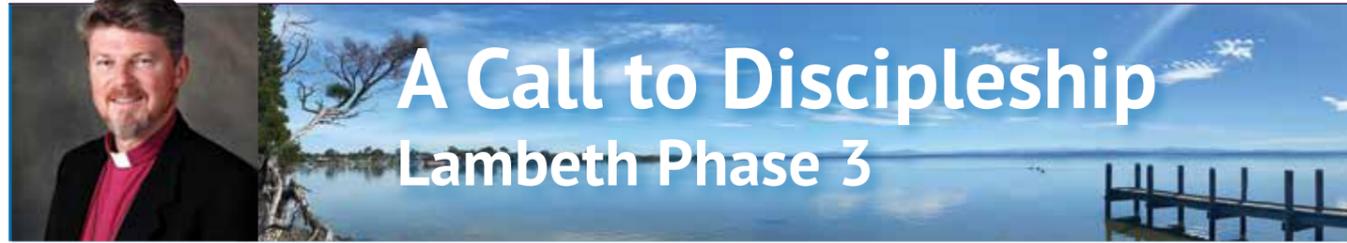
Throughout National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week, educators at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School engaged students in lessons and conversations about reconciliation to encourage a better understanding

of the shared histories of those who call Australia home.

To promote the significance of these days at the Traralgon Secondary School, the newly formed Student Harmony Advisory

Committee decked out the Year 7 common space with gum leaves that contained meaningful words, and they invited other students to add their reflections to the display.

[Continued on page 3](#)



A Call to Discipleship Lambeth Phase 3

The Lambeth Call on Discipleship begins with these words: "A disciple is a learner in mind, body and spirit ... all Anglicans [are called] to learn and learn again the loving, liberating and life-giving way of Jesus Christ in every aspect of their lives."

It goes on to encourage Anglicans to apply that life-long holistic learning to the Communion's five marks of mission:

- **Tell** – to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God
- **Teach** – to teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- **Tend** – to respond to human need by loving service including through healing ministries
- **Transform** – to work to transform unjust structures of society, challenging violence of every kind and pursuing peace and reconciliation
- **Treasure** – to strive to safeguard the integrity of Creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

These five 'T's – tell, teach, tend, transform, treasure – are given a local inflection in our own Diocesan Vision 2021–2024, and you may like to re-read that document in light of the five marks of mission (search 'our vision' at gippslandanglicans.org.au).

The Call on Discipleship, released at Pentecost, marks the start of Phase 3 of the 15th Lambeth Conference.

Phase 1, in the lead-up to the (twice-postponed) face-to-face Conference, consisted of a series of online study groups for bishops around the world to build relationships and consider aspects of the Conference theme: 'God's Church for God's World'.

Phase 2 was the fortnight of the Conference in Canterbury, in July/August 2022, at which – among many other things – the 10 draft 'Lambeth Calls' were

considered and feedback was provided by the bishops.

Phase 3 began with a webinar and the release of this first Call as reworked in the light of that feedback. Phase 3 of the Lambeth Conference is for everyone. Visit the first two links below to view a recording of the opening webinar and to read the full text of the Call on Discipleship.

You'll see there that we are invited to add our voice to the Call by sharing stories of discipleship in our own context. This dynamic has a kind of 'responsorial' quality, such as we experience in our liturgy, sacred music and psalms ("O give thanks to the Lord for he is good: for his mercy endures forever"; Ps 136:1) – call and response, call and response – a pattern to be repeated as each Lambeth Call is released in the months and years ahead.

There's a sense in which there are as many stories of discipleship in our ministry setting as there are Gippsland Anglicans. Each of us – as we are and as we may become – is signed and sealed in baptism to 'live as a disciple of Christ,' into whose body we are incorporated by this sacrament.

On another level, as households of faith and fellowship in our parishes and other ministry contexts, and as a Diocese, what do you see as the common themes and threads that characterise our collective following of the Crucified and Risen One?

In the biblical reflection during the Phase 3 webinar, we were reminded that the great (and flawed) apostle Peter only came to discipleship because his brother Andrew found him and said "We have found the Messiah" (John 1:41); it was literally the first thing Andrew did upon meeting Jesus, we are told.

There's a lovely Roman Catholic tradition of describing families as the 'domestic church,' and – as much as Jesus' teaching relativises the importance of blood relationships in the kingdom of

God – the Scriptures are replete with examples of households coming to faith and discipleship together.

At our recent Synod we witnessed and reflected upon several examples of this life-long holistic learning in the life of our diocesan family, and how the loving, liberating and life-giving way of Jesus Christ stands ready to transform every aspect of our lives: be it as participants in the Ministry Development Program, or an inter-parish EFM group, or a retreat at The Abbey; exploring how better to care for creation with the help of ACTinG; educating ourselves about the Referendum question from faith perspectives; or service-based learning at our Anglican schools and with our partners at Anglicare.

There are so many ways to tell, teach, tend, transform and treasure, as we seek to be more deeply committed in Christ, more intentionally connecting in service and more boldly creative in spirit.

I look forward to sharing the Lambeth Calls with readers of TGA, and adding our voice to them. To that end, I invite you to register with me for the forthcoming Phase 3 webinars at the third link below, the next webinar being the Call on the Environment and Sustainable Development in September.

May you be blessed in your journey of discipleship, as in company with all the baptised and the communion of saints, we learn and learn again the loving, life-giving way of Jesus Christ.

Grace and peace,

lambethconference.org/phase_3_theme/discipleship

lambethconference.org/multi_language_dl/lambeth-call-paper-discipleship

lambethconference.org/phase-3/register-for-phase-3

Continued from page 1

Primary students at the Traralgon campus gained a greater appreciation of the importance of fostering compassion throughout the community through discussions of history, customs and accomplishments. In keeping with the theme of this year's National Reconciliation Week, 'Be a Voice for Generations', they also spoke about how they and their families could support Australia's reconciliation efforts by strengthening connections with First Nations peoples in Australia.



Year 3 students at the Warragul campus created their own five-petaled desert roses, learning about this plant's resilience and survival as well as why it was chosen as a symbol by members of the Stolen Generation, with the five petals of the flowers representing the scattering of its members across Australia. The colour of the desert rose represents compassion and spiritual healing, which sparked discussions among educators and students that resulted in a greater understanding of the importance of fostering compassion throughout the community.



Traralgon Year 2 students Max, Amara and Ruby enjoyed activities designed to help them appreciate the importance of fostering compassion in our community

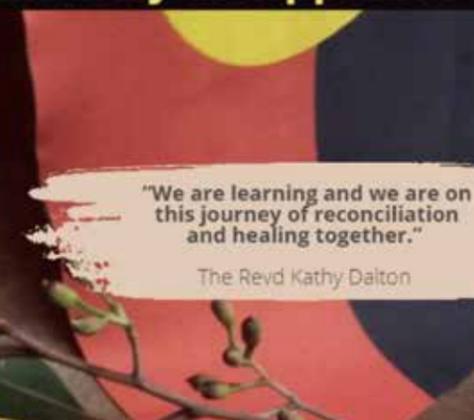
Please donate to support Aboriginal Ministry in Gippsland



The Revd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy



The Revd Kathy Dalton



The Revd Kathy Dalton



Your donation to Aboriginal ministry is vital.

Gippsland Anglicans is raising funds to continue its support of Aboriginal Ministry. The Revd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy (L) and The Revd Kathy Dalton (R), pictured here with The Rt Revd Dr Richard Treloar, Bishop of Gippsland, work together to support the spiritual needs of Aboriginal people across the vast area of Gippsland. They are regularly called to other places and interstate to provide culturally appropriate support and care.

Please scan the QR code or visit www.gippslandanglicans.org.au for options.





We are Gippsland Anglicans – Committed in Christ, Connecting in Service, Creative in Spirit. We are committed to providing a safe environment for all, especially children and vulnerable people. We acknowledge the First Nations people of this region as the traditional custodians of the land on which the Diocese of Gippsland serves, and pay our respects to past, present and emerging Elders of the GunaiKurnai, Boonwurrung, Bidawal and Ngarigo/Monero peoples.



Strong minds, soft hearts at Belgrave Heights Men's Convention

CRU West Director Ed Surrey speaking at this year's BHC Men's Convention

■ Geoff Boer

My wife and I worked with a mission in a provincial city in Papua New Guinea for eight years from 2010. At that time, our mission had a reputation for being self-focused, with the expatriates not really associating with the other missions in the city. Although there were some valid reasons for this, we were determined to do just a little bit to try to reverse this unfortunate reality, and we probably had a little success.

All too often we get caught up in our own denomination, our own way of expressing our faith tradition. We can be inward-looking and intolerant, not contributing outside our comfort zone. The Men's Convention of the Belgrave Heights Convention (BHC), which I attended in May, encourages people of all denominations, and those who are non-denominational, to join in worship, fellowship and learning. BHC also runs a Women's Convention (20–21 October 2023), conventions for all the family at Easter and Christmas, and other events during each year. BHC has the simple aim of serving, equipping and encouraging God's people and a vision "to see the spiritual renewal of God's people for His mission in the world."

BHC has been a Christian institution in some manner for over 100 years. My grandmother first took me camping there as a youngster in 1965; facilities were fairly basic then but have expanded and improved in recent years. The current building program expects to have another 220 beds available, together with modern catering facilities. My ageing body appreciated the bed in the lodge, the bottom bunk reserved for the "premium" package and the warm auditorium on the bitterly cold last weekend of autumn.

For those unable to attend in person there is the option to attend online at a low cost. You miss the fellowship but still achieve the learning. This year, six men from the Anglican congregation at Inverloch and Wonthaggi were able to join several hundred others at the men's convention.

The theme for the BHC Men's Convention was "strong mind, soft heart," recognising the need to have strong principles combined with a gentle attitude if we are to have a beneficial impact on the world. The speakers were dynamic

and entertaining, and delivered first-class messages.

This year, the main Bible talks were based on 1 Peter, chapters 1 to 4, the message that living a godly life gives to those around us.

We also had the opportunity to learn from Christian economist Ian Harper on managing money and finances through the stages of life. We were reminded that we are mere stewards of what God has entrusted to us. We were also reminded of Proverbs 30:8-9:

Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.

Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, "Who is the Lord?"

Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of my God. (NIV)

Do yourself a favour: consider BHC as part of your Christian walk. Check out bhc.org.au for coming activities; for men, save the last weekend in May 2024 (Friday night to Saturday afternoon) for a new experience, and round up a few mates to join in a time of spiritual growth and refreshment with His people from many other traditions.

If we are obedient to Jesus' desire for unity in His church, we remember that what we have in common with all believers far exceeds our differences: the love of God, and our redemption and forgiveness thanks to the death and resurrection of Jesus.

King's Birthday Honour for Rev'd Ken Parker

■ Sally Woollett

The Rev'd Ken Parker, Priest-in-Charge at St Thomas' Bunyip, has received a King's Birthday Honour (OAM) for service to the Anglican Church of Australia.

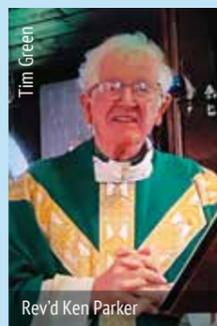
In announcing the awards, Governor-General His Excellency General the Hon. David Hurley said, "Learning about the wide-ranging service of recipients, which spans almost every field of endeavour imaginable, is uplifting and makes me enormously optimistic for our country. Collectively they speak to who we are now and who we can be in the future."

"Each recipient has something in common: someone nominated them. The Order of Australia belongs to each of us because nominations come from the community. In honouring today's recipients, I also encourage all Australians

to consider nominating someone they admire who has had a significant impact in the community."

On being awarded this Honour, Ken said, "I feel deeply affirmed in my sense of ministry and renewed in my understanding of the Anglican Church – that it is and must be a thoughtful, compassionate and creative community. I am grateful to be a part of the Diocese of Gippsland, which lives those qualities."

Nominations for Australian Honours and Awards can be made at any time. To find out more about nominating someone, visit gg.gov.au and search 'nominate'.



Tim Green

Rev'd Ken Parker



Australia's Biggest Morning Tea: Inverloch helps celebrate 30 years

David Chun cutting the cake for Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, Inverloch

■ Wendy McBurnie

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, an initiative of Cancer Council, has been raising money for cancer research since 1993, so this year it celebrated 30 years of fundraising. The Parish of Wonthaggi/

Inverloch opted for an afternoon tea at the Church of The Ascension, Inverloch. A lovely spread of sandwiches and cakes was provided by both centres.

A large decorated birthday cake was

generously donated by Paul the Pieman, our award-winning local baker at Inverloch.

It was very pleasing to welcome members of the Inverloch churches, as well as school children and community groups.

Students in grades 1–4 at Inverloch Primary School shared with us their second language. The school has chosen Auslan, Australian sign language. It was a wonderful experience for our guests. The children sang and signed two songs: *We Are Australian* and *Cover Me with Sunshine*.

David Chun, a nurse at the new cancer hospital in Wonthaggi, spoke about his work, and this was very well received. A trading table was well stocked, and quizzes, competitions and displays proved to be a success.

Many thanks went to our guests for their willingness to support our fundraising efforts for a special cause. Most importantly, 65 people attended, a great representation of the church and community working together to help cancer research. It enabled us to forward a little over \$1100 to the Cancer Council.

Anglicare Earthcare Gippsland success

Sale Cathedral has successfully completed the installation of solar panels using both a Sustainability Victoria grant and tax deductible donations using the availability of the Anglican Earthcare Gippsland (AEG) for parishes.

As promoted at this year's Synod, parishes can now use the AEG tax-deductible donation status for environmental projects. Enhancing the commitment made at the 2022 Synod for us all to address the impacts of climate change, the tax-deductible status of AEG should make it easier for parishes to attract sponsors and donors

to support environmental action.

Be it community gardens, solar panel installation, Communion Forest or other environmental projects, please consider the benefit that the AEG facility may provide to your project.

The Sale Cathedral project was supported by \$2000 in donations using the AEG. All these funds were then passed onto the parish to assist with the project.

For more information, please contact AEG Secretary, Richard Connelly: richardc@gippslandanglicans.org.au



Bonding with babies through music

Sing and Grow program in Nar Nar Goon

Program participant Arthur was fascinated with the music therapist's guitar

■ Rev'd Cathy Turnbull

At St John's Nar Nar Goon we have been delighted to be able to host eight sessions of Sing and Grow. This music therapy program is for mums, dads, carers and grandparents of children aged from newborn to four years. The hour-long sessions are filled with music, song and dance for the

little ones to respond to according to their age, as well as examples of how parents can interact and bond with their babies and infants through music. It particularly encourages singing to your child.

The sessions, hosted by me, are led by a qualified music therapist and are provided free through Anglicare (Melbourne) using federal government funding.

We have been delighted to have eight families and ten little ones participating in this program. There have been two newborns (three and four weeks old at

the start of the program) as well as three-year-olds and others in between. Mums, a dad and two grandparents have come along. After each session we put on a morning tea, so participants can chat and get to know each other.

Lots of fun was had by all, and new connections with local families have been a real joy.

The Sing and Grow program is an initiative of Play Matters and we hope to continue our connection with them into the future, with other programs in the pipeline.

Have your say in TGA!

Send your letters* of up to 350 words to editor@gippslandanglicans.org.au.

* Please include your name and suburb for publication. Letters may be edited in the interests of clarity or space.



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Family fun at Avon Parish Fair

Musicians from the Briagolong Strum Session and Maffra Ukestra

■ Glenda Amos

This year, the Parish of Avon held its Family Fun Fair on 27 May and was blessed with a coolish day but no rain and wind. This was after much prayer and watching the weather patterns. The organising committee worked tirelessly for many months and everything fell into place as parishioners arrived early on the day to finish setting up the Holy Trinity Stratford precinct.

The parish expressed their gratitude to sponsors Wellington Shire Council and Marathon Electrical for their support. Parish priest The Rev'd Dave Perryman acknowledged the Gunai Kurnai people as the original inhabitants of this land, their elders past and present and their children, who are their hope for the future. He introduced the Mayor of Wellington Shire Council, Councillor Ian Bye, who opened the fair. Councillor Carmel Ripper was an excellent MC for the day.

Musical entertainment at the fair was brought to us by a combination of the Briagolong Strum Session and the Maffra Ukestra. Part of the Fun Fair is bringing together community organisations. Their music was beautiful and we were so fortunate to have them.

Many families enjoyed the day of free children's activities: the very popular trackless train, jumping castles, face painting, Animals on the Move, music, bubbles, a clown and lollies. There was fairy floss, books, lucky dips and wooden

toys and native plants – all free. A variety of stalls, including the cake and plant stalls, added colour to the fair.

Children were introduced to farm animals and other small pets by Animals on the Move staff, who supervised when the children entered the enclosures to pet the tame animals. This popular activity can be very educational for children who haven't had pets or experiences with farm animals.

Vet Dr Steve Postlethwaite was our judge for the pet show, which included entries of a yabbie, a rabbit, and small and large dogs. Owners each received a personalised certificate and gift.

Those cooking and serving the barbecue food – sausages, onions and veggie burgers

– were kept very busy for the duration. The free tea, coffee and packs of sandwiches were very much appreciated by the volunteers and stallholders.

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Equitable access to health services

■ Jane Anderson

In January to March 2023, the Latrobe communities' primary aspiration was identified as access to services, making up 43% of the community conversations with me. Whenever discussing the aspiration of access to services, health equity was always mentioned in conjunction with it.

I continue to hear examples where local community members are unable to access or are delayed in accessing the health care they need due to cost. When services for CT scans, psychological counselling and occupational therapy were eventually obtained it was due to specialists or community members providing advice on free services available in other locations.

The 2023-2024 budget recently released by the federal government features measures that aim to address the cost of living and facilitate the transition toward a new energy economy. Notably, the government demonstrated a commitment to supporting regional communities through increased funding for health and welfare programs. The investments to keep GP clinics open for longer hours and support low-income patients to access bulk-billed services will help to address some of the challenges people have identified in accessing health services.

Improving palliative care continues to be an aspiration of the community and was the focus of 16% of community conversations with me.

Access to a designated ward at the Latrobe Regional Hospital was appreciated, although the physical

amenities for family members supplementing care and the variability of the nursing expertise were raised as concerns. Community members advised that they received more information on treatments and services from community palliative care nurses than in the hospital environment.

The community has raised concerns regarding mental health, social inclusion, safety, public transportation and community engagement.

Better mental health service coordination and more flexibility were suggested as options to address the disconnect between hospital treatment, community-based support and expectations of families.

I was advised that the lack of accessible transport and the lack of disability parking at health facilities was reducing access. Some community members indicated there was more pram-accessible parking than disability parking.

Community members expressed confusion about how to access support, were annoyed by continuing long wait times in aged care and dental care, tardiness in transferring funding between providers in aged care providers, disconnects between therapists and service providers, and lack of a coordinated service plan for chronic conditions.

During this quarter, my office has also seen several systems changes that can provide opportunities for better mental health models, better services, better support and integration of community voice.

Latrobe Regional Hospital has

revamped its Community Advisory Committee to diversify its membership, with people from the LGBTIQ community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people with a disability and the multicultural community all now represented.

I continue to hear from communities who share their goals, barriers and suggestions, and how they want to be engaged by governments and services across Latrobe.

As part of my role, I prioritise the experiences of Latrobe communities and advocate for changes in systems that can improve their health and overall welfare. My focus is on reaching out to those who are often not heard and giving them a voice through a platform that can bring their aspirations and concerns to the attention of the government and services. Moreover, I strongly encourage governments and services to prioritise community input in the design and delivery of programs.

If you, or a group you belong to, would like to share your experiences with me please get in touch with my team on 1800 319 255 and they will organise a time for us to catch up. Please contact us if you have any questions about the report or the information provided.

You can keep up to date with my work through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. I look forward to hearing from you in the coming months.



Giving a gift that lasts

Bequests to Anglican Diocese of Gippsland

The Gippsland Diocese has been blessed with the generosity of Anglicans and others in support of its mission. One form of support you can offer is a bequest in your will - to the Diocese, your own parish or for a particular purpose.

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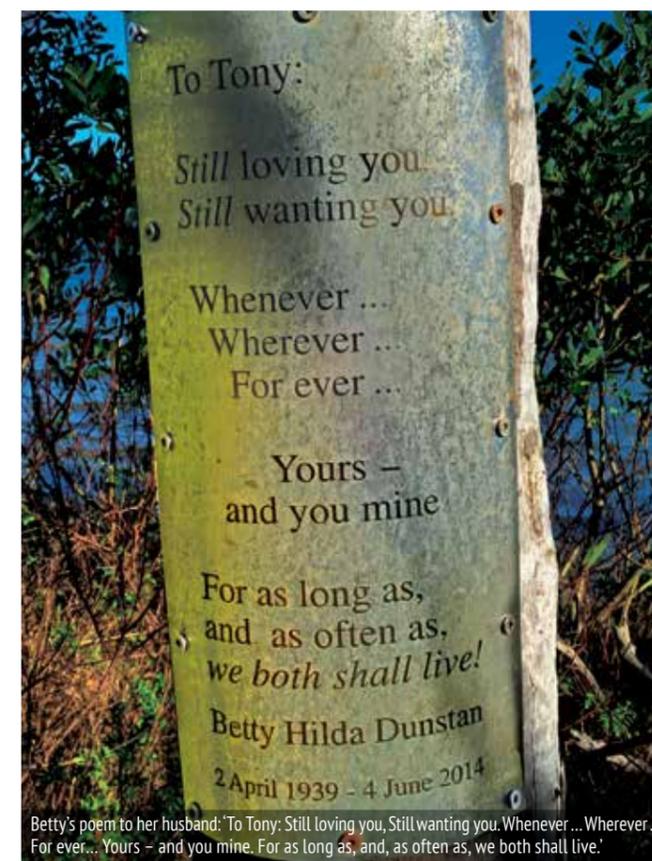
■ Dr Cath Connelly

One of the immeasurable joys of life at The Abbey is meeting people as they wander through the grounds. Recently I met Tony, who visits each year on the anniversary of his wife's passing. A plaque attached to one of the trees on The Abbey foreshore contains a poem composed by his wife, Betty.

Betty Hilda Dunstan, we remember you and all those who through the years have found The Abbey to be a place of hospitality, spirituality and deep connection with nature.

There is much happening at the Abbey this winter season. Our weekly eucharist (Wednesdays at 11 am) is followed by morning tea and discussion time. The Celtic Spirituality retreat is attracting a lot of attention, with bookings filling up fast. This year both the Abbey Feast and the Diocesan Retreat are in August, so put these in your diary. Lots more details of all our events are available at theabbey.org.au.

This is your Abbey; come find a home here.



Betty's poem to her husband: 'To Tony: Still loving you, Still wanting you. Whenever ... Wherever ... For ever ... Yours - and you mine. For as long as, and, as often as, we both shall live.'

Save the date



JULY

- 14-16: Enneagram weekend
- 18: *Hush*. A retreat day on the Island. Mid-Winter Practices with a Celtic Twist
- 21-23: Celtic spirituality retreat

AUGUST

- 4-6: Yoga weekend
- 11-13: Circle dancing retreat
- 18-19: Diocesan retreat
- 22: *Hush*. A retreat day on the Island. Wild Goose: Soulscape of Yearning
- 26: Abbey Feast
- 27: Maria Forde concert

SEPTEMBER

- 12: *Hush*. A retreat day on the Island. Sacred Photography
- 13: The Creation Windows through Literature, Art and Music: Light from Darkness, Sun Moon & Stars, the Firmament. Sue Fordham and June Treadwell



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Synod motions from 2022: progress updates

Part of Synod each year is devoted to updating members on progress with formal motions made the previous year. Here's a summary of progress on 2022 motions reported for this year.

Safe ministry

That Bishop-in-Council reviews the legislative changes necessary to ensure Parish Councils consider their compliance with safe ministry requirements and have appropriate risk assessments for parish activities.

Council recommended to Synod the Parish Administration Act (Amendment) Bill 2023, which was adopted by Synod.

Climate change

That this Synod makes action on climate change a major focus for the Diocese of Gippsland over the coming three-year cycle of Synod.

Bishop-in-Council referred a response to the newly formed ACTinG Committee (Acting on Climate Together in Gippsland).

In summary:

- A range of communication avenues were provided to promote the education and increasing awareness for Gippsland Anglicans of issues relating to climate change and sustainable living.

These include webinars, print, email and text bulletins, social media and web materials and articles in TGA.

- Many of these communication pieces explored issues of eco and environmental theology, with the collation and distribution of resources on the diocesan website.
- Various tools were explored to assist parishes and individuals understand carbon emission levels. Initial steps have been taken to form partnerships with Sustainability Victoria and Solar Vic to access state subsidies for energy and emission reduction technology with several parishes being supported to attract grant funding for solar PV installations.
- A creative encouragement for individuals to reduce household emission was distributed to ACTinG supporters in the form of Christmas and Easter electronic cards.
- Greater access was enabled for parishes to the tax deductible instrument available through Anglican Earthcare Gippsland for environmental initiatives.

The work of ACTinG will continue to promote emission reduction strategies, sustainable living practices and our collective response to caring for God's creation.

Family violence

That Synod adopts the Ten Commitments for Preventing and Responding to Domestic and Family Violence and that the Bishop progress and report on the work of the Ten Commitments in this diocese.

Significant work in responding to this Synod 22 motion has been deferred while work prioritising the implementation of the Child Safe Standards occurs across the Diocese. Responding to the Family Violence Ten Commitments has some overlap with the Child Safe Standards.

Bystander training will be offered as professional development later this year. This training complements the Ministry Wellbeing and Professional Development Policy (see next page).

A working group has been established, chaired by the Vicar General. Membership



Jan Down, Chair of ACTinG



Tracy Lauerson, National Program Manager – General Synod Families and Culture Commission

of the working group is still being developed, drawing in expertise from the wider community. Several people have expressed an interest in championing the Ten Commitments across the Diocese. The Diocesan Staff team retains this work as a standing agenda item.

Articles in TGA, the distribution of resources, messaging from the Bishop and other means will be used to promote awareness of the Ten Commitments. The key message in the Ten Commitments on Family Violence is that our church must be a safe place for all.

Ministry wellbeing and development

That Synod adopts the 'Ministry wellbeing and development' policy guidelines and resources as adopted by the 18th General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia and that the Bishop progresses the work of the policy.

A working group has been formed to progress the implementation of the Ministry Wellbeing and Development Policy including Ven Graham Knott (Chair), Very Rev'd Keren Terpstra, Ven Sue Jacka and Rev'd Dr Tim Gaden. The group meets monthly.

It is understood that the majority of stipendiary clergy already receive some sort of supervision, particularly those ordained within the last 10–15 years. It is an expectation that a candidate for ordination or a priest moving into the Diocese to commence a parochial appointment or chaplaincy receives supervision regularly.

From this base of strong participation in supervision, it is envisaged that the



Rev'd Dr Tim Gaden, Gippsland Grammar Chaplain and member of the Ministry Wellbeing and Development Policy working group

majority of the work to be done with respect to implementing the policy will be about funding and reporting processes for supervision and professional development.

It is also anticipated that a Ministry Wellbeing Coordinator will be appointed, initially for one day per week, to help roll out and administer the policy. Protocols will need to be developed around best practice for retention of confidential records for each person who will be supported in ministry through supervision and professional development.

Clerical Synod members

That Synod resolves to request Bishop-in-Council to consider the need for and desirability of legislative amendments to the Synod Act to better reflect the changing face of ministry and to be more inclusive of clergy serving in a range of authorised capacities at Synod.

Preliminary work has been conducted in response to this motion, including a review of similar legislation in other dioceses and scoping the forms of ministry envisaged to be captured by any reforms to the Synod Act.

A review of the current Synod Act has also occurred, with several matters identified that may be referred for amendment to reflect current practices and to provide clarity. Initial work has commenced in drafting proposed amendments to the current Act, but is not yet in a finalised form to present to Synod. This is likely to occur in 2024, prior to the commencement of the next Synod. In the meantime, we continue to take a maximally inclusive approach in terms of who is invited to participate in Synod.

Gippsland Younger Anglicans group

That Synod requests Bishop-in-Council considers establishment and launch of an official foundation to establish and support



Jack Beamish, Younger Anglicans group

the Gippsland Anglican Young Adults (Family) Movement, supports the need for financial sponsorship and income streams, and other practical supports. Also that Bishop-in-Council consider networking across parishes and enabling work towards re-establishment of a Youth Synod or conference in the Diocese.

Preliminary work has commenced in response to this motion, with Council supporting the endeavours of younger people in our congregations to:

- hold worship gatherings
- formalise leadership networks
- develop partnerships that will promote this ministry endeavour.

The presence and input of Younger Anglicans at this year's Synod reflects a commitment to include younger voices in our governance and mission.

Adapted from Synod Book 2 of Second Session of 40th Synod of Anglican Diocese of Gippsland.



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Our commitment to a safe church

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More than 100 parishioners and community members at Christ Church Foster say goodbye to the Fletchers

Farewell to the Fletchers in Foster

■ Carole Williams

A wonderful day of celebration and appreciation marked the final service held at Christ Church Foster by The Rev'd Tim Fletcher on 28 May, after his 16 years of service as Rector of the Parish of Corner Inlet.

Tim ministered to the congregations of Foster, Toora and Hedley; ran youth programs; initiated outreach projects such as Tuckerbox, Christmas Carols at the Oval and Mainly Music; and was involved in many other church and community activities.

Residents at Prom Coast Aged Care looked forward to his weekly services and enjoyed the sense of humour that accompanied his visits. Tim was also a Hospital Chaplain at South Gippsland Hospital, giving comfort and encouragement to many patients.

One of Tim's many strengths is preaching; during his skilled delivery he projects his messages with clarity and humour. Tim does not use written notes when giving a sermon; he simply speaks from the heart – fully conversant with his subject and fully engaging his congregation in the process.

Tim's ministry across the parish put him in touch with people of all ages, and he is a much-loved and faithful leader and friend to those he has tended. His wife,

Liz, with her inexhaustible kindness, has also been involved in church programs, including Children's Ministry and Know Your Bible.

More than 100 people were present at the thanksgiving and farewell service, including members of the local community also touched by the love and goodwill of the Fletchers. Music was played, songs were sung, speeches were made, poems and limericks were presented, and a special letter of praise and commendation from Bishop Richard was read.

The Fletchers were presented with flowers and a beautiful coffee table crafted by local woodworkers from a church pew formerly used at St Thomas' Toora.

After the service, a delicious lunch was served and a time of social interaction completed the day. The parishioners of Corner Inlet wish Tim and Liz a happy and fulfilling time in their next ministry setting.



New Lay Reader for Moe-Newborough

■ Kerri Brown

The Parish of Moe-Newborough was delighted to welcome the licensing of Julie Bruce as its fourth Lay Reader. Julie was presented with her license by the Rev'd Canon David Head on 28 May. We wish Julie all the best as she starts the next chapter of her journey in faithful service.



Supporting the Aboriginal Ministry Fund

- employment of Aboriginal people in ministry
- training of Aboriginal people for ministry
- cultural education within Gippsland Diocese
- development of Aboriginal ministry

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Implementing the Victorian Child Safety Standards

Visit gippslandanglicans.org.au

This year, TGA is highlighting the 11 Child Safe Standards to help us think, talk about and improve the way we do things in our ministries.

This month we take a look at Standard 5: *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.*

What is this standard about?

Standard 5 is about:

- understanding the difference between equity, equality and diversity
- respecting diversity
- the influence of parish culture on the risk of abuse
- additional obligations for parishes.

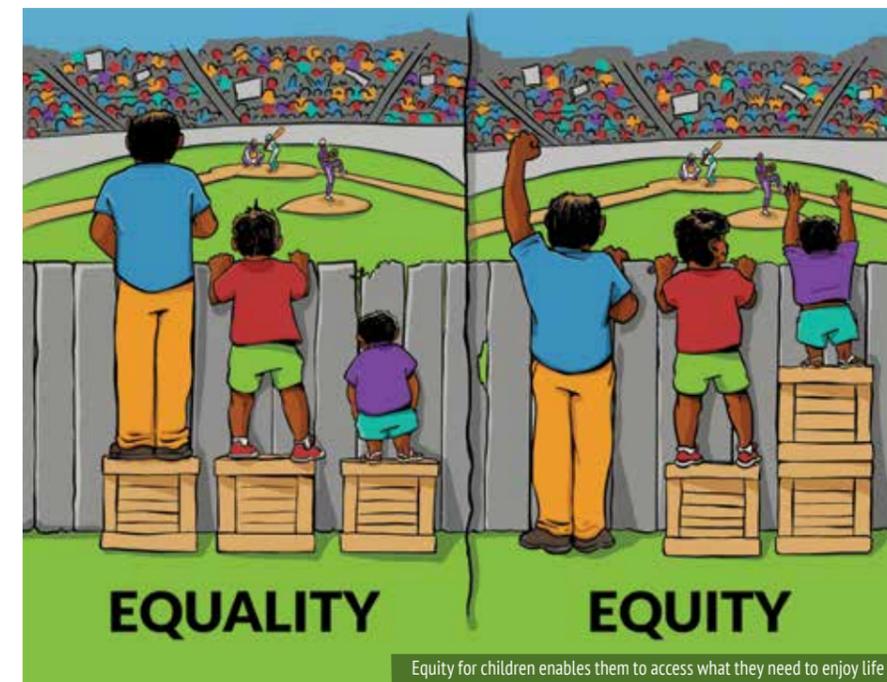
A Child Safe parish will ensure it is informed and capable of responding effectively to diverse needs so that it includes all children in its child safety initiatives.

Parishes can consider:

- a trauma-informed approach – being aware that abuse such as neglect, loss of a parent and exposure to violence affects a child's outlook and behaviour
- how to empower children with a disability
- special needs of children who are Aboriginal, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender and gender diverse, intersex, questioning and/or culturally and linguistically diverse
- discussing their response to asylum seekers.

What to do now

- Be respectful, welcoming and inclusive of all people from diverse backgrounds.
- Identify and respond to the diverse needs, abilities and backgrounds of children in your care.



Equity for children enables them to access what they need to enjoy life

Equity	Children have equal opportunity to access the skills, knowledge and resources they need to be safe, based on their needs characteristics, circumstances, life experiences and backgrounds
Equality	Everyone gets the same things, regardless of their needs
Diversity	A range of personal characteristics, circumstances, life experiences and backgrounds. The combinations of these attributes make a child's unique identity and shapes the way they experience the world and the types of needs they have.

Adapted from *A Parish Guide to Implementation of the Victorian 11 Child Safe Standards*.



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The **Gippsland Anglican**

Rights or wrongs – what can Australia offer humanity?

■ Mark Woods

In its original version, the *Australian National Anthem* declared, among other things, that "... we are young and free ...".* Allowing the librettist the licence to refer to the age of the nation established *de jure* by the Constitution, can we extend that indulgence to the expression "free"? To the extent that being "free" denotes its citizens as having "freedoms," Australia can hardly be so described. Why is that?

After all, we have a proud history of public action to stop governments from acting to curtail freedoms capriciously or without regard to the public will. From participation in the Eureka Stockade, to public rejection of conscription in the Great War, to participation in Vietnam moratorium demonstrations, to telling Bob Hawke to forget the idea of an Australia Card – we, as a people, have rejected any sniff of authoritarianism.

Or have we? Our commitment to being "free" hasn't prevented state governments enacting laws giving a wide range of petty public officials, from gas meter inspectors to wildlife officers, the right to enter our properties – with criminal penalties for those who resist. We didn't stop the enactment of laws that criminalised homosexuality, or suicide, or those assisting it. Nor have we stopped arbitrary detention for protesting, arrests for being drunk or fines for walking outdoors without a mask (even with a few hundred metres between yourself and another human being), if the chief health officer doesn't like it.

Each of these examples highlights infringements of what are described as human rights. Sadly, in sociopolitical terms, they discriminate against those without power – typically, so many First Nations Australians, immigrants and refugees, and those with less advantage than the writer or most readers of this article.

The Australian Human Rights Commission puts it plainly: Australia is the only liberal democracy in the world without a Human Rights Act or a Charter of Human Rights.

To some extent, this is extraordinary. Australia has been bellicose in its championing of international human



The international human rights logo, created by Predrag Stakić from Serbia

rights treaties and covenants. Three-quarters of a century ago, we were one of the proud founders of the United Nations, which adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Commission, mindful of the suspicion with which such proposals have been greeted in the past, describes its proposed model legislation as an "evolution, not a revolution." It aspires to build on the experience of human rights legislation currently existing in Victoria, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory.

We signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1972, and ratified it over 40 years ago. We signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1972 and ratified it three years later. Yet in 2023, neither have been comprehensively enacted into law in Australia. The same can be said of manifold other international instruments concerning

the rights of women, Indigenous people, migrants, those with disabilities and (if you can believe it) children.

How should Christians react to this? While so much of our law has a solid Judaeo-Christian background (remember the snail in the ginger beer bottle, and the judicial extension of the concept of loving one's neighbour to doing them no harm), Christianity and human rights have not always peacefully co-existed.

Max Stackhouse in the *Cambridge Journal of Law and Religion* puts it succinctly:

The historic relationship between Christianity and human rights is an ambiguous one. For hundreds of years the Christian Church actively promoted religious intolerance and persecuted those who failed to accept its moral values and customs. Many of these values and practices are today rejected as contrary to a human rights culture and moral decency.

The Australian Human Rights Commission has proposed an Australian Human Rights Act. Would such legislation make any difference? The Commission, mindful of the suspicion with which such proposals have been greeted in the past, describes its proposed model legislation as an "evolution, not a revolution." It aspires to build on the experience of human rights legislation currently existing in Victoria, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory.

Under the proposed legislation, government, administrators and public servants would be required to "consider human rights and to act in accordance with human rights when making policy or decisions which affect individual lives." Parliament would be required to "place greater priority on the human rights impacts of all new proposed laws." Federal courts would be required to "interpret legislation, where possible, in a way which is consistent with human rights."

Individuals (or groups) that have a complaint about human rights would have the option of seeking that the Commission facilitate a conciliated outcome – or to proceed to seek remedies in court. Those



Demonstration against the Vietnam War outside (old) Parliament House in Canberra in 1970. Opposition to conscription was a large part of anti-Vietnam War protests in Australia

would include orders preventing government from taking an action that would breach human rights, or ordering government to pay compensation.

However, a key difference between the Commission-proposed legislation, and many other human rights protection documents around the world, is that Australian courts would not have the power to strike down laws made by Parliament that were incompatible with human rights. That follows the Commission's stated aim of "dialogue" between the courts, government and the Parliament, to evolve a more effective "human rights culture" in Australia moving forward.

Critics have and will ask the obvious question, "If we want to protect human rights, why stop the courts (whose task is to interpret the law) from striking down laws inconsistent with human rights?"

After all, that's one of the principal reasons for having a High Court in the first place. It can and does strike down laws it considers inconsistent with the Constitution. In other words, how are human rights protected from violation by a Parliament that has the unfettered legal power to do just that? What is the point of the proposed new law?

While many human rights can never be absolute (because they infringe on the human rights of others) the interpretation

of the reasonableness and proportionality of interference has, in the liberal democratic tradition, always been a matter for the courts armed with the power to strike down. So why not in the Commission's proposal?

The answer lies, this writer suspects, in realpolitik. Various human rights advocates have, over the years since Federation, called for a Bill of Rights such as that found in the American constitution, and in the United Kingdom. Indeed, most recently, in 2002, 2017 and 2019, proposed legislation (by way of private members' bills) to enact a Bill of Rights has been brought into the Australian Parliament. None of these bills have been comprehensively debated, let alone passed.

Those who oppose a Bill of Rights for Australia invariably argue that it is anti-democratic, because it reposes responsibility for determining the validity of a law in the hands of unelected judges. Parliament should be, so the argument goes, supreme in its ability to make laws. If the people don't like the laws it makes, then they can replace its members at the next election. Moreover, activist judges with tenure cannot be controlled, and are not accountable to the people.

It is an argument that occupied the drafters of the Australian Constitution. As no less an authority than Sir Anthony

Mason has observed:

Because the founders accepted, in conformity with prevailing English legal thinking, that the citizen's rights are best left to the protection of the common law and because they were not concerned to protect the individual from oppression by majority will, the Constitution contains very little in the way of provisions guaranteeing new rights.

The Commission's offering is, when all is said and done, a compromise it hopes will placate the political opponents of a Bill of Rights by pointing to the absence of any constitutional armageddon in Victoria, Queensland or the ACT since adoption of similar legislation by their parliaments.

It is, however, a poor substitute for enshrining human rights to the extent that laws overriding them can be struck down by independent judiciary. It is that protection, in the view of many human rights advocates, that Australians deserve.

Christians should join the debate.

Mark Woods is a Gippsland lawyer, Chairman of Committees of the Gippsland Diocese and Director of the diocesan Corporation. He chairs the International Bar Association's Access to Justice Advisory Board. The opinions expressed here are his own.

The official wording change to 'one and free' was made out of respect for the venerability of First Nations cultures.



Anglican Archbishop of Dublin to co-chair global ecumenical partnership

The Anglican Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Rev'd Dr Michael Jackson

The Anglican Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Rev'd Dr Michael Jackson, has been appointed as the co-chair of the official international group responsible for ecumenical dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The Anglican-Oriental Orthodox International Commission (AOOIC) was formed in 2001 to build unity between the two families of Churches.

The Anglican Communion comprises 42 autonomous and independent-yet-interdependent regional, national and pan-national churches. Six Oriental Orthodox Churches are represented in the Dialogue. There are an estimated 140 million Christians in the two Communions. AOOIC brings together church leaders and theologians from both to further the work of Christian unity.

AOOIC has two co-chairs. The Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London, His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos, is the Oriental Orthodox Co-Chair. The Most Rev'd Dr Michael Jackson from the Church of Ireland now succeeds the Bishop of St Asaph from the Church in Wales, the Rt Rev'd Gregory Cameron, as the Anglican Co-Chair.

"I feel honoured to be invited by the Archbishop of Canterbury to serve as Anglican Co-chair of The Anglican Oriental Orthodox International Commission," Archbishop Michael said. "The Dialogue is something of which I have been privileged to be part since 2002. Throughout that period, we have addressed a wide range of issues of

importance to the various traditions involved in the Dialogue.

"One of the major changes to have happened is that the movements of people worldwide have brought us all closer together both personally and theologically. This constantly enriches and enhances our range of engagement and makes our Dialogue both ancient and modern at the same time.

"I want to thank my predecessor, the Rt Reverend Dr Gregory Cameron, Bishop of St Asaph and before him the Rt Reverend Dr Geoffrey Rowell, now sadly deceased, and also my fellow Co-Chair, Archbishop Angaelos, for all their work and sustained contributions."

Archbishop Angaelos said, "We give thanks for the contribution of the Rt Rev'd Gregory Cameron over the past nine years, who has not only contributed richly to the life of the Commission, but also exhibited exemplary leadership as the Anglican Co-Chair. I am thankful for the fellowship I have shared with him over these past years.

"As Oriental Orthodox members of the Commission, we extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to Bishop Gregory, and look forward to continuing our work with His Grace Archbishop Michael Jackson as Anglican Co-Chair, who has been a valued member of the Commission since its establishment."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev'd and Rt Hon Justin Welby, said,

"Archbishop Michael has vast ecumenical and Anglican Communion experience and has been a member of AOOIC since its beginning. He now brings this knowledge, and his many other gifts, to the role of Co-Chair of AOOIC.

"The deepening friendship between Anglicans and Oriental Orthodox brings me great joy, and I pray that this may continue to grow with God's help, and that the work of AOOIC may be a blessing to us all as we seek to achieve the unity which Christ wills."

The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Bishop Anthony Poggo, said: "Since 2002, AOOIC has made a significant contribution in bringing Christians from the Oriental Orthodox and Anglican Churches closer together, and in their valuable theological work for both families.

"I welcome Archbishop Michael Jackson's acceptance of the Archbishop of Canterbury's invitation to serve as the Anglican Co-Chair of this dialogue; and look forward to seeing the results of ongoing and future work on Authority."

In 2014, AOOIC signed an agreed statement on Christology. This was followed in 2017 by an agreed statement on 'The Procession and Work of the Holy Spirit', and a statement on 'The Inheritance of Ecumenical Councils' in 2022. AOOIC is currently exploring further questions of Authority in the Church.

anglicancommunion.org

From the editor



A close friend and I recently talked about a contentious public issue, and she told me about her fears and misgivings. The topic wasn't climate change, COVID or the forthcoming referendum – although I've had similar discussions about these.

Afterwards, my friend and I reflected that sometimes there are very few people we feel we can talk to candidly – in a safe space without judgement or heated arguments. Instead of a close friend, we might choose a stranger – perhaps a professional one such as a counsellor – so there is impartiality. If we

... sometimes there are very few people we feel we can talk to candidly – in a safe space without judgement or heated arguments.

speak to a faith leader we trust that there will be confidentiality.

Anonymity is important or critical in a safe speaking space. This is often a priority in resources and services for mental health, sexual identity and health, and family violence, for all of which work continues to increase access, and to reduce stigma and shame.

Referring to the forthcoming referendum and proposed Indigenous Voice to Parliament in his Presidential

Address to this year's Synod, Bishop Richard expressed his hope that "... you will read many views, hear many voices on this topic ... Read what Indigenous leaders have to say – opinions that differ as we should expect."

I hope you have opportunity for plenty of in-person discussion in your safe spaces. Also that some of what you read in this and recent issues of TGA can support your learning about the Voice and the

referendum.

In the May issue (p. 22), Diocesan Development Officer Libby Willems wrote about truth-telling as one of the pillars of the work towards Reconciliation. "Providing a Voice enables truth-telling and the opportunity to strengthen reconciliation," says Cathrine Muston in this issue (p. 21). Cathrine has seen first-hand the disadvantage and discrimination still experienced by First Nations peoples, having recently returned from a visit to Port Hedland to see two young Martu women who lived with her and Archdeacon

Emeritus Philip Muston while finishing their schooling. She encourages us to "try to understand how, as a country, we have got to where we are, and why this referendum is so important."

In his article on the Australian Human Rights Act proposed by the Human Rights Commission (p. 14), Mark Woods touches on several examples of Australia's "proud history" of public action, and remarks that despite this we still don't have a Charter of Human Rights or similar. He outlines a range of Australian laws that can be described as enabling human rights infringements, saying that "in sociopolitical terms, they discriminate against those without power – typically, so many First Nations Australians, immigrants and refugees."

In the June issue (p. 16), Michelle McDonald from the Anglican Church of Southern Queensland shared her views and expertise on advocacy message following her 'Referendum 2023' workshop for clergy and lay leaders. Also in June (p. 4), we published the vibrant For Our Elders poster, featuring art by Ngarluma, Kariyarra, Nyulnyul and Yawuru artist Bobbi Lockyer, the winner of this year's NAIDOC poster competition. Describing herself as an activist for women's rights, including of Birthing on Country, as well as an artist, Bobbi says she is "striving to make a better world" for her four boys.

You may well be reading this issue during NAIDOC week. The theme is For Our Elders, and on 4 July you can join in to Yarning about the Referendum, a webinar featuring Wiradjuri Elder and guest speaker The Rev'd Canon Associate Professor Uncle Glenn Loughrey, as well as Gippsland's Aboriginal Ministry clergy, The Rev'd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy and The Rev'd Kathy Dalton (details this page). If you miss the live webinar, you can catch the recording at gippslandanglicans.org.au. There, you will also find a list of suggested resources if you'd like to find out more about the forthcoming referendum and proposed Indigenous Voice to Parliament. A pamphlet from the Australian Electoral Commission will be posted to all Australian households in the lead-up to the referendum.

"It is not my place – nor anyone's – to tell you how to vote [at the referendum]" continued Bishop Richard at this year's Synod. "Suffice to say that as Christians, let it not be fear that drives us. Rather, let it be our openness to absurd generosity, to transformational forgiveness from the heart of God, and the heart of this land."

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ABORIGINAL MINISTRY

Yarning about the Referendum

Guest Speaker/Presenter

The Rev'd Canon Associate Professor Uncle Glenn Loughrey

TUESDAY 4th JULY 7:30-9:00 PM

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Screenshot from Clash of Clans

Pseudo-Intellectual

Clash of Clans and a faith journey

■ Rev'd Daniel Lowe

What do barbarians, wizards and dragons have to do with faith? The answer may not be what you were expecting. In a recent chapel talk I compared the game *Clash of Clans* with the ongoing journey of faith development that we all experience through our lives. Students seemed to take great delight in discovering that their chaplain played such a game, so let me explain the analogy I drew from it.

For those not familiar with *Clash of Clans*, it is an online, multiplayer strategy game in which you can build your own community, train troops (barbarians, wizards, etc.) and attack other players. It has been around since 2012, with varying levels of popularity.

Like most games of its sort, the play starts out simply. You build things, train troops and engage in simple battles. It isn't long, however, before you hit the first challenge: *frustration!* At some point it takes a bit too long to build things and you start to run out of resources. Hot on the heels of this challenge comes the next one: *insecurity!*

You start to realise that other players are way more advanced than you and you start losing more battles than you win.

At this point you have three options:

- Give it up and move on to some other entertainment.
- Artificially boost your base by paying money to speed things up (not recommended).
- Persevere patiently.

If you do choose the third option and persevere, eventually you reach a point where you feel competent. You settle into a strategy for building, upgrading and battling. You are no longer an amateur; not yet an expert but confident. This is where the third challenge comes in: *embarrassment!* You suddenly feel that *Clash of Clans* is no longer cool. It seems like no one else is playing it anymore. Once again you have a choice: give it up or persist.

My embarrassing confession to the students was that I had persisted in playing

the game long after it lost popularity. But what does this have to do with faith development?

My suggestion is that in a strange way our faith development is a bit like my *Clash of Clans* journey. Let me explain. First, when I say "faith development" I am talking about our worldview – the things we believe about our world. Faith here is defined in its proper sense as 'believing with good reason' (as opposed to the blind faith we sometimes think of), and we all believe something. Some of us believe there is a god; others believe there is no god. Some of us put our faith in the Christian understanding of God and the person of Jesus, while others hold different beliefs about God.

We are all people of faith, and that faith matures through testing and challenging as we grow up. A child's faith tends to be simple, straightforward, easy to understand and comforting: "I am special," "God loves me," etc. As we get older, we face our first challenge – the world gets more complicated and our simple beliefs require more thinking,

more substance, to make sense. Thinking deeply about what we believe takes more effort on our part. Hot on the heels of this challenge comes the awareness that there are people who hold very different beliefs to us and who talk about their beliefs (be they Christian, atheist, Muslim, Buddhist or something else) at a level that seems way beyond what we can understand.

As in my *Clash of Clans* journey we now have three options:

- Give it up. We stop thinking about what we really believe, declare it as too hard and just go along with whatever seems popular or acceptable at the time. The catch here is that this actually means we let others decide what we believe!
- Artificially boost simple views. We defend and broadcast our simple beliefs more loudly without actually working through any deeper thinking. We have all encountered people like this – if not in person, then certainly in the comments section of many social media posts.
- Persevere patiently. We think deeply, inquire thoughtfully, ask hard questions and give consideration to suggested answers.

Assuming you persist in exploring and maturing your faith/beliefs, at some point you may experience the next challenge: beliefs are not necessarily popular or trendy. Now that is fine with me. I don't need Christianity to be trendy. I don't need it to be popular. I don't assume that I have it all figured out, but my faith does not rely on popular opinion. It rests instead on many years of reading, thinking, listening and on personal experience – some people would describe this as a personal relationship with God.

My faith, for me, is faith with good reason. And my assumption is that the people I encounter who hold different beliefs to me also base their beliefs on plenty of reading, thinking, listening and on personal experience. And so I treat them with respect. Maybe I might even learn something from them. Maybe I'll disagree with them. That's ok too. It doesn't mean I treat them with any less dignity and respect. Disagreements can be difficult, but they don't have to be deal-breakers for respect or even friendship.

Unfortunately, this is not the approach we see modelled in a lot of our public discourse. The way many people engage online or in the media is not a healthy

model for relating to people. Also, we are prone to imitating the things we consume, whether we mean to or not (that is why many kids sound the same when they commentate on something, using a 'YouTuber voice').

Thinking about faith and belief can be hard work, no matter what conclusions we draw. Life is messy. We talk a lot about growth mindset, about being willing to make mistakes, being brave in our exploration of ideas. Why should this not also apply to our faith development?

James writes to the early Christians, "Whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing" (James 1:1-5).

Whatever your beliefs, I encourage you to help your children persevere in the maturing of their beliefs – allowing them to be challenged, questioned, maybe changed and maybe strengthened, so that they might benefit from the 'full effect' of their endurance.

Rev'd Daniel Lowe is Senior Chaplain at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School.

Committed in Christ

Gippsland Anglicans are grounded in Christ. We engage with the Church's living traditions as intentional inclusive communities where all are welcome, respected, safe, and valued.

Our identity is shaped by

- Scripture studied with reverence and rigour
- Worship that unites and inspires
- Ministry exercised by all the baptised
- Prayer which opens hearts to grace
- Diversity received as a gift of creation
- Growth in belonging and believing

Connecting in Service

Gippsland Anglicans share in Christ's mission. We hold fast to the vision of human flourishing Jesus called 'the Kingdom of God' and we reach out in partnership with good news for all.

Our ministry is marked by

- Listening to people's lived experience
- Looking outward in meeting needs
- Speaking into the big questions of the day
- Reconciling where there is injustice or injury
- Building up communities of care and trust
- Acting for the good of earth and all creatures

Creative in Spirit

Gippsland Anglicans are open to Christ's leading. We seek to respond to changing needs and new understandings, to be faithful and imaginative in bearing stories of hope for our time and place.

Our calling is discovered by

- Reflection on what disruption teaches us
- Readiness to try new things and ideas
- Engagement with local communities
- Collaboration in small and large projects
- Empowerment of children and young people
- Generosity in the use of our resources

We acknowledge the First Nations people of this region as the traditional custodians of the land on which the Diocese of Gippsland serves, and pay our respects to past, present and emerging Elders of the Gunaikurnai, Boonwurrung, Bidawal and Ngarigo/Monero peoples



Cathrine Muston with Shaylene (to the left), Roshau (to the right) and other family members. They have strong links to traditional language and culture.

■ Cathrine Muston

For those of us who have been grappling with the issues of addressing Indigenous disadvantage for some time, it is heartening to see so many resources available around the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the Voice to Parliament referendum. I encourage you to seek out some of these and try to understand how, as a country, we have got to where we are, and why this referendum is so important.

An excellent book on the topic is *The Voice to Parliament Handbook*, written by Kaurareg Aboriginal and Kalkagal, Erubamle Torres Strait Islander man Thomas Mayo (union official with the MUA and signatory to the Uluru Statement) and Kerry O'Brien (journalist and former *7.30 Report* editor and host). Another is historian Henry Reynolds' *Truth Telling*, which provides comprehensive historical context for the Uluru Statement.*

However, there is nothing quite like personal experience to bring the issues into focus. Philip and I recently returned from Port Hedland where we were

Justice is about equity, and we have that when each and every person has whatever it is they need to live with dignity.

visiting two young Martu women who lived with us from 2016 to 2020 while they completed their school education. Roshau and Shaylene are intelligent, kind and funny. They value family, have strong links to traditional language and culture and want the things many young people want: a job, a car, a house, security. Yet the racism and bureaucracy that I witnessed in just the three days I was with them in South Hedland makes it nearly impossible for them to survive, let alone thrive, in two worlds.

Martu are desert people, and their country extends along what is often called the Canning Stock Route. They are spiritual people with a strong sense of their Creator, and they have the New Testament in their

language. Their dispossession and the fragmentation of their cultural lore has created trauma, dysfunction and chaos in the lives of individuals and families. They are subject to scrutiny by police and other government bureaucracies on a scale that would shock most non-Indigenous Australians.

Here is one small example. The remoteness of Roshau and Shaylene's community means that they often need to drive long distances. Obtaining a driver's licence is difficult for people who rarely have a birth certificate or ready access to proof of identification. Constant harassment by police means that their licence can be revoked over minor infringements. This means that another member of the family must transport everyone else to attend appointments, to do shopping or visiting. This in turn means that the designated driver (who is likely to be a young person) is unable to sustain a paid job and feels the weight of the responsibility of the family and community to drive them where they need to go.

I accompanied Roshau to the WA Main Roads office to get access to her learner's permit so that she could then apply for a driver's licence. Roshau had attended this office three times previously and been told that she did not have the correct information to complete the form. I was able to go with her on this occasion and, magically, the correct form and right numbers all appeared so that the process was able to be completed. She had not done anything differently. This is not an uncommon experience.

I don't know the woman who served Roshau on this occasion, and I am sure she would not think of herself as racist, yet her treatment of Roshau in the earlier instances clearly showed that she had prejudged Roshau in some way that was unfavourable. When Roshau was living with us in Warragul, I also witnessed these 'micro' racist interactions – which in themselves appear small, but can take a toll if you are an Indigenous person and experience these time after time after time.

Some say that a Voice to Parliament won't bring about justice. But what does justice mean – and what if we could we make the systemic changes to enable it?

Justice is about equity, and we have that when each and every person has whatever it is they need to live with dignity. Equality is not the same as equity. Equality is about treating everyone the same – and is that really fair when we are so diverse?

The first change to enable justice is to recognise and acknowledge the injustices that already exist. Incorporating into our Constitution the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia frames a different way of thinking.

I came back from Port Hedland feeling angry: angry at the size of the gap between those with and without wealth and about the degree of disadvantage experienced by

Australia is having a conversation about the **Voice referendum** being held later this year.



It's about whether we should change the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. The Constitution outlines the rules by which Australia is governed, and can only be changed through a referendum.



Why is the Voice referendum happening?

Australia has been talking about recognising First Nations peoples in the Constitution for more than a decade. In 2017, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from across the country came together. They considered all the options for recognition. They wrote the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which called for a Voice for First Nations peoples to be added to the Constitution. In 2022, the Australian Government agreed to have a referendum to let Australians decide whether to establish the Voice in the Constitution.



How would the Voice work?

The Voice would be an independent and permanent advisory body. It would give advice to the Australian Parliament and Government on matters that affect the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Do I need to vote?

Voting in the referendum is compulsory for all eligible Australian citizens aged 18 years and over.

Get informed.
Voice.gov.au



First Nations peoples. I also realised that most non-Indigenous Australians (including me!) are often oblivious to the issues faced by First Nations peoples in remote places.

Once something is seen, it can't be unseen. To know that First Nations peoples are disadvantaged and to do little about it is an indictment on those of us who choose to look away. Providing a Voice enables truth-telling and the opportunity to strengthen reconciliation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are hoarse

from talking to governments about the inequities they face – it is time for us all to really listen.

Cathrine Muston is Get out for Good program coordinator, Anglicare Victoria. The views expressed here are her own.

• For more resources on this year's referendum and the proposed Voice to Parliament, see gippslandanglicans.org.au

A Non-Anxious Presence

How a Changing and Complex World Will Create a Remnant of Renewed Christian Leaders

By Mark Sayers

Moody Publishers, Chicago, 2022

■ Richard Prideaux

Mark Sayers, Pastor of Red Church in Blackburn South and Nunawading and a partner in Uber Ministries, has written a challenging analysis of the impact of COVID on many church congregations and leaders. In a world where Google replaces pastor and screens replace disciples the world has entered, as Sayers puts it, a “gray zone.” It is not the end or the start of an era; it is a zone of uncertainty.

“Gray zones” exist in the overlap of two eras, making life confusing and contradictory. Shifts in urbanisation and consumption, technology and competition, ageing and labour are affecting all countries.

In a huge comparison, Sayers compares the total destruction of Krakatoa after probably the earth’s largest ever earthquake with the extreme rapidity of change in our own day. In Krakatoa new growth eventually came; Sayers writes that the current Western world’s preoccupation with “continual consumption, ever-present anxiety and self-focus” also demonstrates a hunger for renewal. The result is that Christian leaders facing an anxious world can become paralysed.

Sayers notes that, not long ago, Christian leaders of super-large churches and influential Christian organisations were the leaders and influencers. Today, media influencers have far more sway in shaping the views and thoughts of the Christian world. The result is that a “secular autopilot version of Christian leadership takes hold, where we lead like practical atheists, with God as an afterthought” and that “The modern world promises progress and perfection without God. Leaders therefore presume that dependence on God is optional.”

“With no agreed-upon defining story or shared values, identity becomes something the participant in a networked society must search for themselves,” Sayers says, noting that we are coming to the end of the American Century. China will surpass the US in terms of gross domestic product in the next decade. According to

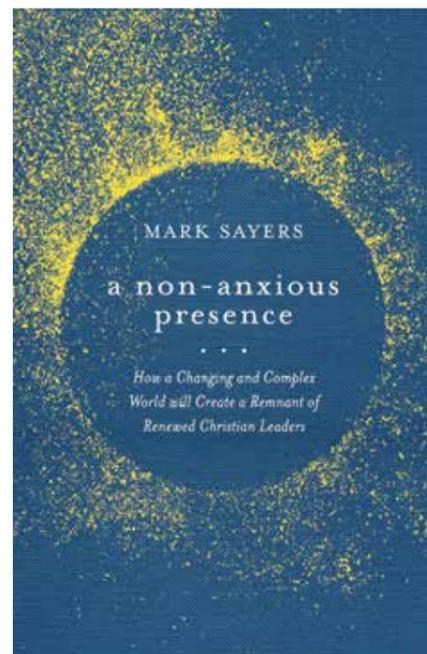
Sayers suggests that character and maturity in leadership are more important than comfort or ease. Many events and situations will be outside of our control, and yesterday’s management model will not work today.

Charles Kupchan (as quoted by Sayer), “the next world will have no centre of gravity. It will be no one’s world.”

Sayers analyses social media’s immense access across the internet, a reality that enables dynamic activists to apply real pressure on large organisations, including the church, through online feedback to advance their goals. This tactic, called cancel culture “can exclude opponents from the network resulting in a privatised form of censorship,” he writes. Such digital networks can become a primary influence on folk, more important than their church network.

Sayers quotes American political scientist Edward Friedman’s writing about today’s “herd instinct swamped by chronic anxiety.” People no longer act rationally and the more aggressive members, with a perpetually argumentative stance, will start to rule. Sayers notes: “Conflict, sexual activity, and even violence become normative forms of social engagement.”

Friedman has proposed a novel and radical leadership solution. Instead of leadership being found in those with charisma, drive, intelligence, training or achievements, Friedman argues that “the most vital attribute to lead, especially in anxious human environments and systems, was a non-anxious presence.” Retreating to our comfort zones insulates us from development. Increasing individualism and a dizzying diversity of opinion in the West



contrasts strongly with the complete lack of individualism in China and many Islamic states. On the other hand “gray zones” are our wilderness. It was in the wilderness that God gave Christ the power to conquer Satan. It was in the wilderness that Israel’s leaders learned obedience to God. Sayers suggests “The Wilderness is where God woos us!”

Sayers suggests that character and maturity in leadership are more important than comfort or ease. Many events and situations will be outside of our control, and yesterday’s management model will not work today. “We do not need superhuman resilience and we don’t want spiritually stagnant leaders on the couch buried in their phones. We must vanquish the infective foe of anxiety,” Sayers writes.

But of course we can only be non-anxious presences with God’s presence. Sayers quotes Swedish economist and former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dag Hammkjöld, who said that “we need humility to experience reality.” St Paul said “when I am weak then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:10); according to Sayers, “we certainly do not need an addiction to approval.” There will always be pressure in leadership. Without pressure there would be no development and no holiness.

Sayers’ writing has a ‘hit you in the eye’ style, and there is perhaps unnecessary historical detail. However, it is a book on leadership that should be read carefully. It will particularly help leaders who are feeling a bit down and defeated. I warmly commend it.

The Settlement

By Jock Serong

Text Publishing, Melbourne, 2022

■ Rev’d Canon David Head

The Settlement is the third and final volume of a trilogy of historically researched novels about early Tasmania by acclaimed and prizewinning Australian author Jock Serong.

The three novels (which also include *Preservation* and *The Burning Island*) describe in detail the destructive interface between white settlers and First Nations Tribes in Tasmania. These novels are really all self-contained and can be read in any order.

The Settlement describes the colonists’ personal and appalling ‘final’ treatment of Aboriginal peoples in Tasmania (then Van Diemen’s Land) during the tragic first three decades of the 1800s.

Jock Serong writes, in a statement before the beginning of the novel:

I acknowledge the importance of respect for all Indigenous people of Australia in the owning and holding of stories and cultural knowledge from their own nations and clans. Multiple First Nations organisations and individuals have been contacted for consultation. I have read and applied the Australia Council’s Protocols for Using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts [in the writing of this novel].

This is such an important affirmation and recognition when dealing with stories that have usually only been told with a White English colonialist view of history.

This novel is a shatteringly honest read in many ways, and it lays bare much of the hypocrisy, brutality and almost total ignorance of British government and settler thinking at the time in relation to the culture and spirituality of the original owners and occupiers of Tasmania. It is a painful, disturbing and yet beautifully written novelised document of those times, and it is such an important novel as we all contemplate the coming Referendum on First Nations Constitutional Recognition later this year.

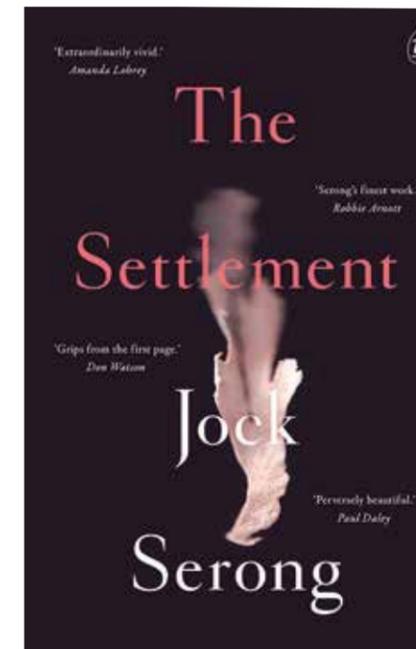
The final ‘round-up’ of the few surviving First Nations tribes and their removal to Flinders Island in 1835 was led by George Augustus Robinson, who – as

commandant of the newly established Aboriginal settlement of Wybalenna on Flinders Island – was the architect and the over-zealous government officer of this tragically misguided ‘solution’ to the Aboriginal ‘problem’. This was done primarily to appease the land-hungry greed of the ravaging white settlers.

This novel is a shatteringly honest read in many ways, and it lays bare much of the hypocrisy, brutality and almost total ignorance of British government and settler thinking at the time in relation to the culture and spirituality of the original owners and occupiers of Tasmania.

Robinson enacted this ‘solution’ on the relatively few remaining First Nations tribes that hadn’t already been massacred by colonists or by introduced diseases, to which the original tribal peoples had no immunity.

Robinson, a very flawed character, managed to believe he was truly the saviour of the remnants of the First Nations tribes of Tasmania. He was almost totally unable or unwilling to see his active role in the virtual total demise of these



peoples as he destroyed their connection to their land, their culture and spirituality, and their rapid physical and mental destruction as they died of disease, broken promises and broken hearts.

The catechist (chaplain) for the island settlement was the most despicable of all the white government officials. How Christ must have wept at the catechist’s appalling treatment of the Aboriginal orphan children, and his sexual and other violence to his own wife, as well as his totally compassionless and hypocritical sermonising. The surgeon to the settlement was a cold, empty-hearted man, typical of the abusive and often useless medical treatments of his day, and he remained unperturbed by his lack of results, as long as he was perceived to have “done the right thing.”

Indeed, it seems that only the First Nations tribal leaders and women on the island lived with any integrity and wisdom, despite their desperation and desolation.

This novel is, I believe, an important read for all who wish to understand and seek in some way the righting of so many wrongs done to First Nations peoples in the past.

It was an especially distressing read for me as a Christian, when I contemplate the willful destruction and desecration of First Nations peoples’ connection to their own land, and their cultures and languages and spirituality. This was so often done by well-intentioned missionaries and other Christian people, who nevertheless could almost always only see potential converts to Christ and people to be assimilated to English ways, and not discern and celebrate the beautiful people of God already in their midst as first occupiers of the land.

Prayer for Ukraine

Lord of all nations, we cry out for an end to war and look forward to the day when it will cease forever.

Please protect and deliver the people of Ukraine from the hands of their oppressors. Have mercy on those who seek to harm, turning their hearts to you and the peace you offer through the blood of your Son.

Please restrain the ecological damage of the Nova Kakhovka dam breach and spare the lives of the people who live there.

Uphold, strengthen, and equip your people in the Ukraine to courageously and generously love their neighbors in their time of need.

In Jesus' name, amen

ARDFA

Coming up

Abbey events – see page 9.



Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative NAIDOC events

gegac.org.au/naidoc

NAIDOC street march & community luncheon

5 July, 37–53 Dalmahoy St, Bairnsdale
10 am for 10.30 am start.
Lunch from 12 pm.

GLaWAC Cultural Day

6 July, Knob Reserve, Stratford.

Dhuna Wannik Wurk Wurk Ball

8 July, 6 pm – 12 am.
Bairnsdale RSL.
Tickets \$50, 2-course meal, live music.

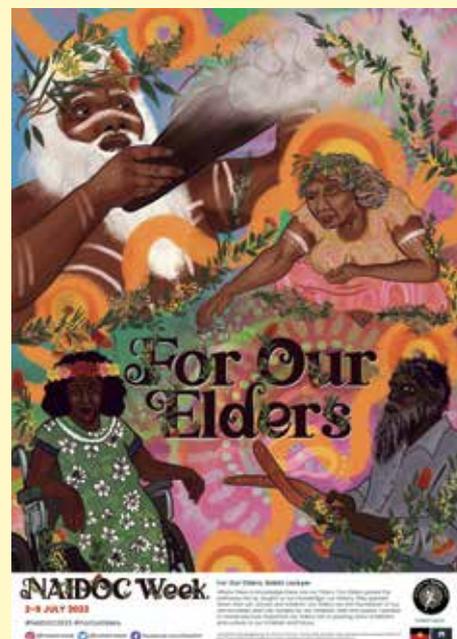
Safe Church Refresher workshops

St Paul's Sale

11 August, 5–8 pm
Register by 9 August at
trybooking.com/CGDLQ

St George's Corinella

8 September, 2–5 pm
Register by 6 September at
trybooking.com/CGDLT



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