

# The Gippsland Anglican

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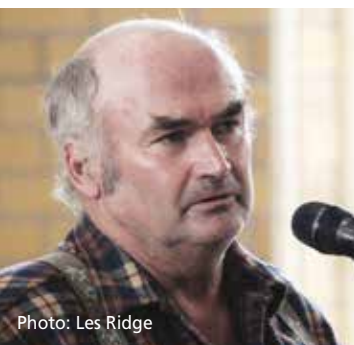
## A mirror and a lamp Reflection and renewal at 39th Synod

Sally Woollett

Bishop Richard Treloar lit the way for the commencement of the third session of the Gippsland Diocese's 39th Synod in mid-May with the launch of the Vision Renewal 2021–2024. His Presidential Address the following day reflected on a Bishop-in-Council motion to add a preamble to Section 7 of the *Faithfulness in Service* Code of Conduct, around which there was lengthy debate. The renewed diocesan vision for the next four years



Very Rev'd Susanna Pain, Sale



Brett Lee, Omeo



Rev'd Jude Benton, Croajingolong



Photo: Christine Morris

Candles lit for Friday night Eucharist at the 39th Synod

(see page 12) was described by Bishop Richard as “both descriptive and aspirational – a mirror and a lamp – in its three ‘taglines’ for Gippsland Anglicans”: Committed in Christ; Connecting in Service; Creative in Spirit.

Renewal will certainly be welcome, after Black Summer bushfires and COVID pandemic left parishes with “feelings of lethargy and fatigue,” as reported by Diocesan Registrar Richard Connelly. Parishes assisted Bishop-in-Council’s finance committee to gain a whole-of-Diocese perspective of impacts through these and other significant challenges. The finance committee, reporting to Bishop-in-Council, noted the great financial resilience of parishes and the faithful and sacrificial contributions of parishioners and clergy that have held parishes in good financial stead.” Finance committee chair David Gittins noted that a move to electronic giving, as well as JobKeeper,

helped many parishes, which are more hopeful now that churches and op shops have re-opened. Looking forward, there will be a committee focus on reviewing assets and income streams rather than trimming already-modest overheads. Philanthropic support for mission initiatives such as Aboriginal ministry is also being sought.

“... the journey of culture change from compliance mode towards seeking best practice is ever before us,” said Bishop Richard in his Presidential Address, referring to the adoption of safe ministry practices, and to instances of past abuse in the Diocese. Earlier this year the Diocese was audited by General Synod on the Safe Ministry to Children Canon, a process that was welcomed, said Bishop Richard, being “keen to benchmark, to improve protocols, and to shift our mindset, so that – as far as in us lies – this [abuse] never happens in our Diocese again.”

Redress is also being made financially, with these costs constituting a large proportion of the 2019–2020 deficit. As reported by David Gittins, these payments have been absorbed by the Diocese; levies have not been imposed on parishes, as has been the case elsewhere.

One of the Bishop-in-Council motions was to add a preamble to Section 7 of *Faithfulness in Service* so that a member of the clergy or church worker in a committed and monogamous relationship is not considered to be breaching two clauses therein “because that relationship does not have the status of a marriage solemnised according to an Anglican marriage rite.” The clauses in question refer to “chastity in singleness and faithfulness in marriage.”

In his presidential address, Bishop Richard said, “... for years, we have been expecting people who are in faithful, committed relationships that

either do not constitute marriage, or do not correspond with our church’s doctrine of marriage, either to sign [up to *Faithfulness in Service*] with their fingers crossed, or to walk away. Why should their conscience bear that burden?”

Supporters of the Resolution argued that these clauses are currently causing moral dilemma, adding that the changes would support young people to “go forward” and enable clergy to work with “those in transition”, and that inclusivity is key. For many, “marriage” has meant any sort of legal marriage undertaken in or out of church liturgy, Anglican or otherwise.

Some against the motion wished to wait until General Synod has met; others saw it as effectively lowering standards and “redefining chastity as monogamy.”

After an opposing procedural motion (not to put the original motion) was defeated, the Resolution was debated and carried in both houses (clergy and laity).

*The full text of Bishop Richard’s Presidential Address can be downloaded from the diocesan website.*



Bishop Jeffrey Driver, Paynesville



Lacy Biggs, Warragul





My first synod in the Diocese two years ago came after an 18-month interlude, and then we had to wait another 18 months before convening online last November.

In that virtual forum we reflected on the enormous challenges encountered through drought and bushfire and pandemic, and on the resilience, courage and generosity shown by our clergy and people in so many ways.

Just six months later, we meet again and for the last time as this body ...

Our renewed vision for the next four years (see page 12) is both descriptive and aspirational – a mirror and a lamp – in its three ‘taglines’ for Gippsland Anglicans:

- Committed in Christ
- Connecting in Service
- Creative in Spirit.

Roman Catholic Franciscan priest Richard Rohr writes:

*The Christ Mystery [is] the indwelling of the Divine Presence in*

# Presidential Address

The following is an edited version of Bishop Richard’s Presidential Address at the Third Session of the 39th Synod in Sale on 15 May 2021.

*everyone and everything ... in Him every kind of life has meaning and has an influence on every other kind of life.\**

Those familiar with Rohr’s thinking will know that it is not some exclusivist or colonising claim for the truths of Christianity over against other world religions.

From within the riches of our own tradition Rohr speaks this good news of radical inclusion – “a cosmic notion of the Christ,” he says, that “competes with and excludes no one, but includes everyone and everything.”

This is akin to the realisation Peter’s companions come to in Acts 10, when the Holy Spirit is poured out “even on the Gentiles” – unthinkable for those early followers of the Way emerging from Judaism.

For our identity to be grounded in Christ, it must embody the diversity which reflects that gospel of inclusion: diversity received as a gift of creation itself, understanding better now what our First Nations People seem always to have known and respected, namely how critical biodiversity is to the earth’s flourishing. In this year’s federal budget – a

hopeful one for rural and regional Australia in several respects – we welcome a \$32 million lift in promoting on-farm biodiversity.

We lamented the threat to biodiversity in the bushfires of 2019 and 2020. And yet we are often slow to embrace the God-given diversity of our own human condition.

One of the resolutions before us from Bishop-in-Council relates to an interpretive preamble to Section 7 of our Code of Conduct, *Faithfulness in Service*, to the effect that those who would serve as church workers will not be deemed to be in breach of the Code only because (and I would underscore that word ‘only’) they are not in a relationship that constitutes marriage as provided for in Anglican rites.

Let’s be very clear. This is not a kind of ‘wooden horse’ for the blessing of same-sex civil marriages, a subject to which I will return. This is about two things: coherence between our policies and our practices, and not putting unnecessary barriers before people who are seeking to serve.

As Peter says to his astounded Jewish-Christian

friends in that passage from Acts, “Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?”

While this resolution is not about baptism *per se*, it is about baptismal ministry.

For years, we have been asking an ever-growing list of people to sign up to *Faithfulness in Service* as a condition of being cleared as a church worker.

And for years, we have been expecting people who are in faithful, committed relationships that either do not constitute marriage, or do not correspond with our church’s doctrine of marriage, either to sign this with their fingers crossed, or to walk away. Why should their conscience bear that burden?

Since 2017 this list includes those legally married to someone of the same gender. And until such time as we can bless such unions, any claim that we recognise them as marriages in a Code of Conduct lacks integrity.

The helpful background paper prepared by our Diocesan Solicitor, Viv Braham, whose contribution to so much of our legislation

(Continued on page 8)

## Around the parishes

“That we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith...” (ROMANS 1:12)



### MAFFRA

We recently celebrated St George’s Day at Boisdale with a life-sized dragon and beautiful princess (pictured). Please pray for this small faithful congregation as they continue to witness in their local community.

A small group of young people are currently enjoying Youth Alpha. Please pray that their journey of faith will

grow through the talks and our discussions.

We recently re-commenced our community meal. We are moving forward carefully with COVID precautions. The fellowship for those who often eat alone is most valuable. Please pray for those who attend to enjoy the connections as well as the food prepared with much love

### MOE-NEWBOROUGH

Thanksgiving prayers for:

the gifts and talents among the parishioners and their willingness to use them

the enthusiastic contribution of volunteers (non-parish members) who willingly offer their services within the parish

our loyalty to God, who has called us serve him and the world around us



# Episcopal Relief & Development supports COVID response in India

Episcopal Relief & Development is supporting its partner Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA) in responding to needs created by the current COVID-19 crisis in India. CASA is conducting COVID-19 educational awareness campaigns and supplying personal protective equipment and hygiene kits to rural communities.

CASA has identified 15 villages in the Nandurbar District of western India where the organisation has relationships to leverage in providing assistance. Due to the remote locations of the villages and lack of internet connectivity, many in the communities are not aware of how to prevent the spread of COVID-19. There are misconceptions about the vaccine.

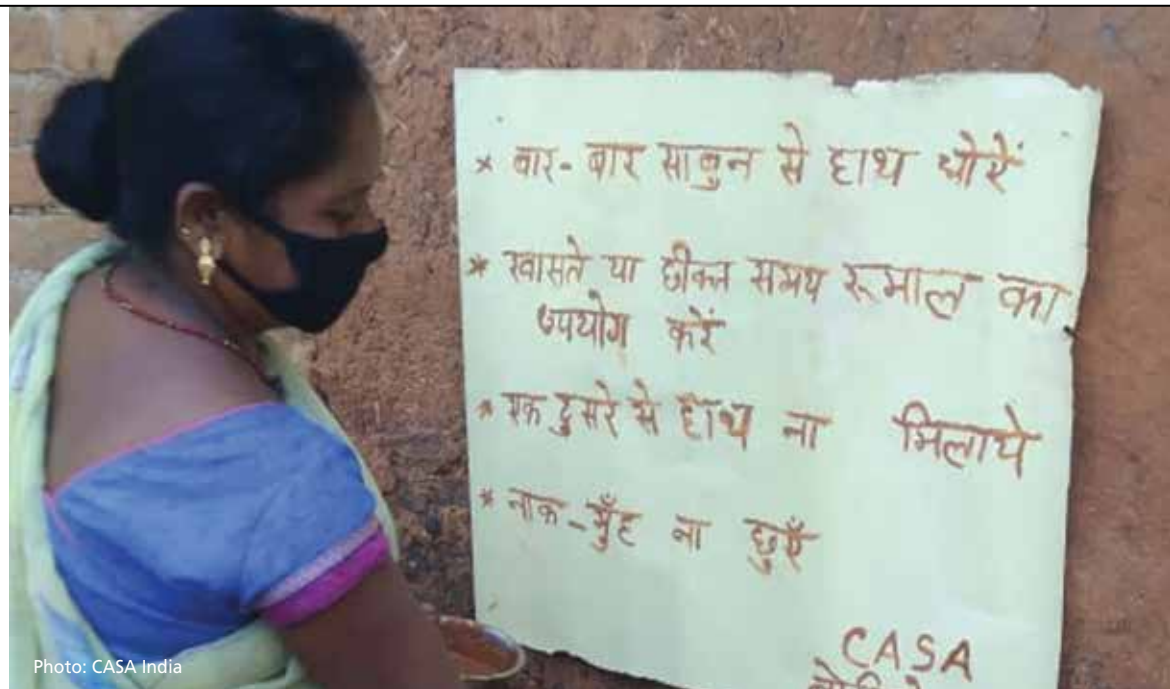


Photo: CASA India

Additionally, many members of the communities are at higher risk of complications from COVID-19 due to malnutrition and weakened immunity. In April, the Nandurbar District reported an 81% increase in cases.

With Episcopal Relief & Development's support, CASA is conducting a COVID-19 educational campaign. Using wall murals and hand-washing stations at prominent market locations, CASA is raising awareness of the importance of hygiene to

prevent the spread of the virus. Volunteers and leaders are travelling between the villages making announcements over speakers about the need for vaccination and directing people to vaccination sites run by the government and local health authorities.

Additionally, the agency is providing hygiene kits of face masks, soap and sanitisers to 160 individuals and families, as well as direct financial support to families of COVID-19 patients to help food and medical care.

"The second wave of COVID-19 in India has presented different challenges and needs than the first wave of the virus," said Nagulan Nesiah, Senior Program Officer, Episcopal Relief & Development. "CASA's response has been targeted to reach marginalized communities that have not been assisted by other relief efforts."

*Courtesy Episcopal Relief & Development. Each year the organisation facilitates healthier, more fulfilling lives for more than three million people struggling with hunger, poverty, disaster and disease.*

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(L–R rear) Banjo Lott-Stevens, Bishop Richard Treloar, the Rev’d Lloyd George, Daniel Cock holding baby Ada McCann, Jennifer Clover and Gavin McCann; (L–R front) Harrison Dodd and Madeline Satur

# Baptisms and confirmations in Drouin

Pauline Davies

Sunday 18 April was a significant day for Christ Church Drouin, with three baptisms and six confirmations taking place during the morning service. Christ Church has not had a resident priest for the past 15 months, so the morning was eagerly anticipated. The three congregational members to be baptised were baby Ada McCann; her father, Gavin McCann; and her godparent, Daniel Cock. Bishop Richard blessed the holy water for baptism before our local retired priest, the Rev’d Lloyd

George, took the next part of the service. The candidate’s families were there to sponsor and support them. The six parishioners confirmed were Jennifer Clover (baby Ada’s mother), Gavin McCann, Daniel Cock, Banjo Lott-Stevens, Madeline Satur and Harrison Dodd. All were individually blessed by Bishop Richard and inducted into the faith of the Church, surrounded by their family members. They were each presented with a certificate verifying this special occasion. Towards the end of the service, Bishop Richard made a presentation

to parishioner Dulcie Cheesman. Dulcie was retiring from the Drouin Anglican opportunity shop after 23 years, during the latter years having had the responsibility of op shop coordinator. The opportunity shop is an arm of the Church supporting not only the Church but local non-profit organisations, as well as individual members of the community. Dulcie was congratulated on her commitment and responsibility as a volunteer, and she received a trophy engraved with her name and the years she had contributed.

# Changing ministry in Morwell

Carolyn Raymond

It is wonderful to be able to worship together again, after the long months of lockdown. Not being able to meet together for church made us all realise how we value our worship time together. Following COVID-safe requirements has increased our awareness of each other, and our determination to keep each other safe. The Ven Sue Jacka has been with us in Morwell for several weeks. We are all appreciating the services she creates. Our 8 am service remains quiet and prayerful, following the prayer book. However, Sue has encouraged the congregation to sing. This is a new but appreciated experience for this congregation – music enriches our worship. For the 10 am service, the liturgy now explores new prayers and responses. We are using the overhead screen more often, and Sue often includes a video on the service theme. Sue is encouraging and supporting our individual ministries. She is also encouraging us to take up new roles. This may be taking one part of the service, organising one aspect of our church life and/or ministering to our wider community. One ministry in the community is to the residents of nursing homes. Since the lifting of

lockdown, a team has been reorganised and we are now able to take more services at Mitchell House, Heritage Manor and St Hilary’s Community. One member of our team, Val Lawrence, is so committed to the residents of St Hilary’s that she also visits pastorally and takes a craft group. COVID put a stop to Confirmation classes last year, and the Confirmation service with Bishop Richard was cancelled. Now we can recommence our discussions. Sue and the Rev’d Kathy Dalton guide the group. Several members of the congregation (I am one of them) have joined the group. It is truly a joy to get to know the candidates and to share with them. Our candidates are different in age and life experience, so I have found it a challenge to share our faith so everyone can ‘hear’. Sue has involved many members of the group to make a presentation or be part of the discussion, and shown videos to encourage us to think in new ways. The parish council organised a social evening (dinner and a film) to raise funds for Aboriginal ministry. We raised a satisfactory amount for our Mission project, which is very important to everyone at St Mary’s, as we worship with Rev’d Kathy, one of the Diocese’s two Aboriginal priests.

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## Abbey Winter Feast 2021

The ninth annual Winter Feast will be held at The Abbey on Saturday 24 July commencing at 12 noon. The Feast has become a significant event in the life of the Diocese as we unleash hidden culinary skills and raise much needed funds in support of ministry at The Abbey. Past chefs have set a high standard and the challenge this year is being taken up by Kath Grandy and her team from Lakes Entrance.

The charge for this event has been kept at \$60 per person, with three courses and matching wines included, and all proceeds being committed to the work of The Abbey in its service to the Diocese and outreach to the wider community. Don’t miss this special occasion and please note that booking is required. For further information and bookings please contact Anna at The Abbey on 5156 6580 or [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au).



Val Lawrence and Jess Day, Activities Coordinator for St Hilary's



# Safe environment and community engagement

Jane Anderson

At a stakeholder forum recently, the agencies involved with the delivery of the action plan for improving access to services shared progress updates related to our shared commitment to improving access to services for the people of Latrobe. We were joined by National Rural Health Commissioner, Professor Ruth Stewart, who said the Latrobe access to services action plan was “leading innovation in rural health in Australia.”

Dean of Federation University’s School of Health, Professor Wendy Cross, also presented at the forum and provided insights about exciting developments

underway. These include advanced practice programs, a dual degree in nursing and midwifery, and the exploration of student-led clinics with input from local health professionals.

The Workforce Planning Team from Rural Workforce Agency Victoria also shared their access to services priorities, including improving links between health professionals and rural communities, supporting health professionals to enhance cycles of patient care, and equipping health services in regional Victoria to educate the next generation of health professionals.

I recently released my quarterly update for the period January to March 2021

and would like to share some highlights of this report.

Safe environment was the top aspiration spoken about this quarter, followed by community engagement. This is largely due to concerns about the development of the used lead acid battery (ULAB) facility in Hazelwood North. People are calling on the government to further acknowledge and respond to community voice, they are expressing concerns about potential health impacts of the development and doubts about the economic benefits.

Palliative care was again among the top aspirations. Communities have told me hospitals are noisy places and there is a shortage of palliative care specialist

doctors in Latrobe. People are looking for a dedicated space where the physical design and atmosphere is family friendly, quiet, serene and peaceful.

Insights from my engagement with young people in Latrobe were recently published and made available on our website. The young people I met expressed a desire for their voices to be heard and their concerns and suggestions acted upon. Young people have talked to me about feelings of belonging, enjoying good mental and physical health and having the support of a community that is there for them. I am now focused on the systems changes that need to occur to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of young people in Latrobe.

As part of my 2020–21 Statement of Intent I now want to hear from older people aged 60 and over in Latrobe. These conversations will then be used to help design, develop and implement ways

of engaging that support older people to participate more fully in systemic changes to improve their own health and wellbeing.

*If you are interested in meeting to share your perspective, please contact Kylie on 1800 319 255 or email [info@lhadvocate.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@lhadvocate.vic.gov.au)*

*Jane Anderson’s role as Latrobe Health Advocate is to provide independent advice to the Victorian Minister for Health on behalf of Latrobe Valley communities on system and policy issues affecting their health and wellbeing.*



## Tony and Jenny Wicking inducted at Yarram

David Miller

It always was going to be different. The inductions of two Priests in Charge, a year after actually starting in the parish, the two personalities of Tony and Jenny Wicking, and Bishop Richard, who just a few weeks earlier took the invasion of a magpie at Holy Trinity on Easter morning as if it happened often.

The service commenced pretty much in the usual way for an induction, albeit with three computers providing images for those who joined on Zoom. However, for the part of the service where the symbols of ministry are presented, any resemblance to normality disappeared.

Rather than symbols being brought up to the rectors at the front, the Ven Graeme Knott took Tony and Jenny around the church.

From the lectern to the prayer desk, up to the north isle for the holy oils, across to where two young boys joyously poured water into the font, out to the narthex for the parish roll where the names of the centres were mischievously mixed around

to put Port Albert first, back to the main doors where they were given a copy of our local paper, down the south isle to receive Lay Reader scarves in recognition of their role as chaplains to the Lay Readers, and sideways to the chancel steps to receive their stoles, which were then put on them by the wardens.

The installation was performed by Bishop Richard at the altar table to affirm the Wickings’ roles at the Eucharist.

Speeches of affirmation were also different – members of the community and other churches had already had a year to get to know Tony and Jenny – with anecdotes about previous interactions. The Ven Graeme even cracked a few jokes in his introductions.

After the induction we moved to the hall, where the usual loaves and fishes miracle occurred – so many choices of food and plenty of it.

Thank you to everyone who made this an induction to remember – especially Bishop Richard, who allowed the service to be rewritten to reflect a ministry started in COVID lockdown.



Brian Laidlaw and his wife, Jean

## The gift of mentors

Cathrine Muston

Sometimes we can get distracted by the grand gesture, when really all that is needed is the small offering. This is particularly the case with mentoring those who have been in prison.

Over the past two years, the Get Out for Good program has been blessed with volunteers who have offered the gift of non-judgemental friendship to those who have been in prison. Most of our volunteers are retired men who are willing to offer their time and attention to others by meeting for a coffee or a catch-up on the phone.

One mentor who has made a particular impact is Brian Laidlaw. Brian has an ability to draw alongside others and chat about any topic from fishing, machinery and how to make things to parenting and the meaning of life.

During the time that Brian has been a volunteer, participants in the program have changed their thinking and made the small changes necessary to adapt to living in the community after time spent in prison. This is no small thing, although it can often seem that way. Brian’s commitment to the men in the program has made them feel as though they have someone who

will both support them and challenge them.

Brian has now taken the decision to retire as a mentor, due to ill health. For the men he has mentored, and for myself as coordinator of the program, this is a huge blow. It is not easy finding people who are willing to engage with those the rest of the community deem too difficult or too dangerous. And yet it is in this space where our faith is built as we see God at work in the lives of the participants.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining the Get Out for Good program in Gippsland, please contact Cathrine Muston (0458 450 370 or [cathrine.muston@anglicarevic.org.au](mailto:cathrine.muston@anglicarevic.org.au)).

Maybe God will bless you, like Brian and our other mentors, with “the foolishness to think that you can make a difference in the world ... so that you will do things which others tell you cannot be done” (Celtic prayer). Small offerings that have the potential of a grand gesture.

*Cathrine Muston is Anglicare Victoria’s Community Development Officer, Parish Partnerships.*





Photo: Nikki Blades Photography Phillip Island

Erena Lawrence and Troy Norfolk give and receive promises that will form a foundation for their life together

## Wedding bells for Deacon Erena Lawrence

Erena Lawrence and Troy Norfolk were married by the Rev'd Jo White at St Philip's Cowes on 9 April. St Philip's congregant Erena was supported by her sister Natalie Krutop, while Colin Holst was local music identity Troy's best man. Erena has been part of the Diocese of Gippsland for over 10 years. She was brought up in Traralgon, ordained Deacon by Bishop John McIntyre and served as Children and Families Minister at St James' Traralgon.

## Yarram op shop celebrates 21st birthday

### Rev'd Jenny Wicking

The Anglican Parish of Yarram celebrated the 'coming of age' of our op shop, Twice Blessed, as we turned 21. On 11 April, at our Sunday Service, we gave thanks and remembered the vision and work of the Rev'd Graeme Walker in setting up Twice Blessed, and the many past and current volunteers who have faithfully given their time over the past 21 years in service. On 13 April we gathered at the Commercial Hotel for a morning tea celebration and thanksgiving. After we sang *Happy Birthday*, Wendy Pope and Enid Walker cut the birthday cake. We were delighted to welcome many of our past volunteers – especially Kaye and George Robertson, who travelled from Geelong to join us. Celebrations continued during the week, with daily prizes and giveaways for customers.



Enid Walker (left) and Wendy Pope, part of the original op shop committee, cutting the birthday cake

## Gippsland Grammar space honours former student

Gippsland Grammar has transformed an outdoor space at its Garnsey Campus honouring the late Stephen Ashton AM, who attended the school from 1964 to 1971. Stephen was a Prefect in his final Form 6 year and was also dux. He went on to become an award-winning architect with strong connections to Gippsland Grammar. Stephen's father, John (known as Stuart), was also an architect, designing some of the buildings at St Anne's campus.

Stephen died in July 2016 as a result of mesothelioma, a malignant tumour caused by inhaling asbestos fibres. He is survived by his wife, Rosemary, and two daughters, Louisa and Kate. The Ashton family made a significant donation to Gippsland Grammar for the redevelopment of the Year 7 and 8 area, which was named Ashton Court during an official opening and dedication by Bishop Richard on 26 April.

Stephen's mother, Jean Ashton, helped unveil a plaque. Jean taught at Gippsland Grammar and was a founding member of JJAGGANS, a Parents and Friends group that raised large sums of money for the school from the late 1960s through to 2018. The Garnsey Campus lecture theatre is named after the JJAGGANS.

Rush Wright Associates, including colleagues who

had worked with Stephen, were contracted to transform the courtyard into a greener space to promote sociability for students. They used Mt Angus sandstone and local plants to create a subtle form of 'abstracted nature'. The space also features four-square courts for ball play.

Rosemary Nixon encouraged students to use the space mindfully: "The act of imagining the future will guide you through the complex network of large and small decisions along the way. The act of imagination increases the possibility that you will get where you want to be. Perhaps the legacy of the Ashtons and this courtyard will help you to imagine your own future and get where you want to be."

Principal Leisa Harper was delighted with the transformation of Ashton Court: "Gippsland Grammar is enormously grateful for the generous donation from the Ashton family. It is important our students have role-models and I hope that they take from the wonderful achievements of Stephen and how he gave to his community. Ashton Court will be a permanent reminder of this legacy of achievement, connection and community."

Courtesy Gippsland Grammar



(L-R) Gippsland Grammar Principal, Leisa Harper, with Stephen's family, daughter Louisa Ashton, mother Jean Ashton, wife Rosemary Nixon, sister Meredith Watson and her husband Hugh Watson after unveiling the plaque of the courtyard





*Dancers at the Gippsland Multicultural Services Rock and Roll Dance Party*

# Gippsland Multicultural Services offering social connection

**Tania Ryan**

Gippsland Multicultural Services has a proud history of serving Gippsland's ethnic community members for over 35 years. We are the only service in Gippsland tailored specifically to meet the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse community. Our services focus on the social and cultural connection of our clients, supporting them to remain living the life they choose in their own home. We offer a range of services through Aged Care and Disability programs (including NDIS).

The need for social connection has been highlighted through the COVID-19 pandemic and

the impact of resulting restrictions. For many, their normal connections with friends and family have been broken. For many people who are aged or living with disability, the impacts have been significant.

As our normal social activities and gatherings were forced to stop running in their normal format, we looked to what we could do to change. Gippsland Multicultural Service's quickly responded by adapting our services, looking at innovative ways to support our clients.

Our staff were wonderful in adapting. Along with a range of respite programs, we offered a morning tea and a range of activities that were delivered at the doorstep to provide a friendly face and conversation, while remaining

at a COVID-safe distance. For some of our clients, this person was the only person they saw and felt safe to talk with. As we were able, we began walking groups and outdoor picnics, providing opportunity for people to come together. COVID has had, and continues to have, a significant impact on many people's lives. For those with friends and family overseas, the sense of disconnection is amplified. We continue to modify our services to respond to the current and changing needs of our clients and their carers.

Gippsland Multicultural Services' offers are individually tailored to the person and/or their carer. In-home respite services support people to remain living at home. The type of support we provide can include accessing community activities, company at home, assistance with cooking or some time to give carers a break.

We also run weekly social support groups on Tuesdays and Thursdays. These groups are a wonderful opportunity for people to meet with friends (old and new), participate in various structured activities, and enjoy freshly cooked meals suitable to their culture.

All activities are based

on the needs and interests of those attending the groups and are led by a team of committed and trained staff who have backgrounds in different nationalities.

Recent activities have included International Food Day, various cooking demonstrations, visits from guest speakers such as nurses and healthcare professionals, baking competitions judged by local police officers, pamper days and a rock and roll dance party. With a focus on health and wellbeing, we have introduced some new activities including weekly meditation, a dancing/movement group, walking, nutrition education and demonstrations.

We understand that accessing aged and disability services can be challenging for some people, or just understanding what is available can be confusing. We can offer free support with our Access and Support worker to discuss your current situation and how to find services to suit you.

We invite people to contact us on 5133 7072, or feel free to visit our new office at 26–28 Tarwin St, Morwell.

*Tania Ryan is  
CEO of Gippsland  
Multicultural Services.*

## A traditional Elizabethan Evensong

**Gail Wager**

Since 1989, as part of the well-known Annual Shakespeare on the River Festival, Holy Trinity Church Stratford has hosted an Elizabethan 1662 Service of Evensong. William Shakespeare's parish church was Holy Trinity in Stratford upon Avon in England, a church that can still be visited today.

The celebration of the 1662 Evensong, an ecumenical service, is usually held on the first Sunday in May, Medieval Faire Day.

This year, our pews were filled with local parishioners from Holy Trinity and sister churches, as well as guests from Heyfield, Sale and

Richmond. Others linked in on Facebook or Zoom, all sharing the Elizabethan worship experience.

We were most fortunate to welcome Bishop Richard, who, assisted by our priest, the Rev'd David Perryman, led the beautiful 1662 Liturgy. The Rev'd Nikolai Blaskow's deliverance of God's message through the lens of great writers, including Shakespeare, was outstanding. Nikolai, an Associate Priest at St Paul's Cathedral, is a deeply knowledgeable Shakespearian scholar.

The parish again welcomed the Stratford Singers, who supported the worship with appropriate and uplifting songs, concluding with a wonderful rendition of a traditional Irish blessing.

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(Continued from page 2)

over more than two decades we gratefully acknowledge, explains the rationale for this resolution.

As Viv points out, we are not looking to alter the text of *Faithfulness in Service*. We are seeking to clarify how two clauses in Section 7 will be applied in this Diocese when it comes to safe ministry clearances or alleged misconduct. Several other dioceses have made comparable amendments.

This Synod must form its own mind. My counsel is that a fit-for-purpose code of conduct would not exclude people only on the basis of a narrow interpretation of ‘singleness’, or an understanding of marriage that differs from that in our law.

When we introduced this resolution at the pre-Synod briefings last October, some were concerned about expectations that might apply to clergy in particular.

*Faithfulness in Service* (§1) clearly states that, “The personal behaviour and practices of pastoral ministry required of clergy ... of the Anglican Church of Australia are specified in the Holy Scriptures as well as in its Constitution, canons, ordinances, the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordinal.”

Here again we see the importance of that word ‘only’. This Code of Conduct is not the only standard of behaviour to which clergy are accountable. It does however provide a consistent set of expectations for all who perform a role with the church’s actual or apparent authority – lay and ordained, voluntary or stipendiary.

To be committed in Christ is to commit to the ministry of all the baptised, and to remove obstacles to growth in belonging and believing, mindful as Rohr says of the influence we have, for good or ill, on every other life which has meaning in him.

The transparency of such a resolution is entirely in keeping with our commitment to safe ministry, which is also stated clearly in the renewed vision.

Like many here, I am often asked why we have to fill out forms and attend training

sessions and submit to screening checks – especially by those of more senior years who have been faithfully volunteering all their lives ...

Part of an answer from Synod’s perspective has to do with me sitting for two hours with a survivor of abuse that took place in this Diocese. I listened to her, at her request I prayed with her, and I apologised to her for our betrayal of trust – ours in the sense that we are structurally complicit in the systemic breach of a duty of care.

That was the third time in fewer than three years I have had the opportunity to meet in person with a survivor as the face of the organisation that has so failed them. I doubt it will be the last. And for each of these people I have met, there are

“To be committed in Christ is to commit to the ministry of all the baptised, and to remove obstacles to growth in belonging and believing ...”

others who, understandably, do not seek such a personal response.

So, while these cases of abuse might be historical, their legacy is far from being behind us, and the journey of culture change from compliance mode towards seeking best practice is ever before us. As Rohr says, “obedience is usually about cleaning up; love is about waking up.” We’ve needed to do some cleaning up and we have; now we need to open up to how the love of Christ would reshape us.

Unless our credibility in this regard is restored, our efforts at connecting in service are built on sand, and we have little authenticity when speaking into the big questions of our day – including speaking up for those without a voice.

This year we were audited by General Synod on the Safe Ministry to Children Canon. We welcomed that process, keen to benchmark, to improve protocols, and to shift our mindset, so that – as far as in us lies – this never happens in our Diocese again.

On a much more temporal frame of audit, when we

come to consider our finances we will note that the vast proportion of last year’s deficit can be attributed to redress payments as a result of civil claims, as is the case in the current year.

In my time alone, roughly a million dollars that might have been directed towards missional activities and ministry has been disbursed in making reparation and meeting legal costs and Professional Standards expenses – as is appropriate if we are serious about reconciling where there is injustice or injury.

If, therefore, you are asked why we need to do all this safe ministry stuff, please join me in giving an account of the hope that is within us: not least so we can say to everyone out there – hand on heart – “here is the standard and consistency you can expect from Gippsland Anglicans.”

Our November Synod was the weekend following the release of the Appellate Tribunal’s Opinion on the matters referred to it last year, finding (by a five to one majority) the use of The Canon for Services to provide a liturgy for the blessing of civil marriages, including same-sex civil marriages, to be consistent with our Constitution.

On the Saturday morning of that Session I made a short statement, and it seems timely to offer some further comments, for this goes go to our capacity for building up communities of care and trust.

The bishops have met several times since the Appellate Tribunal released its report to continue what has been a charitable if challenging conversation.

For better or worse, General Synod has not been able to meet as planned last year or this; indeed it has not met since the *Marriage Act* was amended in 2017. There is consensus that General Synod is an important and appropriate forum for engaging with these issues, and plans are underway for a meeting mid-next year.

Notwithstanding the

Tribunal’s opinion, restraint is being widely exercised. In the interests of unity, and of holding a space in which dialogue can be had with all of the sensitivity and respect it demands, I continue to call us to prayerful patience.

This means that, as things stand, if a priest in this Diocese seeks my permission to bless a same-sex civil marriage under The Canon for Services, I will not authorise such a liturgy.

On a personal level, that grieves me – both from a theological and a missional perspective, and I recognise the pain and frustration those who identify as LGBTIQ+ and others will no doubt be feeling, along with those of you here and in our churches who find the prospect of blessing same-sex unions problematic for equally principled reasons.

So, in asking us to bear the open-endedness of this moment for a little longer, let

me add that restraint applies in all directions, and that unity is not to be prized at any cost – that kind of “peace where there is no peace,” as Jeremiah puts it (6:14).

Our essential unity in him is given to us in baptism – a gift that must be treasured, hence the restraint. At the same time, such a gift must not be instrumentalised, whereby those who would act in good conscience, and in keeping with the Constitution as it has been interpreted to us, are not held solely responsible for any structural disunity which may follow. For the sort of unity to which Christ calls us – of the kind he has with the Father – is not a coercive unity, or one built upon fear or mistrust.

Richard Rohr suggests we “see oneness [when we] look out from oneness, instead of

(Continued on page 9)



## Our commitment to a Safe Church

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

We are committed to ensuring all people in contact with the Church can participate in a safe and responsible environment.

If you have been harmed by a church worker, or you know someone who has, please contact Cheryl Russell, Director of Professional Standards, for a confidential discussion.

Contact: 03 5633 1573, 0407 563 313, cheryl.russell1@bigpond.com

To find out more about Safe Church, and about Safe Ministry resources, visit [www.gippsanglican.org.au/safe-church](http://www.gippsanglican.org.au/safe-church).

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(Continued from page 8)

labelling everything as ... in or out," reminding us that "Jesus came to show us how to be human much more than how to be spiritual."

For a significant minority of people, to be human is to be same-sex attracted, or to be gender non-binary, or to be one or more of a host of identity markers that as a Church we seem to be ranking above our primary identity 'in Christ', in whom "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female" (Gal 3:28).

For me, these are not salvation issues, though I recognise that for others they are, and I respect that view. As I see it, if we attend to the Book of Nature, and if we read it alongside and coherently with the Book of Scripture, understanding God to be in some sense the author of both sources of revelation, then we are not dealing here with unrepentant sin that cannot be blessed, as has been argued.

We are dealing – and let us never lose sight of this – we are dealing with people's reality, which involves listening to people's lived experience.

For how can we connect if we do not first listen and look – preferably outwards, from a sense of oneness? Only then can we presume to speak, and reconcile, and act. And that means we need to have those voices in rooms like this. The 40th Synod of this Diocese will have to address these matters in ways the 39th Synod has not. I am committed to you, in Christ, to doing so in such

a way as includes all voices, and preserves the unity of this household.

In the six months since Synod members last met we have had two ordinations, three inductions and two commissionings; six people have entered discernment; several new Lay Reader licenses have been issued, and four people – lay and ordained – have been accredited as Mentors for the Education for Ministry theological education and reflection program.

These are among the many signs of Gippsland Anglicans being open to Christ's leading.

In the absence of a suitable candidate for the Diocesan Development Officer role, Campbell Bairstow continues to consult for us, generously and effectively, exploring opportunities to collaborate on small and large projects.

One example that has arisen since Cathy Turnbull prepared her report as Missional Deacon to the Eastern Region is a piece of research currently underway with Beyond Blue, redesigning mental health resources for remote and regional areas following critical incidents.

This large organisation sought us out to partner with them on the strength of our bushfire response and our capacity to keep connecting during COVID. The collaboration attracts a financial contribution towards Cathy's ministry, and feeds into our ongoing reflection on what disruption has to teach us.

Disruption from the pandemic continues to be experienced beyond our shores. We are mindful of the

terrible situation in India, and also of our nearest neighbours in Papua New Guinea where, as our diocesan missionary to Newton Theological College, Bishop Jeffrey Driver is helping that Church to build capacity.

By trying some new ideas, and thanks to the generous support of many, positive change is occurring in the lives of students there and the College's accreditation process is moving forward.

Such readiness to try new things is no guarantee of success. Nor should we define success simply in terms of what works, or goes on indefinitely. We know that the pace of change is increasing: what works today may not be effective in five years; just as what worked ten years ago may not bear fruit today.

Two of our more creative ministries in *Anam Cara* (see story page 11) and Café 123 have come to a change of season. In each case their ending is a good news story.

For 123, the necessary closure of the cafe opened up a public discussion around how such a social enterprise might live on in new ways. This has drawn people together across churches, local government and service organisations to cooperate and think expansively about future possibilities.

That sort of engagement with local communities is being replicated across the Diocese, as is clear from recent grant applications reviewed by the Anglicare Parish Partnerships Steering Committee – projects which show how parishes and ministry centres are creative in spirit, with careful and prayerful attention to context.

The Council of Anglicare Victoria recently heard directly from some of the young people whose lives had been transformed by the truly relational and bespoke programs that have helped them exit foster care with a sense of independence.

In our vision renewal process the importance of children and young people to our life and work came through again and again, often with a tinge of regret at their relative absence from our churches.

Forging new pathways for meaningful and culturally sensitive relationships with local schools isn't easy in the current environment, but we see it happening through some good old ministry practices of bridge-building, visible presence and meeting people where they are. Not everything needs re-inventing!

Alongside Christian schools like Kairos, our two Anglican schools in Gippsland are effective centres for the empowerment of children and young people. The opportunity to gently form hundreds of children (and their families) in Christian character and an Anglican ethos is precious, and we are blessed to have principals and senior staff who are themselves devout Anglicans, well supported by chaplains, lay and ordained.

There is a huge body of work to be done in this demographic space. Yet we take great heart from these school reports to Synod, along with Alisha Moyle's on her role with younger people across the Diocese, just as I am heartened by the frequent privilege of confirming children and young adults.

In the six months since we last met we have also been saddened by the loss of a number from our diocesan family whose lives of grace and service have embodied such a vision. We think especially of Rod Burney, Fay Woodward, Betty Milner, Jock Gibson, Christine Makin, Gwen Matheson, and others we name in our heart or with our lips. May they rest in peace, and rise in glory.

Last year was a very tough time for all of us. Coming out of that it would be easy to expect too much of ourselves too soon. I'm conscious of people here, and some not with us, who are carrying heavy burdens, and may be travelling a bit rough. Fatigue is prevalent, and real. This time together is an opportunity to care for each other, and to encourage one another. Whatever else we do today and tomorrow, let us do that for the ever-wounded and risen body of Christ ...

The Archbishop of Canterbury calls us in these days between Ascension and Pentecost to pray with Anglicans the world over, 'Thy Kingdom Come'. May the quality of our life together be the truth of our prayer; and may the depth of our prayer make us truly a kingdom people: Committed in Christ to a radically inclusive church, Connecting in Service of the world God loves, and Creative in Spirit as we live now into the promise of God's loving, just and gentle rule.

\* All citations from Rohr's *The Universal Christ* are those of Patrick Boland in *Every Thing is Sacred: 40 Practices and Reflections on The Universal Christ* (SPCK, London, 2021).



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# Gippsland diocesan organisations: 2020 perspectives

The full text of the diocesan organisation reports presented at Synod is available at [www.gippsanglican.org.au](http://www.gippsanglican.org.au).

## Anglicare Victoria

Anglicare Victoria were successful in their application for the Working for Victoria initiative last year, which ran for six months. This initiative helped Victorians, including people who lost their jobs as a result of COVID-19 to find paid work to support our community. The Working for Victoria Fund was designed to connect workers with new opportunities that contributed to Victoria's ability to respond to the pandemic. ...

The parish of Nar Nar Goon has also started a youth group with the support of a partnership grant, and Leongatha parish has been able to equip two young women in pastoral skills with a grant that provides the payment of fees for a course for pastoral workers through St Marks. Mallacoota Parish were supported with a grant to build an outdoor reflection area and The Abbey have used a partnership grant to offer weekend retreats for Anglicare client families who need a break.

*Tim Pedlow, Anglicare Victoria Regional Director*

## Mothers' Union

As part of the Worldwide Mothers Union, Mary Sumner House Regional Development Coordinator Jeanette Lawrence facilitated a Zoom Meeting for Zone C, comprising Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, Australia, Melanesia, Papua New Guinea Diocesan Representatives, where experiences of the past year were shared, coping strategies discussed and new ways of reaching out to members and beyond were promoted. It is hoped that further Zoom meetings will continue as a way for Dioceses to be connected, encouraged and supported.

*Maryann Ashton, President*

## Bushfire Response and Recovery in East Gippsland

Someone recently asked me 'What is the significance of spiritual care when working with people impacted by disaster?' My reply was that when you bring spiritual care into the mix, you are focusing on the whole person, not just their physical and mental wellbeing. You are finding out where that person gets their strength from, what brings them healing and hope for the future. You are seeing the person before you as a broken but beloved human being, precious in the sight of God. You are bringing into the situation a sense and place of belonging: a belonging as a beloved child of God – even when they cannot see that belonging themselves. Spiritual care brings a sense that there is more than simply what someone is currently experiencing. It is care that is felt as the Holy Spirit brings healing and peace. It is humbling when I see the results of such care in the responses I get from people and communities I spend time with, the warmth of the welcome and the trust that is built. The Spirit's presence is in every place and every situation.

*Rev'd Cathy Turnbull, Missionary Deacon for the Eastern Region (Bushfire Response)*

## Gippsland Anglican Retirement Villages

Improving the amenity of Clifton Waters Village for the benefit of the residents continues to be a focus.

Two drone flights were conducted over the village to capture photos of the village looking its best last spring. The Residents' Committee are enthusiastic about producing postcards and calendars from these images to sell as a fundraiser. ...

Residents are finally able to get out and engage in a variety of social activities, including

bus trips to restaurants around the area. A wide range of activities are happening within the village under COVID-safe guidelines.

*Sue Paterson, Community Manager*

## Gippsland Grammar

Throughout Learn@Home, Gippsland Grammar remained steadfast in its twin goals of ensuring a streamlined educational offering for its students and to ensure the safety of the school community. With this in mind, it's clear Learn@Home has been an unprecedented success: feedback from families has been overwhelmingly positive and Mrs Harper has been contacted by many contemporaries interested to learn from the finer details of the program. Perhaps the best measure is that during this time Gippsland Grammar increased enrolments, which meant it was the first time Gippsland Grammar had students enrol, yet not physically be seen in person until months after their 'first day'! ...

While it is hoped the days of remote learning are behind us all, we are cognisant that we need to keep evolving as the challenges of COVID are ever-present in our world.

*Leisa Harper, Principal*

## Safe Ministry Authority

When we set out on this safe ministry journey we knew that we needed to change our church culture and practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people in our parishes. We have made great headway where people understand why our culture needs to change and what is at stake. To date well over 1000 people – clergy and laity – are listed on our online safety management system (SMOnline) – and hundreds of people are fully compliant. There are legal and insurance reasons for us achieving full compliance –

let alone our duty as Christians. Hence, our work continues and with everyone's assistance we can achieve a fully compliant Diocese.

*Val Jones, on behalf of members of the Diocesan Safe Ministry Authority*

## St Paul's Anglican Grammar School

Our chapels for much of the year became pre-recorded videos which students viewed at home. This required some rapid upskilling of our chaplains' media skills but came with the unexpected benefit of allowing whole families to view our chapel services. As successful as these videos were, it was a great relief to return to face-to-face chapels towards the end of the year. We were most grateful to have retained the services of Lynton Allan, initially as a long-service leave replacement in semester 1, then in a part-time pastoral capacity for semester 2. Lynton's ability to use art and storytelling to encourage and challenge people was readily adapted to the online format when required.

*Cameron Herbert, Principal*

## St Paul's Cathedral Sale

St Paul's Cathedral continues to thrive, with vibrant worship of varied styles including traditional communion services on Sunday, and contemplative and healing services, and small groups meeting for prayer, study, worship, or planning. ...

Our primary outreach to the community currently is through food and hospitality, and participation in council food security, and living well during COVID committees; volunteering at Wellington Food Bank; work with Gippsland Grammar; and through providing worship and a space for prayer. ...

The Cathedral Chapter, at its planning day, chose these words as our overarching goals for this year: *care, connect, nourish*. These guide our work this year.

*Dean Susanna Pain*

## The Abbey Raymond Island

Following the 2019 2020 Bushfires The Abbey was pleased to receive a grant from Anglican Mothers Union Australia (AMUA) to provide holidays for fire-impacted families. The first Families Week at The Abbey was held in late January 2021, with David and Deb Chambers catering and Judith Lake as Chaplain. It was the first 'Abbey Program Activity' that we had been able to schedule for over 12 months. This AMUA grant provides for another two Families Weeks, the second one being in progress as I write this report, and the third scheduled for 18–20 June 2021 ...

Building on the insights we have gained from working with the MU Family Respite over the years, The Abbey has been offered a small grant under the Parish Partnerships Program to explore how we might extend and reframe the MU Respite concept to meet the needs of families engaged with Anglicare.

*Rev'd Edie Ashley, Abbey Priest*

## Youth and Young Adults

Emerging from the 2018 Young Adults Retreat at The Abbey, Raymond Island was an important new ministry for the 'next generation' of Anglicans in our Diocese. At the heart of the gathering was the awareness of the need to continue the vision and journey outwards until meeting again for another retreat at The Abbey.

Hence, the motion moved at our annual Synod in 2019 to enact and enable such a

*(Continued on page 11)*



(Continued from page 10)

ministry under diocesan accountability by way of Bishop-in-Council. ...

With Bishop Richard's approval and kind support, we held a Zoom session on Sunday 23 August 2020 on the theme of 'Deep Sea Discovery' (stepping out in faith with Jesus into the unknown) based on scripture from Matthew 14:22-33.

Amongst this discussion, Bishop asked the youth what they would like to see

from him. Emerging from this were voices from youth in needing to: 1. Grow in faith, 2. Have fun together. The two points were fitting for the vision of being God's family together and the next step to plan a 'party'. This provided a new platform for an ongoing outreach ministry and youth network, which will continue to be developed throughout 2021.

*Alisha Moyle, Youth and Young Adults Representative*



*New Chancellor of the Gippsland Diocese, Roger Blythman*

## Roger Blythman new Chancellor of Gippsland Diocese

### Jan Down

The Synod Eucharist on Friday 14 May, the Feast of the Ascension, included two significant events: the commissioning by Bishop Richard of Roger Blythman RFD LLB as Chancellor of the Diocese of Gippsland and the Bishop's presentation of the Renewed Diocesan Vision 2021–2024 (see page 12).

Roger Blythman, Principal at William Murray Solicitors in Melbourne, was appointed as Deputy Chancellor of the Diocese early in 2019. He has since been assisting the former Chancellor, Rowena Armstrong AO, QC, who retired from the role in February of this year, after more than 30 years.

The new Chancellor later commented, "It is an honour and a privilege to serve the people of the Diocese of Gippsland and Bishop Richard, as well as a challenge which I am eager to take up to the best of my

ability." The Chancellor's role is to advise the Bishop on legal and constitutional matters. The appointment is for five years.

As reported in TGA (February 2019), Roger was admitted to practise as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1972. Since then he has practised as a solicitor in Melbourne, dealing with a broad range of legal matters. In more recent times he has given greater emphasis to the creation and administration of trusts. He has also assisted with professional standards matters concerning church workers.

At the commissioning, Bishop Richard also welcomed Roger's wife, Alison, noting that she is already a Gippslander, having been born in Bairnsdale and grown up at Bruthen, before moving to Melbourne for work. Roger and Alison were warmly welcomed by the congregation at the cathedral.

## Completion of ministry for Anam Cara Community Gippsland

Following several months of prayer and discernment, in January 2021 the Servant Leaders made the decision that it was time for the ministry of the Anam Cara Community to come to a close.

As I write this report I would like to express my thanks to Bishop Richard and Dean Susanna, who have assisted the Servant Leaders through this process. When you read this we will have liturgically marked the ending of the Anam Cara Community with a Final Quiet Day and Thanksgiving Service on 1 May. I am thankful for the pastoral care and prayerful preparation offered by Bishop Richard and Dean Susanna as they have assisted us to formally lay up this ministry.

The Community originally grew out of the ministry of the Rev'd Anne Turner and was formally inaugurated as a ministry of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Gippsland at a service led by Bishop John McIntyre and the Rev'd Brian Turner in December 2007.

The Community grew and changed over the years primarily providing encouragement and resources in the areas of prayer and contemplation. As I look back, there have been highlights, with retreats and a pilgrimage at The Abbey and a year dedicated to monthly teaching on spiritual practices such as meditation, centring prayer and *lectio divina* in our School for Prayer during 2013.

One of the constants through the 13 years of ministry has been the facilitation of Quiet Days throughout the Diocese. These days have provided space for people to intentionally come aside from the busyness of their everyday lives and just 'be' with God. These were opportunities to listen to the divine within and around us, in nature, in one another, in the words shared and the silences.

In recent years the Community has been thankful for the encouragement of Dean Susanna, who has shared

with us in leading Quiet Days and offering many opportunities to continue the contemplative journey through her ministry at St Paul's Cathedral. It is a comfort to the Servant Leaders as we conclude our ministry to know that there are many

ongoing opportunities for exploring the contemplative journey in the Diocese. These include the ministries of Dean Susanna, the Rev'd Edie Ashley at The Abbey and the Rev'd Ken Parker at Bunyip.

The Servant Leaders and other friends of the Community have shared memories in recent months. We have been thankful for the wisdom and teaching offered by many. In particular founding Soul Carer, the Rev'd Anne Turner; the Rev'd Brian Turner, who remained Chair of the Servant Leaders until his death in 2016; Dr Colin Thornby, Soul Carer from June 2012 until his death in 2013; and Bishop John McIntyre, who encouraged the Community from those early conversations prior to its inauguration until his death in 2014.

During his ministry with the Community Colin Thornby set up the website and began the e-newsletter, *Waterholes*. This has remained a source of nourishment to many and a valuable tool of communication.

The Community has been led by a faithful group of Servant Leaders who have offered ministry through leading Quiet Days, meditation groups and contemplative prayer services as well as the ministries of prayer and hospitality. My thanks to those who have served from the formation of the Community until now, Kate Campbell, Heather Toms and Carolyn Raymond, and those who joined us on the way, Sue Hopkins, Val Lawrence and David Head.



*Kate Campbell, who presented Jane Griffith's report to Synod, with a symbolic open-ended gift*

Also to those who have served on the leadership at some time in the past 13 years including Jo Inglis, John White, Marion White, Joy Campbell, Marilyn Obersby, Allan Huggins, Nick Nagy, Chris Venning, Colin Thornby and Brian Turner. Whilst the Community comes to a close I know that each person, each Servant Leader and each friend of the Community will continue to offer the ministry of presence in all that they do. Others will offer ongoing ministry in their parishes. It was a delight for all Servant Leaders to attend the ordination service of Kate Campbell to the Diaconate in February. Kate continues to lead the monthly contemplative prayer service at St Paul's Cathedral. ...

Finally, I am thankful for the opportunity to have been part of the journey of the Anam Cara Community from its inception until its closure. The spiritual journey is an ever-changing and ever-deepening one. I am thankful for the friends and spiritual mentors whom I have been privileged to minister alongside and learn from in the past 13 years. My eyes and my heart were opened to new things, to new ways of encountering God, some of which were ancient spiritual practices that were new to me. It has been a joy and a privilege to begin the journey of contemplation, and to begin and begin again.

*Jane Griffiths, for  
and on behalf of  
the Servant Leaders.*



# Bishop Richard introduces Renewed Diocesan Vision at Synod Eucharist

These are excerpts from his homily, which can be viewed with slides of the vision material at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QH6n76A6Yc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QH6n76A6Yc).

I guess if one had to pick a feast day on which to launch something, there are worse ones than the Ascension. Up, up, and away! Luke’s account of the Ascension sets the scene for the entire sequel to his gospel in Acts: a missional success story pretty much from start to finish. Yet there is a note of reproach from the two angelic flight attendants, who challenge the disciples: “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven?”

It’s a real tension for Christians: to have our hearts fixed on things above, as one of the Collects for the Easter season puts it, while attending to the world God loves, and our share in God’s mission to it.

The renewed Vision for 2021–2024 seeks to hold these two things together.

You will recall the process we have been on since the second half of last year. I liken it to throwing a pebble in a

pond, generating a series of ripples, and trying to harness each one in turn. It has been a deliberately measured journey, and I am grateful to everyone who has participated – quite literally hundreds of people, in multiple forums.

The renewed Vision starts with the words ‘Gippsland Anglicans’, because it serves as both a mirror and a lamp: reflecting back to us our sense of identity and purpose, and shining a light for us and others on what we aspire to be.

What emerged from all that consultation has been distilled into three things we would want to say about Gippsland Anglicans, namely that we are Committed in Christ; Connecting in Service; Creative in Spirit.

There is a sense of movement here from ‘being’, to ‘doing’, to ‘becoming’.

Our whole being is grounded ‘in Christ’, as St Paul would say –

baptised into his death and resurrection, grafted onto him as the vine.

Emerging from that foundational sense of identity is an understanding of what it is we’re called to do – doing that starts with listening, and most importantly includes the ministry of reconciliation – not least with respect to our own breaches of trust as a Church. The love of Christ urges us to look outwards (not upwards) connecting in service of his church and God’s world. This is something we are already doing, and clearly want to be doing better, with greater attention to our context and in partnership with others in the wider church and community.

And even before the experience of fire and pandemic last year, we had been challenged in our first Session of this Synod in 2019 to be more creative in how we go about our mission, to ask hard questions, take risks

and be courageous.

We do that as Gippslanders, alongside people of all faiths and of no particular faith whose spirit of resilience, inventiveness, and generosity resonates with our living Anglican tradition, with its gift for adaptation: holding fast, and reaching out.

There’s also an aspirational – or perhaps inspirational – piece here that has to do with where we’d like to be in 2024, having learned from the good and the bad of recent experience, tried new things prepared for some to fail, engaged more deeply with the people and places where we’re set, thought expansively about the way we use our human and our capital resources, and raised up the voices of our younger people.

And stretching right across the bottom is our recognition that all of this takes place in a region our First Nations people have cared for over tens of

thousands of years.

“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into heaven?”

In Luke’s theological vision, the Ascension is not about the absence of Jesus. It is, as with the resurrection, about learning to look for Jesus in the right places: not amongst the dead, like the women at the tomb; not ‘up above the clouds so high’, like these men of Galilee; but where his mission lives on in his crucified and risen body, the church; and where the borderless, peaceable kingdom of God is being built in human hearts and in human history.

It is my hope, and my prayer, that this collective offering and team effort will help every Anglican and every ministry centre in the Diocese to focus our gaze on who we already are in Christ, on what God needs us to do for the of building that kingdom in Gippsland, and on where the Holy Spirit may be leading us.

## Our Vision 2021–2024 Gippsland Anglicans:

### 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.