

# The Gippsland Anglican

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Sue Fordham

## An Easter like no other

St Peter's in Paynesville, like every other church, is 'closed for business'. No onsite services, no Sunday community, no parish groups meeting to provide cohesion.

What might then be a barren time, especially at Easter, has turned out to be far from that.

Fortunately, we have had particularly good locum priests since the parish fell vacant. Parishioners have received information almost daily during Eastertide, including meditations crafted by locum Bishop Jeffrey Driver and information about the excellent online diocesan services.

The reserved sacrament for Easter Day was distributed to about 20 people who requested it and the church had its Good Friday and Easter Day livery set up. We may not see it, but God can.

Pastoral care has been strengthened by five volunteers who coordinated a contact list of all parishioners, and the finances have been addressed by contacting parishioners about regular collections.

We have never been busier or more involved in the life of our parish. It is a hard time but also an empowering time for us.



'Peter ran to the empty tomb'. One of the 12 'Peter windows' created by artist Bruce Hutton at St Peter's Paynesville. Photo: John Rigg



'We are attempting to get around the parish on a weekly basis offering Holy Communion, prayer, written copies of readings, homilies, children's bulletins – hopefully something for everyone.'  
Anne Perryman, Wonthaggi



Brian Norris cutting the simnel cake at Holy Trinity, Yarram



The banner outside St Paul's Cathedral in Sale



Easter at St John's, Bairnsdale



The Rev'd Tracy Lauerson is delivering a Sunday Service Stream in Warragul in lieu of in-person gatherings

'I put the lights on at Holy Trinity just before 6 am on Easter morning. ...we are all safe and well, so must be content.'  
Glenda Amos, Yarram



'We delivered 112 Easter care packages across the parish including palm cross, consecrated communion and Easter eggs.'  
Belinda Seabrook, Leongatha



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## GIPPSLAND DIOCESE VACANCIES

Drouin  
Paynesville  
Wonthaggi/Inverloch

# Turning the page

Welcome to what I believe is the first ever online-only edition of *The Gippsland Anglican* in its 116-year history. The editorial committee has made this move primarily as a cost-saving measure during COVID-19 restrictions, and is grateful to editor Sally Woollett for adapting quickly to new conditions.

Even before the coronavirus pandemic began to bite, we had already started asking how *TGA's* online presence could improve, and we hope that in addition to the full PDF version of each edition available via the diocesan website, you will notice in the months ahead a few different features with respect to individual articles.

We are conscious of those regular *TGA* readers who may not be reading this edition because they do not have internet access or a device or sufficient familiarity with the technology to view it online. A number of clergy and lay volunteers have kindly offered to print some hard copies and deliver them to households where this applies.

And there is something,

isn't there, about spreading out the paper on the kitchen bench with a cup of coffee and feeling it between your thumb and forefinger as you turn each page? I have never found reading online as pleasurable as the touch and smell of a book or hard copy journal, and then there's the toll the screen starts to take on one's eyes, especially if camped in front of seemingly endless Zoom meetings as some of us are these days.

If that makes me sound like a 'luddite', please don't misunderstand me. We are able to continue to worship corporately in some sense, to stay connected pastorally, and to provide essential services from the Registry Office largely because of the wonders of the available technology, which is itself a function of the divine gift of human reason.

Yet it behoves us to reflect on these differences in our current experience of worship especially: what are we missing, and why?

One of my former teachers, Jesuit priest Andy Hamilton, is a regular contributor to the journal *Eureka Street*. It has been online-only for several



Bishop Richard Treloar

years now, but I still love the printed volumes that fill a shelf in my study from its earliest days of publication.

In a reflection posted in early April, 'Present from afar', he wrote:

*In the [c]atholic tradition faith is tactile. At its heart is a God who in Jesus Christ joined our world, walked among us and had skin in our game. God is understood to be present in thingy, face to face ways – in gatherings of friends and strangers, rich and poor; in eating bread and drinking wine, teaching and listening, joking and being serious, in the pouring of water and anointing with oil, in shaking hands and hugs. The central symbol and ritual of this understanding is the Sunday Eucharist where people gather to pray, eat and drink in the belief that Christ is really*

*active in what they do and really present in what they eat and drink ... The privileged ways in which God is present cannot fully be replaced by other forms of presence.*

As the consulting editor of this fully online journal, Hamilton can hardly be accused of being a 'luddite' either. Though he surely makes an important point, and a number of people have written to me in recent weeks who are both deeply appreciative of our online liturgical offerings and yet who miss terribly the sacramental experience of holding the bread of the Eucharist, and drinking from the cup of salvation – those outward, visible and tactile signs of these inward and spiritual graces.

When the time comes to turn the page from the COVID-19 'crisis' chapter to the chapter that narrates the longer term rebuilding it will certainly entail, there will be many positive and unexpected learnings for us to take from the pandemic and apply to the 'new normal', some of which we're already starting to grasp – not least the great potential of technology as an instrument of mission.

*Continued on page 3*

## The Gippsland Anglican

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## Prayer Diary: around the parishes

"That we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith..." (ROMANS 1:12)

### KORUMBURRA SOUTHERN REGION

St Paul, Korumburra  
All Saints, Poowong  
Priest-in-Charge:  
The Rev'd Fran Grimes

Please pray for St Paul's in Korumburra and All Saints Poowong with our ministry extending to Loch and Nyora. Pray that our connections with each other will be strong in this time of social isolation.

May we continue to keep in touch with the local community. We pray for our *mainly music* families and for our team, and for our monthly community meal patrons and the volunteers, that they would access food from Milpara Food Bank.

Pray for our Mine Road op shop in Korumburra, for love and care to flow into the community and new ways of getting stock in and out to those who need it.

Pray that our Sunday

worship online will strengthen and encourage members and may there be a feeling of belonging. Pray for deepening connection with Poowong community as we work towards a community garden at the back of our church building.

### LAKES ENTRANCE AND METUNG EASTERN REGION

St Nicholas, Lakes Entrance  
St John, Metung  
Rector: The Rev'd Canon Philip Muston

Lakes Entrance is a seaside resort and fishing port; Metung is a picturesque village located on the Gippsland Lakes. The parish community welcomes visitors and we try to extend love and fellowship through our various activities in both communities: worship services, small groups and Bible studies, op shops which function equally as

drop-in centres, *mainly music*, occasional services such as baptisms and funerals, coffee/chat at a local coffee shop, afternoon teas with guest speakers organised by Social Group and Missions, Men's Breakfast, Emergency Food Collection, aged care services, Meals on Wheels and an annual school concert.

Please pray for these ministries, especially in the pandemic setting where so much has to take place via email, YouTube, hard copy distribution; for people who begin to feel the stirring of God in different ways; for parishioners now in residential care; and for the incumbent, Philip Muston, his wife Cathrine and their ministry within the parish and the wider community.

### LEONGATHA SOUTHERN REGION

St Peter, Leongatha  
St David, Meeniyan

St Andrew, Dumbalk  
St Andrew (Union Church), Tarwin Lower  
Archdeacon Graham Knott and The Rev'd Belinda Seabrook

Following a Parish Council Away Day early in January, we designated this year to be a Year of Mission. Numbers of conferences, events and activities were planned to bring growth and to connect with a fresh group of people. We are currently praying about how we can best deliver mission possibilities in a very changed context. Further, we are trying to involve as many from the congregations in pastoral, prayer, discipling and teaching opportunities. Like many other parishes, we have had to make hard choices regarding staffing. Belinda Seabrook was deemed our response coordinator for the COVID-19 situation very soon after her ordination to the diaconate. After several years of discussion, the parish council made the decision to reconfigure our worship space.



# Hey, Hay and Hearty at St Paul's Birchip

Judi Bird

On Friday, 14 February we had our usual worship service (Hey there to one and all and Hey there to our Lord), then we had a Hearty feast of fish, chips, pavlova, ginger sponge and vanilla slice, then the Hay – a locally produced and edited movie (by talented congregational member David Bell) to explain the invention which assists in loading hay bales. The Mallee was blessed this year with sufficient rain to produce excellent crops. There are thousands of hay bales on display in paddocks everywhere. Weighing nearly half a ton, the round bales are usually moved by some kind of mechanical loader. But

what if you only need one or two bales to feed a couple of domestic animals? Well, Geoff Smith had the answer. He invented a simple device for loading round bales onto a trailer. Geoff had the device, a trailer and a hay bale on display to provide a demonstration. Sharing our gifts and talents – what a special night.

*Courtesy Diocese of Bendigo*



*Geoff Smith with his hay bale loader*

# Bell tower restoration underway

An impressive structure of scaffold-ing has been built around the bell tower of St Paul's Cathedral in Bendigo as work to repair the rendering and brickwork begins. Repairs to the external fabric of the facade of the bell tower, include repointing, replacement of rendering and recasting of concrete rosettes and other ornamental features. Although the scaffolding is obstructing the front entrance to the Cathedral, regular worship is still continuing inside the building with access from the side. The congregations are looking forward to having their much loved building restored.

*Courtesy Diocese of Bendigo*



## Around the Diocese

# New financial counselling service for bushfire recovery

**Cathrine Muston, Anglicare Development Officer, Parish Partnerships**

Since the bushfires tore through east Gippsland at the beginning of the year, Anglicare Victoria has been working as part of the bushfire case support program to provide expanded financial counselling to those who have lost homes and livelihoods. So far, a team of four extra financial counsellors have been busy meeting the demand for financial counselling advice and support for those recovering from the bushfires.

Team leader Leonie Cooke has decades of experience in the financial sector as well as being a local from Bairnsdale. Her team offers comprehensive financial counselling to those experiencing financial difficulties or who are financially vulnerable or disadvantaged. Financial counsellors can assist with insurance claims, as well as informing and advocating on behalf of those who are at financial risk.

This might mean accessing affordable credit through the No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) or empowering clients with skills and information about their rights and responsibilities in the marketplace. For those who have been affected by bushfires, it involves assisting with insurance claims, applying for grants and negotiating mortgages as well as other credit issues.

Already, the financial counselling team has been able to make a difference in the lives of those who have been affected by bushfire. One client was only offered \$16,000 for the replacement of fencing. However, through the advocacy of the financial counsellor, this was increased to a more appropriate amount of \$36,000.

Another client lodged their insurance claim in early January and by late February had not had an adequate response. When they contacted Anglicare's

financial counsellors, who were able to follow up with the insurance company, the response was swift and they were able to receive a cash settlement in March, meaning they could get on with rebuilding their lives.

Financial counsellors treat the concerns of the client in a holistic manner, keeping in mind their social and emotional wellbeing. Anglicare financial counsellors are able to refer clients to other programs that may provide different types of support for those experiencing the trauma of having lost homes and properties.

The team has been working alongside the mobile bushfire support team and, until COVID-19 shut down travel, was scheduled to visit areas in East Gippsland that were affected by the fires. At present, this service is available at 1800 286 260 or [bushfirecpgipps@anglicarevic.org.au](mailto:bushfirecpgipps@anglicarevic.org.au)



*Philip Muston and his wife, Cathrine*

## 40 years of ministry for Philip Muston

The Rev'd Canon Philip Muston, Rector at Lakes Entrance and Metung, marks 40 years of ministry this year. He was ordained deacon on the Conversion of St Paul the Apostle at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne in early 1980 and priested the following year.

Philip has twice been administrator for the Gippsland Diocese and is a longstanding editorial committee member for *The Gippsland Anglican*.

Congratulations on this milestone, Philip!

## Turning the page

*Continued from page 2*

In this Easter season, however, as we hear and reflect on stories of the risen Christ eating and drinking with his disciples, showing them his ever-wounded hands and feet, let us remember that God's mission to the world in which we share is focused in this Christ who was not present to us from afar, but in the crucible of our flesh. His was no virtual incarnation – that third-century-CE 'docetic'

heresy has a way of hanging around – rather, he embodied God's costly love and gave us the dominical sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist that we might be called and sustained to do the same.

The way in which we feel the absence of the divine touch in these and other ways will inform how we turn the page to embrace them, and each other, once again.

+RM



# John Batt to retire from Neerim South

The Rev'd Dr John Batt, Priest-in-Charge at Neerim South, has announced his retirement.

John was born into a vicarage family while his father, Alan, was the Vicar of Warburton. Alan also served in the Parish of North Geelong, Norlane and Corio. John attended Geelong Grammar for his early education. When John's father joined the navy as a chaplain, this took the family to NSW where John lived on the North Shore, attending Barker College at Hornsby.

Theological studies saw John return to Melbourne where he studied at Ridley Theological College, was ordained in Armidale Cathedral in 1984 as deacon and priested in 1985. John served at Guyra and Quirindi as an assistant curate then at Boggabri as vicar. Whilst at Boggabri, a meeting room/Sunday school was built, and a youth group and Sunday school established. John wanted to continue his studies in Melbourne, and Bishop John Wilson invited him back to Melbourne Diocese to the Parish of Hampton Park, where he commenced a new family service, Sunday School, GFS Australia and through a grant was able to employ a part-time youth worker. The suburb grew quickly and so did the parish, which was very multicultural. It was a very busy and fulfilling time, although not without its challenges. John commenced a Master of Ministry degree through the Melbourne College of Divinity, which he completed in 1998.

John went to Sunbury in 1993, a fast-growing area with an expanding population. The parish was very demanding, with up to 50 weddings, 60 baptisms and 50 funerals each year. The church attendance numbers grew as more and more people moved into the area and started coming to St Mary's. John encouraged the building of an op shop on the church grounds,



John and Penny Batt

which has helped resource the parish finances and serve the local community ever since. Family services were initiated, a thriving Sunday school was established, a part-time youth worker was employed and parish camps were initiated.

The call came to be vicar of the Parish of St John's Blackburn, which also saw growth and development under his leadership over more than 10 years. It was a different type of ministry – more one of supervision with a curate, children's and families worker, and Ridley College students to supervise. John took on a wider dimension to his ministry role as the Victorian and Tasmanian chairman of the Bush Church Aid Society, board member and national committee member of BCA and diocesan examining chaplain, among other roles. At St John's, a Sunday school and youth group were begun, a children's and families worker appointed, and essential maintenance and development of the parish site was undertaken. John completed a Doctor of Ministry through Fuller Seminary at that time and filled in as lecturer of theology at the Bible College of Victoria for a semester. Life was full and busy, lived at a fast pace.

John came to Gippsland Diocese in 2011 at the invitation of Bishop John McIntyre and has served faithfully ever since, for almost 10 years. Neerim

South has meant a change back to grassroots ministry and a much slower pace. John spends time involved in community activities such as the local Men's Shed, Community House and in other community activities in conjunction with parish responsibilities. John does ministry in the streets of the village as much as in the church grounds amongst folk who do not feel comfortable coming to church.

It is pleasing that John can leave the parish in good shape financially—it has transitioned from a 0.8 appointment in 2011 to support a full-time stipend from March 2019. It is also pleasing that the op shop is complete. This has become a place of hospitality and friendship, a social hub for the community as well as being a place that provides affordable goods.

The greatest achievement for John has been winning the heart of Penny, his wife. They were married in 2015. John and Penny look forward to spending time sharing adventures in retirement, doing much caravanning and travelling. John is going to take a complete break from ministry and enjoy worshipping in the pews (when John and Penny are not out and about in their caravan).

John has enjoyed the fellowship of the clergy of the diocese and will keep praying for Bishop Richard and the diocese into the future as they minister in an increasingly complex social context.

## Easter Vigil Eucharist online

The Easter Vigil Eucharist for Holy Saturday on 11 April was recorded by the Registrar in the Chapel at Bishops court, Sale, with Dean Susanna Pain presiding, and is available at [www.gippsanglican.org.au](http://www.gippsanglican.org.au).

In the homily, Bishop Richard offers the final part of a four-part series, 'Through the Eyes of Mary Magdalene'. Parts 1–3 were delivered during the services for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday (also available at the website).

You may like to practice the tradition of 'spiritual communion' as you watch and listen, and especially at the point of distribution of the Sacrament in this video.

The following prayer may be helpful:

*O Lord Jesus Christ, through your tender mercy grant that as the hem of your garment, touched in faith, healed the woman who could not touch your body, so the soul of this your servant may be healed*

*by like faith in you, whom I cannot now sacramentally receive. In union with the faithful at every altar-table in your Church I desire to be united with you, and pray that you will come spiritually into my heart. Let nothing ever separate me from your love, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

'There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.' (Eph 4:5-6)

May we draw on the unity that is ours in the Crucified and Risen Christ all the more deeply in these days when we feel the pain of separation.

Grace and peace,

+ RM

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thank you for a great issue of *The Gippsland Anglican* (April 2020)!

What a task it must have been to collect the material and then to weave it all together into such a fine offering.

Thank you for your thought-provoking editorial and for Lynn Ungar's poem, *Pandemic* (page 11). The poem needs a wide circulation.

Let's see if we can manage to share it round.

Ken Parker



# Affordable art in Trafalgar

Jillian McCourt

At the Trafalgar op shop, we often receive beautiful items we think are worthy of greater admiration than a sticker on one of our shelves. To do this, we hosted an Affordable Art Show wine and cheese evening on 13 March.

Held in our community meeting hall, the show

featured an eclectic selection of original paintings, prints, ceramics, books, vases, cushions, glass items, scarves and object d'art. Most items were priced at \$5, \$10 and \$20 and, when presented to look their best, were seen as bargains by purchasers.

For an entry price of \$10 per person, guests enjoyed conversation, drinks and

nibbles from our grazing table in a relaxed atmosphere, and many items were purchased. A silent auction for a beautiful painting of wedge-tailed eagles, given to us especially for the night, raised \$200. With a gallery price tag of \$950, the painting was an extremely generous donation.

On Saturday morning, we opened the hall again for people to view the remaining items free of charge, and a few more purchases were made. The function raised \$894 – a great success.

I encourage all shops to consider such a function. It might be a nice event to get people together again when safe to do so.

To discuss event organisation details, contact Jillian (040 994 9011).



Some of the items for sale at Trafalgar's Affordable Art Show

## Harvest Festival at Holy Trinity Yarram

Glenda Amos

We celebrated Harvest Festival at Holy Trinity Yarram on Refreshment Sunday in March. The church was decorated with corn stalks and baskets ready to receive the produce brought by all those who attended. A table in front of the altar held a display of fruit, vegetables, herbs and sauces. We also had Indigneous foods and items as part of the display this year.

God blessed us with an abundant harvest: tomatoes, apples, flowers, fruit and vegetables of all kinds. During the Harvest Festival service,



The Harvest Festival offerings at Holy Trinity Yarram

members of the congregation brought forward fruits, vegetables, flowers and seeds and laid these on the altar as a sacrificial offering. A simnel cake was also blessed. God has given us this bounty and we, in our turn, give it back to God as a way of sharing the blessings we have enjoyed with others.

We sang the doxology *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow* at the conclusion of the procession.

After the service, we shared produce from a trading table. We could swap or purchase goods including jams, sauces and a huge variety of vegies and fruit.

## Education online at St Paul's

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School was ready to continue the education of students in Term 2 thanks to online learning management system MyStPauls, which has already been used extensively at secondary levels since 2016 and from Prep to Year 6 for over a year.

The platform was chosen to allow students to interact in an e-learning environment. In the weeks succeeding the end of term, St Paul's staff added the use of video and video conferencing to their learning and teaching repertoire.

The wellbeing of students continues to be a key focus. To monitor the wellbeing of students in this new learning environment, regular wellbeing surveys are being offered online. Students are facing many challenges in this period, and pastoral care staff will reach out to any students who find the online environment challenging.

An online school day is following a similar structure to that of a classroom. The school's counselling team is continuing to support students and their families, making

referrals and conducting its usual range of services via telephone. Regular assembly, chapel and pastoral care activities are also being placed online.

Principal Cameron Herbert said "St Paul's has a significant role to play for our students and families and we take this responsibility seriously. Times of adversity strengthen us and positive opportunities for growth arise. Our confidence and genuine optimism for the future will help our students adapt to the changes they face and heighten their adaptability, creativity and resilience."



Photo: Patrick Lane

Arthur Boyd's The Ascending Christ at St Mary's, Morwell

## Art and faith at Anam Cara Quiet Day

Carolyn Raymond

Quiet Days provide opportunity for reflection, silent prayer and meditation; a time when together in silence we can spend time with God. Quiet Days give us great richness of being. Our most recent Quiet Day was held at St Mary's Morwell on 14 March. People came from across the diocese and from several denominations.

The theme of the day was Faith and Art. We prayed, sang and spent time in meditation in the light of an amazing mural by Arthur Boyd, *The Ascending Christ*. St Mary's is blessed with many artworks. Some have been commissioned by the church over the years and some created by local artists. They are made with many different materials and media, including stained glass, oil paint, watercolour and fabric. This is a reminder of the many different forms of prayer.

The day began with music and prayerful worship, and the Rev'd David Head gave two reflections during the day. He shared how art has expressed faith throughout the ages. Art has always explored our relationship with God and our relationships with each other.

In the afternoon, David shared several examples of artwork from different centuries. It is necessary to spend time examining a piece of art in detail to

reveal the artist's response to a situation, an idea or an event. Art allows us to get in touch with our inner selves and in that way in touch with God. One was from an illustrated manuscript painted when most art was produced in monasteries as a way of sharing the Bible and the Liturgy with both the small percentage of people who could read and those who could not read. It depicted God creating the world. David encouraged us to look at the size of objects, the placement of objects and the symbols used to reveal the prayer within. The second piece of art, *The Blind Girl*, explores the meaning of sight and brought to mind Jesus' frequent comments on inward and outward sight.

The artists share with the viewer their faith journey and experience. We must give time and attention to a work of art if we are to learn and travel with the artist. We included the following prayerful thought from Archbishop Rowan Williams in our worship:

*When we move with poetry and imagination,  
When we deal with symbol and images,  
We become people who are happy with mystery and open to discovery.  
To deepen the mystery and embrace the complexity is risky.  
We need courage enough to be ready for an unveiling.  
This can be a startling process.*





Leisa Harper

# Fruit of the Spirit

School community connection in uncertain times

Leisa Harper

Though we are apart, we can come together.

This is the mantra that fills my head and heart as I begin my role as Principal at Gippsland Grammar. I am a firm believer that my journey is guided by my faith and I feel very blessed to be part of the broader Gippsland community. From the moment I arrived, I felt connected to a rich history within this community.

Most recently, I have worked as a consultant at Rockhampton Grammar School while completing a Masters in Business Administration. Previously, I was Principal at Fraser Coast Anglican College and held executive roles at St Paul's School and Brisbane Grammar School. I have worked extensively for the Harvard School of Education through teaching Educational Leadership and Data Wise courses as well as participating in some of their courses. I have served as a director on the Independent Schools Queensland Board and Queensland Independent Schools Network since 2015 and, in time, I hope to engage with Independent Schools Victoria. I am a passionate teacher and also hold a Masters of Educational Studies in Adolescent Psychology.

I am passionate about regional schools and believe that students all over

Australia have the right to an excellent education. Gippsland Grammar is one of those schools and I can only imagine how proud the community is when it continues to improve in state and national testing and, importantly, producing young people who contribute meaningfully to the Gippsland community.

At Gippsland Grammar, we aim for our students to embody our motto and have a 'passion for excellence'. I am dedicated to the students in my care and to providing quality academic care for each student, to provide them the greatest number of options post-school and ensuring that this is done in an environment rich with opportunities that support their holistic development.

As a passionate teacher and leader, the knowledge of teaching and learning is paramount in all that I do. Fortunately, I have many professional networks across Australia, and the sharing of knowledge and systems is something I engage with on a daily basis. I am very excited to be part of the Victorian education system.

I have been married to my husband Graham for 25 years and we have three children – Georgia (18) is currently studying a dual degree of Arts and Education, majoring in English literature and Psychology at the University of Queensland, and twins Phoebe and Rhys (15)

began Year 10 at Gippsland Grammar at the beginning of this year.

I am very excited to join the school. Although the world faces some challenges right now, I have been reassured by the positive attitudes, preparations and effort from every member of staff over the past weeks. I am very proud of our students and their desire to partner with their teachers, which has seen an outstanding start to Learn@Home – a true credit to everyone involved.

Gippsland Grammar's motto, 'the truth shall set you free', is from the Gospel of John (verse 8:32) and reflects Jesus talking to a group of Jews who believed in him. For us at this time, I believe that it is important to reflect on the fruit of the Holy Spirit to enable us to understand more about ourselves and this period of time. The nine attributes that make up the fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. They were created to provide people with ways of living in accord with the Holy Spirit. I am confident that every member of our community can reflect on these attributes so that their interactions with one another are supportive, caring and promote a refreshed way of interacting during these uncertain times.

I have described my start at Gippsland Grammar as one similar to a child who knows what their gift is under the tree at Christmas time, and yet they can't have it. For me, it is about patience. The upside is that I am learning new ways with technology. People need to feel connected, and the capacity for Gippsland Grammar staff to connect with their students is one that is not limited. I enjoy meeting staff online and hearing what they love about the school.

What I am missing is the daily contact with the students. I am always energised by our young people and love to hear their voices and laughter around the school grounds. While the Gippsland Grammar grounds are beautiful, the true beauty comes from those who make up the community. I can't wait for the students and staff to return.

*Leisa Harper is Principal at Gippsland Grammar.*

## Virtual meetings: attuning to a new experience

Cynthia Grove

Have you been using Zoom or another online platform for your meetings? I have participated twice: for a chapter meeting and a meditation session. To my surprise, I found both to be fairly positive experiences.

The chapter meeting (prior to the COVID-19 shutdown) included some people physically present and some, including me, online. That did present some issues: those online could not always hear the words of the person speaking, let alone see them. However, these communication difficulties actually prompted some good things: self-discipline in the length of time we spoke (comments had to be more crisp and succinct) and being more aware of others because we couldn't always see them. There was a case

for inviting each person in turn to comment. Having a copy of the report to refer to while it is being presented is helpful.

The meditation session worked extremely well. Five of us participated. For me, the lack of the physical presence of the others was both negative and positive. My body was not 'on alert' for cues from others and I could more easily allow my mind and spirit to be submerged in the meditation. Individual computer microphones were muted for the session, so there was true silence (except for the ticking of my clock, but only I could hear that).

As the lockdown continues, please be open to trying virtual meetings – it is worth the effort. There was definitely a sense of communion in both of my sessions.

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# Op shops closed but hearts open



Newborough's Magdalene Centre window with a wedding theme, window-dressed by retired interior designer Ann Sampson

Julie Bruce

The three parish op shops of Moe-Newborough have closed completely for the foreseeable future. This has been a severe blow to not only our community, but also the many willing workers involved. Gone is the opportunity for a friendly chat and exchange of news. There is a sadness when we pass by their closed doors. However, our church community continues to support our neighbourhoods through emails, letter drops and cards, and provision of food and shopping services.

There are three op shops across the parish:

Angel's Treasures in Moe, the Magdalene Centre in Newborough and Yallourn North op shop. All were very well patronised and provided a quality service to their communities.

The Magdalene Centre in particular had widened its focus towards outreach because particular welfare needs of the community.

In the changing room, a section is dedicated to pamphlets outlining local support agencies in the community. A small bookshelf contains scriptural material and other helpful literature, freely available. Sanitary items and toiletries are available as well. People can take what they need in the privacy of this area.

Donated toiletries are collected and placed in attractive bags as part of the Share the Dignity Christmas Drive gifting of essentials to vulnerable women in the community. Toys are donated to the annual Toy Run in the Latrobe Valley.

School uniforms and school shoes donated to the shop are passed on to the appropriate schools for their

welfare departments to distribute to students in need. Excess books are donated to school libraries and to the local CFA for their annual book sale. Suitable backpacks are delivered to Fulham Correctional Centre in Sale so that, on release, people have a discreet alternative to the issued plastic bag in which to carry their belongings.

The op shop also welcomes people who are part of the Work for the Dole scheme to become part of the volunteer team. This has become a mentoring and training opportunity, and there are some lovely stories of these volunteers developing confidence, self-respect and connection with each other and the community as they sort, display and sell the donated items.

In these and many other ways, the op shops connected to our churches can be leaven in the community, sharing and caring as we do. Any other creative ideas for service would be gratefully received, because these shops are a window of opportunity to extend our role of service. We look forward to when we can re-open and add to the life of the wider community once more.

## Lifeline needed during COVID-19 crisis

Crisis support and suicide prevention organisation Lifeline is running a national fundraising campaign so that they can continue to meet the needs of additional people contacting them during the COVID-19 crisis.

The campaign, titled You've Got 30 Seconds To Save A Life, comes at a time when Australians have been turning to Lifeline in record numbers as they grapple with COVID-19 on the back of the summer's bushfire devastation.

In March, Lifeline answered almost 90,000 calls for help, an increase of 25% over the same time last year – equating to one call every 30 seconds. On Good Friday, Lifeline received more calls than on any other day of its 57-year history.

Lifeline Australia Chairman, John Brogden, said, "We have 40 centres, half of which are in rural and remote locations across the nation. They provide important mental health education, face-to-face counselling and therapeutic groups for people at-risk, or bereaved,

by suicide. Our centres are directly supporting thousands of people in the community every day. It is crucial that we keep these services operating."

To help Australians who may be feeling worried, anxious or overwhelmed by the COVID-19 outbreak, Lifeline has compiled the following mental health and well-being tips and strategies:

1. Manage your exposure to media coverage – as this can increase feelings of fear and anxiety. Be mindful of sources of information and ensure you are accessing good quality and accurate information.
2. Follow a 'calm yet cautious' approach – do your best to remain calm and be mindful not to contribute to the wide-spread panic that can hinder efforts to positively manage the outbreak. Ensure you are following directives issued by the government, medical advice and observe good hygiene habits.

3. Show compassion and kindness to one another – these times of fear, isolation (both physical and social) and uncertainty are when it is most important that we strengthen our sense of community by connecting with and supporting each other. Remind ourselves that we can manage this much better together in solidarity, and that COVID-19 doesn't discriminate – it can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, nationality or ethnicity.
4. Actively manage your wellbeing by maintaining routines where possible, connect with family and friends (even if not in person), stay physically active, eat nutritious foods and seek additional support by contacting Lifeline or further professional support as required.

Lifeline's 24-hour crisis line is 13 11 14.

To make a donation, visit [fundraise.lifeline.org.au/emergency-appeal](https://fundraise.lifeline.org.au/emergency-appeal).



# Prison, privilege and prayer

## Isolation and the call to social justice

Heather Toms

In these very different, difficult and uncertain times, I would like to share a little of my world and what it means. As a prison chaplain, I contribute to the practice of spirituality and pastoral care that makes for an individual's wellbeing and stability in a community, and support the maintenance of this contact in the prison environment.

One of the challenges I have faced in my chaplaincy work is negative comments such as "Why do you bother?" Another challenge has been how to bring 'church' in a different way.

Answers can be found in this prayer from Mother Theresa's meditation in her spiritual guide, *A Simple Path*. This prayer seeks to answer God's call to social justice – the same call issued by the prophet Amos, the psalmist, St Paul, and even by Jesus himself.

*Dear Lord, the Great Healer, we kneel before you, since every perfect gift must come from you. We pray, give skill to our hands, clear vision to our minds, kindness and meekness to our hearts. Give us singleness of purpose, strength to lift up part of the burden of our suffering fellow human beings, and a true realization of the privilege that is ours, take from our hearts all guile and worldliness, that with the simple faith of a child, we may rely on you.*

The prayer is a call for inward change: meekness of heart and a true realisation of our privilege. This has an outward effect: strength to lift up the part of the burden suffered by others that we can. Being comfortable, being privileged creates a blindness in us, and those of us who 'have' can be blinded to the needs of those who 'have not'. As prophets like Amos remind us, "those who enjoy the fruits of wealth and luxury" without regard to the plight of the poor and needy are as guilty as those who



The prophet Amos, as depicted in Gustave Doré's English Bible (1866)

actively exploit them.

A common comment I hear is "only bad people are in prison." It's not far from this to the assumption that "I am not in prison; therefore, I cannot be like those people." If we regarded all those who are in prison as family, ours and that of Jesus, then we would be much more likely to support those in prison and, on their release, help them again become part of a community. One of the wonderful programs of Anglicare, 'Get Out for Good', helps people released from prison to adjust to life afterwards, with much-needed support in what are often lonely, difficult and scary times.

Suffering and social exclusion tend to make people feel angry and resentful or hopeless and worthless. But the children of Abraham are called to something different. We who are richly blessed with wealth, power or position are called to open our eyes to a true realization of the privilege that is ours, to notice the plight of those who have little or nothing and then to imitate God by acting to restore right relationships.

We are called to be the presence of Jesus Christ in our world, who declared that the Spirit of the Lord has

anointed him to bring good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19).

One of the most serious aspects of being in prison can be the sense of isolation and even abandonment. Thus one of the most effective witnesses that can be given to prisoners is the assurance that they are not forgotten. "When I was in prison, you visited me," said Jesus, and this tells us two

“...one of the most effective witnesses that can be given to prisoners is the assurance that they are not forgotten.”

things: that Jesus is already with those in prison, as he is with all who live in loneliness (including the loneliness of self-reproach or self-hatred); and that he is waiting for us there. May we all connect with the Jesus who waits for us in prison, and those undergoing imprisonment will feel confident that they are accompanied in prayer and compassion by the Lord and his servants.

Few of us can understand the isolation, loneliness and hopelessness of prison. This affects not only those within the prison system but also their families, their victims also and those who work there. Judges and

police too often work alone, and the responsibilities of directly and justly deciding the future of another human being must weigh heavily on them. Christians rejoice that Jesus himself shares the same sense of imprisonment, and that he walks alongside those who need compassion and understanding, those whose lives have been broken through their own mistakes and the deeds of others.

Restorative justice is an internationally recognised response to criminal behaviour that gives adults charged with or convicted of an offence a chance to understand and start to repair some of the harm they have caused. It allows the offender to own up to what they have done, accept responsibility for their actions and take steps to repair the harm or damage they have caused. It aims to encourage healing by responding to the needs of victims and society, while at the same time changing the offender.

Involving the victim, the offender and the community, the unifying concept behind restorative justice is the restoration of relationships. At the centre of the restorative justice concept lies the idea that crimes or wrongdoings are violations of people and relationships, and that acceptance of responsibility is required before the process of restoration can begin.

Restorative justice is a peacemaking response to crime for all those affected by it. The roots of restorative justice are in Judaism. 'Shalom', the Hebrew word for peace, carries the sense of 'peace with justice'. There can be no justice without peace and no peace without justice.

Restorative justice is central to the idea of a covenant. It expresses God's fundamental intention for Israel. All the most important themes of the Jewish Scriptures, including atonement, salvation, forgiveness and justice, have their roots in 'shalom'. It is God's intention that all people should live in physical wellbeing, and that God's people should live in harmony with each other and with God. Over and over again, the Jewish Scriptures make it plain that oppression and injustice are contrary to 'shalom'. Also, restorative justice carries an ethical dimension. There can be no 'shalom' without the restoration of social, physical,

spiritual and moral justice. This teaches us that 'shalom' is possible only when we care for one another, even in wrongdoing.

Jesus took up the theme of restorative justice in all he said and did. His Gospel is always about the Good News of the Kingdom in which even repentance is seen not so much as conscience, but conversion; not a guilty verdict, but the announcement of forgiveness. Christ frees us from the whole universe of condemnations, debts, courts, punishments, expiation, guilt and shame, in order to introduce us to a new world of grace. Not the cheap grace that costs nothing, but a grace in which the offender feels the pain and weight of responsibility, and longs to make 'shalom' between offender and victim. It was grace that freed Zacchaeus from his greed, the prostitute from her clients and Matthew from his profession.

With the most gracious words and tender gestures, Jesus did something that cold, grey, analytical eyes alone could never do for them. He helped them to know their true value and gave them hope for a better future.

The mercy and grace of Jesus were the means by which they knew themselves to be sinners – more precisely, forgiven sinners. UK Methodist Church worship material for Prisons Sunday says "The love of God is always generous if not extravagant, and can evoke radical changes in the hearts and minds of all so that, as the hymn-writer says: 'the vilest offender who truly believes that moment from Jesus a pardon receives'."

The church at its best introduces a new dimension as it stands alongside victim and perpetrator. Restorative justice from a Christian perspective recognises that the dividing line between good and evil cuts through every human being; that we are all sinners in need of grace. The emerging church is learning new ways of doing justice by building communities of acceptance, and reconciliation becomes second nature and 'Shalom' is restored.

There were joyful moments at the prison during what was a very different Easter and in world greatly changed due to COVID-19.

*Continued on page 9*



# Changing culture for Safe Church

Sue Jacka

Ensuring we have personal safety in our churches, especially for children and other vulnerable people, is a top priority. After the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, a new law, 'Failure to Protect', was introduced by the Victorian Government in 2015. This law means that churches, along with other organisations that involve children, need to do everything possible to remove risks that a child will become the victim of a sexual offence.

Our current ethical and legal situation is different from how things used to be. To help people understand the change, I like to use the image of the aftermath of a huge storm, which has smashed cliffs and taken out landmark trees. Things in the social and legal landscape are very different. Every organisation has to operate in this changed landscape.

In the wake of these changes, Anglican diocesan policy now requires volunteers, clergy, ordination candidates and paid church workers to complete various checks, questionnaires and training. This includes a Safe Ministry Check, Working with Children check, police check, referee questionnaire and the Safe Church Awareness Workshop.

The best approach I have found to fostering acceptance of Safe Church requirements is to work on changing attitudes and understanding in our churches, including congregations and programs, as well as in our op shops.

When I explain the purpose of Safe Church, people are more willing to complete the process. Most are happy to cooperate when they understand the need for the new checks, and when their questions are answered gently and thoughtfully. Listening, taking people seriously and finding out what is behind any reluctance means that issues can be addressed calmly and pastorally.

These are some of the most common concerns I have heard and addressed in relation to the Safe Church process.

*I am a teacher and my registration card says I don't need a Working with Children check.* The Education Department does not share information with other organisations, so teachers need to complete a Working with Children check.

*I have been part of this church for 30 years and I've always been trusted.* This relates to a person's perceived honour, which is not in question. The Safe Church policy has to be applied equally to all people.

*I am not on the internet.* It is possible for someone else to guide a volunteer as they fill out their information on the computer of a friend or family member.

*The church is about forgiveness and a new start in Jesus.* Although a police check will show records of any previous offences, these are kept confidential and do not necessarily restrict all contributions to parish life. For instance, a driving offence would not be a problem for serving of morning tea.

*I don't like sharing my personal information.* Some people are very concerned about privacy and do not like to give out personal information. This means they cannot be on a committee, roster or take any other position within the church. Everyone needs to be confident that personal information disclosed in this process will be seen only by those authorised for screening purposes.

It is helpful to have a few different people in a parish to hand out the information packs. These are more likely to be well received from someone people know and trust and in the context of friendly conversation. Also, it lightens the load of the parish Safe Ministry Officer.

Working together will help ensure our churches are safe places.

## Safe Church support and resources



The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland is committed to providing a safe place for worship and fellowship. We all have a duty to protect all who participate in the life of the church from abuse, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Abuse can be defined as any behaviour which causes harm and violates the rights of others. It can be emotional, physical, sexual or spiritual abuse, bullying and/or harassment.

Please tell someone if you feel uneasy or have the slightest concern about the behaviour of an adult towards a child or vulnerable person, that someone may have been abused, or about the welfare of a child.

Please contact Cheryl Russell, Director of Professional Standards Office: 5633 1573, 0407 563 313, [cherylrussell1@bigpond.com](mailto:cherylrussell1@bigpond.com)  
Visit [www.gippsanglican.org.au/resources/safe-ministry](http://www.gippsanglican.org.au/resources/safe-ministry) for Safe Ministry resources.



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**The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland does not tolerate abuse, misconduct and harm in its Christian community.**

The Diocese is committed to ensuring all people in contact with the Church can participate in a safe and responsible environment. If you may have been harmed by a church worker, or know someone who has, please come forward.

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## Prison, privilege and prayer

Isolation and the call to social justice

Continued from page 8

Due to the cessation of Bible studies and church services, and the additional isolation, the men decided to form a special prayer group as a gift to the community in, around and beyond them. The group, called God's Prayer Time at 10 (GPT10), has a prayer vigil each night at 10.00 pm. GPT10 now has more than 64 members – most of them praying in their respective cells while a small number of chaplains and family members pray at home. It is such a blessing that their faith is so important to them and prayer has become integral to their journey. God is present everywhere and in every situation.

One of the men has written down the names of everyone who is praying and has mentioned to them we are praying for our world, the community, each other, for hope and courage for the uncertainty that lies ahead. The men have expressed their hope in Jesus Christ and they want to honour that commitment in their prayer life. They have written a number of songs expressing their thoughts and feelings and look forward to when we can gather again for community services.

*The Rev'd Heather Toms is Anglican prison chaplain at Fulham Correctional Centre in Sale.*

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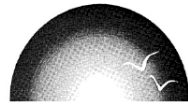
**Religion and Ethics Report**  
Andrew West      Wednesday 5:30 pm  
– repeated: Thursday 5:30 am and Friday 11:00 am

**Soul Search**  
Dr Meredith Lake      Sunday 6:00 pm  
– repeated: Wednesday 11:00 pm and Thursday 12 noon

**God Forbid**  
James Carleton      Sunday 6:00 am  
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Photo: Flickr/Mohamed Sahnoun

*A sweet side to the celebrations of Eid-ul-Fitr*

## Eid: celebrations of Islam

Arfa Khan

Culturally and traditionally, celebrations reflect our identity. Celebrations and festivals are a vital part of any religion. Most religions have some form of festivities, which suggests that the need to celebrate is an innate trait of human nature. Religious celebrations are a vibrant and colourful way to teach our children what we believe in.

Islam, Christianity and Judaism are all Abrahamic religions with monotheistic beliefs and recognising a holy book (Quran, Bible or Torah) considered to be the word of God. All say that God sent prophets to spread his word. All have a creation story in which God created the universe.

Islam and Christianity rituals are dramatically different but their ethical teachings are virtually identical. The main messages of these religions are goodness, compassion, charity and discipline. There are a lot of similarities in celebrations and observance. Christians observe Lent and celebrate Easter, and Muslims observe fast and celebrate Eid.

Muslims have two major religious observances called 'Eid', meaning 'celebrations'. Festivals and celebrations

in Islam are based on the lunar calendar, which is about 11 days shorter than the solar calendar most commonly used today.

First is the month of fasting (Ramadan), one of the five pillars of Islam. The other pillars are faith, prayer, charity and Hajj. The month of Ramadan is in the ninth month of the lunar calendar. Muslims fast for 29 to 30 days, fasting from sunrise to sunset. This month is a time of spiritual reflection, self-improvement and worship. During fasting time, Muslims abstain from eating, drinking, sexual relationships, and sinful speech and behaviour. Fasting is an extremely important aspect of the Muslim faith.

The end of Ramadan is marked with the celebrations of Eid-ul-Fitr (the feast of breaking of fast and charity). In most Islamic countries, Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated for three days. This year, it begins at sunset on 23 May.

The Muslim celebrations of Eid-ul-Adha (the feast of sacrifice) honour the willingness of the prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son to show submission to Allah's command. Eid-ul-Adha is celebrated immediately upon the completion of Hajj, the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudia

Arabia. Hajj is a once-in-a-lifetime observance that is mandatory for those who can afford it. Eid-ul-Adha falls in the last month of the lunar calendar. Muslims all around the world who can afford to will sacrifice an animal (a cow, buffalo, goat, sheep or camel).

The Eid celebrations include special morning prayers followed by formal embraces. Eid is a time to meet and greet, share and express love, and spread peace and friendship. Muslims worldwide share meals and exchange gifts with their neighbours, families and friends. Special feasts including sweet dishes are prepared at home, and gifts are given to children, families, friends, and to less fortunate people. Men and women make new clothes. In most cultures, girls wear henna, bangles and dress up in special clothes.

Religious celebrations and festivals reinforce togetherness, cooperation, harmony and enhancement of community. They enhance religious values and are a chance to show appreciation and gratitude to the Almighty for all His blessings.

*Arfa Khan is president of the United Muslim Sisters of Latrobe Valley.*

### EDITORIAL

## Lady with the Lamp, and rays of hope

The World Health Organization has declared this year the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. The 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth is this month, and on 12 May each year many countries, including Australia, celebrate International Nurses' Day.

Florence's tireless nursing work during the Crimean War as the Lady with the Lamp is widely known and celebrated. Working in 19th-century Turkey in a medical facility overwhelmed by sick and injured British and allied soldiers, Florence established order, greatly improving sanitation and being responsible for significant reductions in the mortality rate. Less known is Florence's work as a writer and theologian, and her astonishing ability to retain and assimilate information.

Florence is said to have been called to God as a teenager, the first call happening at one of her family homes, Embley Park. At the age of 30, during her travels through Greece and Egypt, she wrote of being "called to service" by God. She acted out her strong personal devotion to Christ in service to alleviate pain and suffering.

Although part of the Anglican broad church, Florence was a radical theologian, openly questioning some aspects of the tradition and at one time consulting with Cardinal Henry Manning, Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, to seek spiritual direction.

Florence wrote extensively on religion and mysticism. Her sermons, biblical annotations, essays, letters and journal notes are part of the *Collected Works of Florence Nightingale* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001). *Suggestions for Thought*, a large manuscript of her theological writings, remains unpublished.

With her stamina, dedication and organisational skills, Florence established a nursing school, collected statistics and used them to instigate improvements in medical care in England and in India. She was key adviser to Sidney Herbert, Secretary of War during the Crimean War. This remarkable woman also strived to raise living standards, introduce sanitary reform and promote the nursing profession.

Some parts of the Anglican Communion honour Florence with a commemoration in their liturgical calendars. In the Church of England's *Common Worship*, Florence Nightingale's commemoration is on 13 August, the day on which she died in 1910.

The wonderful Florence Nightingale stained glass window pictured here was originally at the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary Chapel and has been removed to St Peter's Church, Derby, rededicated in 2010. Now, more than ever, we need some light in our lives, and I hope that looking at this window, and other creative works in this and future issues, will be a source of comfort and hope.

It's timely to reflect on an important legacy of the work of Florence and other pioneers in health: the skilled, informed and caring acts of service of her modern-day counterparts worldwide each day in the face of COVID-19.

Sally Woollett



Photo: Russ Hamer



# Deep sea diving, empowered by the Holy Spirit

Alisha Moyle

## A 'deep sea diving' prayer

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.*

(Mark 12:30)

February 2012 was the month of my Holy Baptism at Christ Church Drouin. I was 25 at the time and taking a committed step in faith. Standing at the font saying 'yes' to Jesus. Dying to an old life and birthing into the new. Deep sea diving with God is just this – holding your breath, taking God's hand and diving into the deep unknown.

About a year later, I heard a sermon from the Rev'd Amy Turner. It went something like this:

*As Christians, we are often 'lukewarm' to God's invitation and calling. God can invite us into the calling of going deeper with him. We have a choice. We can be just playing around the edges of the ocean where it is warm and safe. Or ... we can respond to the invitation, take his hand, trust and dive into the deep with him.*

As a younger Anglican, sitting amongst the ocean of other church family members, I was impacted. Word. By. Word. An obvious working of the Holy Spirit.

Maybe a week or two later, I came to an uncomfortable crossroad in my journey. (Coincidence, maybe?) Where was God?

Listening quietly to God that day, he reminded me of Amy's important sermon. I was so inspired and dared to pray: "God, could I please dive into your ocean?" What a Creator!

*When he got into the boat, his disciples followed him.*

(Matthew 8:23)

I wanted to test the waters. What is that actually like? Taking on a 'dare' from God is a little risky.

My prayer was answered, but I was totally unaware I needed to take a deep breath first! Blissful weeks of moving

with the Holy Spirit through the deepest of ocean space in a non-stop experience. There was no going back. Eventually, my prayer was to come up for some air so I could actually breathe!

I had been into the depths of my calling and true identity, even in the day-to-day of working and living.

Pursuing his heart into these depths looked like this: a deeper commitment to Jesus and saying 'yes' as a follower, out of pure love for him. My heart intertwined to the never-ceasing depths and widths of his, through grace. An awe-inspiring discovery of treasures in Scripture and the sacredness of prayer. The secrets of my true inner identity through God's eyes and the unimaginable personal promises of God revealed.

I began to emerge from the deep waters, up and out into the arms of my Heavenly Father. I had been completely transformed, arriving at another level of spiritual maturity since baptism. There was no going back.

Years later, I had another invitation to dive into the deepest waters from the very cliff edge. "You are ready. Take my hand, take a deep

breath. Trust me and let's start diving into my ocean. I am with you."

The invitation was there. I could well have made a run for it! It took my faithfulness and prayer to 'dive', before God's 'yes' to my prayer became another eternal, breathtaking experience into the extraordinary love of God, extraordinary transformation and exciting opportunities (Hebrews 11:1). This time, it was completely different.

I am no longer afraid of this prayer and what comes after, of diving into the deepest of unknown waters in the most challenging of experiences with God. The invitation is now too precious to waste.

Now, I share it with you. Could I dare you to pray this special, life-transforming prayer? What treasures are waiting for you in this invitation to the ocean of God's heart?

Close your eyes, pray, hold your breath, let go and trust God.

I would love to hear from you.

Yours in Christ – Alisha

Alisha Moyle  
(alishaj8@outlook.com)  
is a parish councillor at  
Warragul Anglican Church.

## Light in the Darkness

When all around is hail and storm,  
Light of the Spirit, keep me warm.  
When all around is sad with pain,  
Shine me a healing Light again.  
Guide me O Light to where I go,  
Grant a gentle candle glow.

When all around is dark and drear,  
When all around is hate and fear,  
Come to me Light, to light my way,  
Come, make my Darkness into day.  
Dear Father, set your light for me  
Illuminate so I can see.

The Darkness cannot understand  
A small lamp held by Spirit's hand.  
Come shine your beam through time and space  
Illuminating through your Grace,  
The shining path that I must know  
To reach the goal where I must go.  
Show me the music I must hear,  
Vanquish the anger and the fear.  
The Darkness cannot overcome  
The Light that shines from the Holy One.

Wendy Nickson  
(Lakes Entrance-Metung parish), 2007



Photo: Flickr/Carina

## The Gippsland Anglican

*Q: Is there a faith question you're afraid to ask?*



*A: Chances are others have that question too!*

Send your question to the editor at [gippsanglican.org.au](mailto:gippsanglican.org.au) or 0407 614 661 and we will publish an answer from a clergy person. (Your details won't be shared or published.)

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# Worship beyond Sunday morning

Rob Bath

Red Alert  
Does the Future  
Have a Church?  
by Gil Cann  
Albatross Books, 2018

I remember Gil talking about this book. It was planned about 15 years ago, and now we have it in print.

Gil has had vast experience in pastoring and encouraging local churches over the years, so his observations and thoughts have much relevance for the church universal and local today.

He spends time surveying how the world has changed in the past 200 years both theologically (no absolutes – everything is relative) and culturally. Many of the changes that concerned Christians with a strong faith are now taken up by government agencies with a complete secular agenda, squeezing out Christians from grassroots ministry and decision-making.

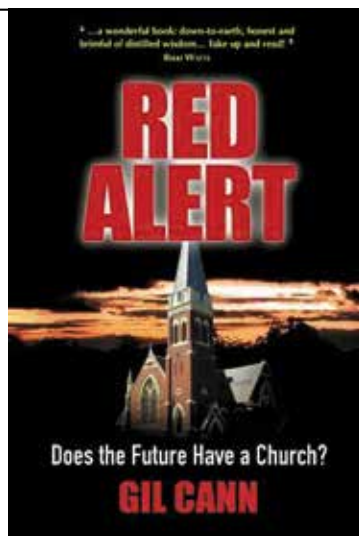
The bulk of the book is about how the church leadership can respond to these changes, especially at a local level.

A local pastor is seen as a facilitator, encouraging every church member to use their gifts and abilities with the challenge that our worship is 24/7 and not just Sunday a.m. (Romans 12:1). When the local church meets on a Sunday it is a family reunion. Experiences are shared about situations during the week, time of prayer for concerns and also how God has answered prayer during the week. There are several references to Hebrews 10:24-25.

Gil comments that the church gathered becomes the church scattered, so Sunday or when the whole group meets is a time to catch up, give praise, pray, hear corporately from Scripture, with appropriate application for Monday-to-Saturday worship of each 'family' member.

Under the heading 'Don't meet to "hold a service"', Gil explains:

*To go home saying 'what a wonderful speaker', 'what marvellous worship', what an uplifting experience' when we have done little or nothing to meet, encourage, listen to or support others is a gross distortion of what*



*Christian gatherings are meant to be.*

The vexed issue of music is dealt with in a chapter titled 'From discord to harmony: making the most of our music'. Gil writes about the change in people's preference with the note that in the 1950s and 60s we sang songs, in the 1970s to 90s we listened, and now we watch songs. Consequently, some churches turn songs into a rock concert – dim lights, band out the front, music rather loud and nobody singing. Gil gives some practical advice to the leaders of music that would enhance and encourage the body of Christ, instead of disharmony.

The last two chapters I found to be very challenging and encouraging. 'Tough times ahead: the need for real courage' acknowledges that the secular world seeks to limit church and Christian involvement in the world because we do not accept their *modus operandi*. If you stand for biblical truth you are labelled either a bigot or an extremist. The call is to stand firm and be courageous.

The last chapter, 'An attitude of gratitude: living in the grace of God', finishes with these words:

*Nothing is more important, for any church, than this: that all its members marvel at the grace God extends to them. This is a daily reality. As followers of Christ, to live in an attitude of gratitude is a daily calling – something for which we will be forever grateful to him.*

Highly recommended.

*Rob Bath is a lay preacher at South East Bendigo Parish.*

## Planting Challenge at the Abbey

Edie Ashley

This year, the Abbey at Raymond Island has been allocated 1200 seedlings as part of the Landcare distribution. The seedlings will be available for collection by the Abbey late in May or early June 2020.

However, this year is different. In light of the COVID-19 restrictions the big planting weekend has been redesigned.

I have now taken upon myself the challenge of planting all 1200 seedlings by the target date of 27 July 2020 and I am asking you to sponsor me!

All sponsorship money will be contributed to the installation of solar panels at the Abbey

Residence, Ena Sheumack House; \$3500 is needed to complete the installation.

If you would like to contribute to the Abbey Planting Challenge, please contact the Abbey. [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au) ph. (03) 5156 0511



## Re-inventing Cafe 123

Jules Lanham

Cafe 123 in Sale has always been a place for community, for gathering, for sharing stories and food. A place for hugs and a listening ear. But that was then – before ... isolation.

123 looks different now, and for about four weeks it was quiet inside. I worked alone for a bit after sending all our staff home. It was an anxious and uncertain time. But after the 123 committee met we decided to re-open 123 for take-away meals. I stayed and cooked, did the dishes, the serving and made the coffees. I kept in touch with our 123 family – everyone was really missing the community.

We met with the local council, who invited other community services to figure out how we could

support people. Some in our community, as in all communities, are struggling to make ends meet. Families have lost jobs and there are still bills and rent to be paid. Some people are isolated because of age and medical conditions. Food has always been a great connector and we are delivering meals and treats to families that visit 123 and are part of our family.

The way our community of Sale is working together has been great.

We have now invited back a skeleton crew at 123. Laughter echoes again in the building and although we are not all back together we dream of that day. Our opening hours are short, but people hang around for a chat and the chance to connect. Re-inventing 123 has been an important move.

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**VOLUNTEER**  
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CHANGING LIVES. WEEK

Volunteering Australia is with online activities and closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation, and events. You can follow Vol- says "it is more important than ever to recognise and acknowledge Australia's volunteers."

National Volunteer Week 2020 will still run between 18 May and 24 May,

Facebook or Twitter, or visit [volunteeringaustralia.org](http://volunteeringaustralia.org) to access fact sheets, research, resources for teachers, or to subscribe to the newsletter.



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Ross Jacka



William Hatherell *Christ Appears to his Disciples* 1925 oil on canvas 112.2 x 91.5 cm.  
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne Felton Bequest, 1925

# Christ appears to his disciples

This depiction of Christ appearing to his disciples is a late painting by Englishman William Hatherell, who had been an artist and illustrator throughout a long career in painting and publishing.

Looking at the two accounts that describe Jesus appearing to the disciples, the painting seems to combine both Luke 24.36-43 and John 20.19-31. There are the various emotional responses of the followers – worship, scepticism and questioning expectation – which fit with the Lukan gospel and the display of the wounds of Jesus for Thomas to confirm that Jesus has risen from John's gospel. In the painting Jesus is looking at me, Thomas. I can see his wounds. His look at me is of calm concern for me, shown in the set of his eyes. His lips are at rest waiting for my response and then his further response. I have not yet said the words 'My Lord and my God'.

We are gathered in the upper room, about to share table fellowship. We have clung together, holding on to the wonder and joy of being Jesus' followers in a sustaining and challenging community, not wanting the fellowship to end despite the threatening times, and now Jesus is back with us confirming our hope and challenging our doubt. What will I say?

Another thing that intrigues me about the painting is the quality of the light. It seems very northern, reminding me of German and Scandinavian domestic interiors, not the golden warmth of a Mediterranean evening. Probably this is deliberate. Placing the scene in the atmosphere of Hatherell's English viewers brings the message to their home rather than off in a foreign place. The clothes and the view of the cubic architecture on the horizon line through the screened window provide the historical authenticity, and the light brings the message home to the viewer.

Here is a painting that asks me what my response to Jesus is, and asks it with a compassionate hope of relationship.

## NGV drawing tutorials online



Virtual Drop-by Drawing class with Lily Mae Martin at NGV, 2020.  
Image courtesy of NGV

The National Gallery of Victoria has launched a four-part virtual series of its popular Drop-by Drawing program.

This virtual iteration of the program invites audiences to watch a video tutorial of a Drop-by Drawing class, which features tips and tricks on how to draw from some of Victoria's most engaging contemporary artists.

The series features Victorian artists Minna Gilligan, Lily Mae Martin and Kenny Pittock giving a step-by-step guide on how to draw, while taking inspiration from some of their favourite artworks in the NGV Collection, including life-size marble sculpture *Musidora*, 1878 by Marshall Wood; Andy Warhol's

*Self-portrait No. 9* (c. 1986); and Édouard Manet's *The Melon* (c. 1880).

Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV said: "Our Drop-by Drawing program is one of the NGV's much-loved programs where our visitors can hone their drawing skills in the setting of the wonderful NGV Collection. We know drawing is a very mindful and therapeutic activity, and during this time we are delighted to be able to give audiences a chance to experience virtual Drop-by Drawing tutorials at home."

To access the tutorials, visit [www.ngv.vic.gov.au/playlist/drop-by-drawing](http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/playlist/drop-by-drawing)

Courtesy National Gallery of Victoria