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The Gippsland Anglican

www.gippsanglican.org.au

Volume 119, Number 3, April 2022

Published in Gippsland Diocese since 1904



Image: Victoria Hamilton

For singing till his heaven fills,
'Tis love of earth that he instils,
And ever winging up and up,
Our valley is his golden cup,
And he the wine which overflows
To lift us with him as he goes

From George Meredith's poem
The Lark Ascending

GIPPSLAND DIOCESE
VACANCIES

Drouin
Nar Nar Goon
Trafalgar
Traralgon

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself”



This verse (2 Cor 5:19) was in one of the passages for the Bible studies at the national Bishop’s Conference in Adelaide towards the end of March. In between worship, fellowship and various business sessions we also undertook some professional development around Reconciliation with First Nations people, and on conflict resolution.

The website of a new resource for leaders in the Church of England called ‘Reconciling Initiatives’ makes the point that:

Christians often feel embarrassed by conflict and seek to avoid it. Our great diversity and the tensions over our differences can seem debilitating. Yet God is always in the midst of conflict, prompting bridge-building and transformation because the life

of God is shaped towards reconciling. The question is how we might discern and contribute to God’s reconciling work, both inside the Church and in the wider world.

This Holy Week and Eastertide we are acutely aware of different kinds of conflict in the world and in our churches, including war in Ukraine and associated friction within and around the Orthodox family of Churches, and principled differences over questions of human sexuality as the Anglican Church of Australia prepares for General Synod next month.

Holy Week is the time in the calendar when we are powerfully reminded that ‘God is always in the midst of conflict’. The Risen Christ bears the wounds of clashes with the religious leaders and political authorities of his day – even with some of his own disciples.

It is precisely in and through such conflict that the costly and redeeming work of reconciliation occurs. For just as God’s life is shaped towards reconciling, so must ours be as those called in baptism to be cross-shaped ambassadors of Christ.

Our conversations at the Bishops’ Conference on matters relating to human sexuality – although difficult at times – were deeply respectful, searchingly honest and necessarily patient.

As Christians, and as Anglicans, we ought not be embarrassed about having difficult conversations, or seek to avoid them, even though they may make us uncomfortable. Nor, of course, should we inflame or prolong conflict for its own sake. Rather, we must remember the foundational stories of our faith, which teach us that God is in the midst of it with us, so as to bring about transformation.

Much of the tension around the Church’s response to the way our society has come to view marriage equality and related issues has centred on the Bible: on the interpretation of some particular verses and of broader biblical themes and trajectories. This is as it should be, given that our constitution enshrines Scripture as the ultimate (although not the only) source of authority for Australian Anglicans.

In that interpretive work, Anglicans have always privileged God-given reason and the Church’s tradition (including our liturgies and

our accumulated experience) as conversation partners with the biblical text, shaping in us what Anglican Divine Richard Hooker described as a “Scripture-informed reason.”

Over recent months I’ve been reading a few pages from an age-appropriate version of the Bible to my nine-year-old son at bedtime each evening. One night recently when we were late getting the kids to bed and I had some work to do, I made the mistake of saying to Nicholas that we didn’t have time for a Bible story. After Mum had come to the rescue, Nick popped his head in and said, “Oh, and Dad, a piece of advice: there’s always time for the Bible!” Despite the lateness of the hour, I could not disagree with such wisdom.

As we make more time to read and reflect on God’s word written, let us read it in the light of God’s ever-wounded Word made flesh. Might we read in such a way as to reconcile the ‘book of Scripture’ and the ‘book of Nature’, understanding God in some sense to be the author of both texts. And may we live out of, and into, the truth to which God calls us in and through conflict, waiting on Holy Spirit, reconciled in the Crucified and Risen One, who is making us and all things new.

+RWT

Prayer for Ukraine

*God of peace and justice
We pray for the people
of Ukraine today.*

*We pray for peace and the
laying down of weapons.*

*We pray for all those
who fear tomorrow,
that your spirit of comfort
would draw near to them.*

*We pray for those with
power over war and peace,
for wisdom, discernment
and compassion to
guide their decisions.*

*Above all, we pray for all your
precious children, at risk and
in fear, that you would hold
and protect them.*

*We pray in the name of Jesus,
the Prince of Peace. Amen.*

*Archbishop of Canterbury,
Justin Welby and
Archbishop of York,
Stephen Cottrell*

NSW SES helps break the bias

For International Women's Day, NSW State Emergency Service (SES) celebrated some of the amazing women who keep the community safe from floods, storms and tsunamis. As far as role models go, they don't come much more inspirational than Lindy Trapman.

Deputy Goodooga Unit Commander, grandmother and pillar of the community, Lindy has been volunteering with the NSW SES for almost a decade. In a united effort with the local community and now Unit Commander, Beverley, Lindy was able to establish the unit after a series of floods hit their town.

"We had three floods straight after another," says Lindy. "Every year, for three years. No one even thought about joining the SES back then."

The theme for International Women's Day this year was #BreakTheBias, which is



Lindy Trapman (right) is SES Deputy Unit Commander at Goodooga in northern NSW

something that resonates deeply with Lindy as an Indigenous woman.

"My grandmother was part of the stolen generation," Lindy explains.

"She's one of the oldest surviving generation babies, she recently turned 93. She always taught me to treat people how you want to

be treated. Show respect and you'll get it back. Don't judge anybody by the way they look."

Taking care of her four-year-old grandson and 14-year-old granddaughter keeps Lindy busy when she's not volunteering.

"My grandson is energetic," says Lindy. "My granddaughter came to stay for a weekend a while back and never left."

The Goodooga unit has certainly grown from its beginnings as a temporary unit back in 2016. They now have 14 volunteers on the books and were upgraded to a brand-new unit building last year.

"We volunteer when there are community events.

When we were in isolation last year due to COVID-19, we helped out by delivering food as well as conducting health and safety checks," says Lindy.

Not one to shy away from standing up for her community, Lindy organised Goodooga's first lolly drop last year, arranging for the local emergency services to drive through the town giving ice blocks, poppers and drinks to the local kids.

"We're a small town,

we've only got about 300 people. In the past we've been overlooked but I kicked up a bit of a fuss," says Lindy.

"We put tinsel on the trucks and drove through town with Santa on the back of the fire truck. The kids were asking if he was coming back next year!"

Lindy has a simple message for any women thinking of volunteering with the NSW SES: "Do it. I keep trying to tell the young fellas in this town, put your hand up. You'll meet new people, get new skills. You'll be joining the orange army. Go for it."

Courtesy NSW State Emergency Service

Anglicare North Coast 2022

Northern NSW Flood Appeal Parish of Sale

Anglicare North Coast has opened a flood appeal for tax-deductible donations. Emergency relief processes will be used to provide direct and efficient support to affected households.

Please reference your deposit 'Lismore 2022' by navigating to www.anglicarenorthcoast.org.au and click on 'donate here'.

Alternatively, deposit from your bank account. Anglicare North Coast (BSB: 705077 A/C: 00041320).

Around the Diocese

New Dean for Cathedral Parish of Sale

The Diocese is delighted to share the glad tidings that The Rev'd Keren Terpstra has accepted an invitation to be the Dean of our Cathedral Parish in Sale.

Keren comes to Gippsland from the Dioceses of Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. She is currently the incumbent at St Margaret's in Eltham, where she has served since 2016 and will be much missed.

Keren's appointment was unanimously supported by members of the Cathedral Presentation Board, including the three Lay Canons. Over the course of a number of telephone and Zoom conversations, and several visits to Sale, it became clear to both parish and diocesan representatives – and to Keren herself – that there is a strong sense of call to this new ministry, for which she has been warmly commended to us and is well equipped.

Keren holds a Masters degree with first class honours in Music from Sydney University, and is an accomplished organist (AMusA) and harpist.

Enabling and composing good contemporary and traditional church music is an integral part of Keren's love of liturgy, and is a means of nurturing both her own and others' gifts – something that is central to her vocation more generally.

Having contributed at St Mary's Waverley in a variety of lay ministries during her music studies in Sydney, Keren returned to her home city of Brisbane to test a calling to ordained ministry at St Francis Theological College and through Charles Sturt University, gaining a Bachelor of Theology, also with honours. After a two-year curacy at Trinity Anglican Mission, Robina, Keren had the cure of souls for seven years in the Parish of Booval, in the western reaches of the Diocese of Brisbane, where she was Area Dean for a season.

A person of great spiritual discipline, Keren values professional supervision and spiritual direction in taking responsibility for her self-care – a ministry in which

her faithful cat Gabrielle also participates!

Keren looks forward to the diocesan and wider church connections that come with being the Incumbent at Sale. A member of Provincial Council, she is the inaugural President of an inclusive

forum in the Province called Victorian Anglicans Together, and is actively involved in the HeartEdge movement.

We eagerly anticipate welcoming Keren towards the middle of the year, and she is very excited to be coming to Sale and to Gippsland, and at the prospect of working closely with lay and clerical colleagues at St Paul's and

across the Diocese.

In the meantime, we continue to uphold in prayer the Acting Dean, Liam Matthews, and the clergy and people of the Cathedral Parish, grateful for their unstinting ministry locally and beyond.

Excerpted from Bishop Richard's Ad Clerum.

Easter Gift 2022

Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Ministry

Your gift to the Church to Church Program will help build up Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministries around Australia.

Donations to this appeal are not tax-deductible.



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www.abmission.org/Easter2022
or scan the QR code



Prayers for Ukraine on World Day of Prayer

Marion Dewar

Leongatha churches prayed for Ukraine and flood victims during the annual World Day of Prayer (WDP) services on 4 March. Held at St Peter's Leongatha this year, the service was prepared by a committee in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Prayer candles of hope were lit for the seven regions of the world, and seeds of hope (rice and buckwheat) were given to all present.

Led by Leongatha's Marion Dewar (WDP Committee Secretary) and Robyn Allen

(morning service) and Heather Scott (evening service), the services included readings and prayers, hymns and a video. The 2021 services in Victoria raised \$65,000 for a Trauma Healing Program in Vanuatu and this year's project is Bible Bubs for Northern Ireland, a picture book Bible program for parents and carers and their toddlers.

Following each service, the congregation enjoyed a display of souvenirs from the British Isles and themed refreshments served by St Peter's Ladies' Guild, featuring Welsh and Irish loaves, and strawberries and cream.



(L-R) Jenny, Anita, John, Anne-Marie, Robyn, Leo, Maria and Anne after a World Day of Prayer service

Rotary stands for peace in Warragul's Harmony Park

"It is ironic that during the month of February, when Rotary's theme is Peace and Conflict Resolution, Russia invaded Ukraine," said Diane Carson, President of the Warragul Rotary Club.

Rotarians along with community members held a vigil at Harmony Park in Warragul on the night of 11 March in support of peace. Harmony Park is a place that is significant for the local community: it was here, back in 1992, that six boys from Kyiv, along with Warragul Scouts and Rotarians, planted trees to commemorate their friendship.

The boys and their guardian were hosted in Warragul by scouts and Rotarians through a Scouts Friendship Program. They had been living near Chernobyl when, on 26 April 1986, no. 4 reactor of the nuclear power station exploded, releasing radioactive material into the atmosphere. With their surviving family members, they were evacuated to Kyiv.

One of the boys, Mickal, stayed with the Mitchell family. Teresa Mitchell, now President-elect of Warragul Rotary, said, "It was a privilege to host Mickal, as my son Bryce was a scout with 1st/2nd Warragul Scouts. Mickal lost his father in the Chernobyl explosion, and



A photo of the 1986 Ukrainian visitors next to the commemoration plaque in Harmony Park

his mother and his younger sister were both unwell. Even though Mickal could not speak English, we were still able to understand each other through pictographs and charades, and we had a fun time together. I pray that Mickal and his family are safe. Mickal turns 40 this year."

We all fear for the safety of those (now) men.

At the vigil, Tim Wills, Assistant District Governor of Rotary, read Rotary International's statement on Ukraine:

It is a tragic and sad time for the people of Ukraine and the world.

At Rotary, we are deeply concerned by the deteriorating situation in

Ukraine and the escalating loss of life and humanitarian hardship there.

In the past decade, Rotary clubs in Ukraine, Russia and nearby countries have transcended national differences and have actively engaged in peace-building projects to promote goodwill and to marshal assistance for the victims of war and violence. Today, our thoughts are with our fellow Rotary members and others in Ukraine coping with these tragic events. Rotary International will do everything in its power to bring aid, support and peace to the region.

Courtesy Rotary Warragul

Power of music at Paynesville

Susan Fordham

For many years, the Paynesville Music Festival has concluded its February weekend with a free concert in the garden at St Peter's by the Lake. Each year, the East Gippsland Symphonia (this year joined by the East Gippsland Brass Band) performs first at the morning Eucharist, then again after morning tea in the church garden overlooking the lake.

Just as the Symphonia/East Gippsland Brass Band set up in the garden and made ready to begin their concert, the sun came out and for the next hour the audience was treated to a program that began with a John

Phillip Sousa late 1800s composition based on nursery rhymes, and ended with more modern music written for theatre, television and film.

Under the capable baton of local musician Kees Dogger, the combined band enchanted the audience, who toe-tapped to Kylie Minogue's *Locomotion* and provided the refrain for Herb Alpert's *Tequila*.

A coincidence perhaps, but before the concert proper we had been treated to a wonderful sermon by Bishop Jeffrey Driver on the Transfiguration. The concert demonstrated that music can also be a transfiguring force, can also offer a glimpse of the wholeness that lies beyond suffering and indignity.



The East Gippsland Symphonia and East Gippsland Brass Band at St Peter's

MU AND ME

Connected in prayer

As Mothers' Union groups across the Diocese begin to meet again, some MU members are offering encouraging stories about why and how they joined. Here, previous MU Diocesan President Jenny MacRobb shares her story.

To begin, I must say why I *didn't* join Mothers' Union for many years. Years ago, MU always conjured up visions of elderly ladies in their best hats and coats, sitting in a formal meeting and staunchly excluding divorced women. This was not for me.

How things have changed! At my first Australian council meeting, there were the Australian President, her secretary and treasurer – all at the front in jeans and t-shirts! You no longer had to be a married woman or a mother or a woman. Now, many MU members are men.

The late Joyce Erbs persuaded The Rev'd Graeme MacRobb that an MU group was needed when he wanted a group to assist with baptism preparation.

The MU purpose, aims and objectives were right for the task, and membership was open to all who have been baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity and declare support for the aim and objectives of MU.

MU is specially concerned with all that strengthens and preserves marriage and Christian family life. We aim to advance the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life.

Our objectives are to:

- uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and to promote its wider understanding
- encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the church

- maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service
- promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
- help those whose family life has met with adversity.

Through my membership, I have met members from many parts of Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu and England. It has been a special time when visiting family in England to be able to spend time in Poole with my branch-linked members. There have been times of trouble when the prayers of members have been a blessing. When our younger



Jenny MacRobb (left) and MU Diocesan President Maryann Ashton

granddaughter was a few days old, she was diagnosed with a heart condition and rushed to the Sydney Children's Hospital. A few phone calls later and I knew members from many places were praying. An MU member came to my daughter's home and offered to care for the baby's older sister when we visited the hospital. On another occasion, a parishioner asked if I knew of somewhere she could stay in Melbourne when her husband was taken

to hospital. After a call to the Melbourne MU President, accommodation was found and the parishioner arrived to a room complete with welcome package.

It is through our strong emphasis on prayer that I feel connected to the millions of members in so many countries around the world, and privileged to be one of them.

Jenny MacRobb is the previous Mothers' Union Diocesan President



Cherishing the Chapel of St Barnabas

Robert Fordham

Last year The Abbey Chapter began a major refurbishment of The Abbey Chapel at Raymond Island. Thanks to the assistance of supporters across the Diocese, the internal works are nearing completion, including new carpet, internal painting and upgraded lighting. However there remains the much needed external painting.

In seeking support for the Chapel Appeal, Bishop Richard said:

For 30 years the Chapel of St Barnabas has been the spiritual heart of The Abbey – a symbol of the faith that undergirds The Abbey's ministries of hospitality

and environmental stewardship.

I join with members of Chapter in appealing for your support in helping us to ensure that the Chapel might be a place of prayer and reflection – a place of encounter with creation and the Creator – for at least the next 30 years.

As the Chapel is named for Barnabas – 'son of encouragement' – so may we encourage one another: 'connecting in service' to the world God loves through the outreach and The Abbey.

For further information, contact Appeal Director Robert Fordham: info@theabbey.org.au, 5156 6580.

Vale Ray Elliot

Ven Allan Huggins

Gippsland Diocese farewelled one of its oldest and best Diocesan priests in February. Ray Elliot had been in care for some years, and died in Drouin at the age of 94.

Born in Darwin in 1927, Ray was forced to escape with his mother from the Japanese war planes, travelling by plane down the west coast of Australia to Adelaide, then by train to Melbourne. The plane, which lost a wheel, was stranded for three days in Oodnadatta, and the passengers had to sleep under the fuselage.



From Melbourne, Ray and his mother travelled by train up the east coast to Brisbane, where Ray's grandparents were living.

Ray's Brisbane vicar saw in him the possibility of a call to ordained ministry, so Melbourne's Ridley College became Ray's new home. While gaining worship-leading experience one Sunday, Ray met Joyce, and admits he immediately "fell in love" with her.

Yallourn parish was Ray's first experience as a curate, but permission had to be given by the bishop before Ray and Joyce could be married. So, the marriage took place when Ray was appointed to his first parish: Neerim South.

Bishop Blackwood evidently saw great promise in Ray, and the Diocese paid for Ray, Joyce and their first child, Brian, to spend a year in St Augustine's College in Canterbury. This was a great success and the college awarded Ray the prize for being the best student.

On return to Australia Ray was appointed to the parishes of Yarram, Warragul and Foster, then became the Dean of the Cathedral in Sale, followed by another appointment as Dean of the Cathedral in Bendigo. Joyce proved to be of great assistance to Ray in his parish ministry and when he was Archdeacon of Gippsland after their return to Sale in 1985. Ray's stipendiary ministry concluded with his ministry at Mirboo North in 1994, and then in an honorary capacity in Drouin parish.

Ray and Joyce were both enthusiastically involved with leadership in the Cursillo movement and Ray was National Spiritual Director from 1996 to 1999. Ray was responsible for parish missions in Gippsland, Bendigo, Rockhampton and Newcastle, Melbourne and the Riverina.

Joyce Elliot died in 2015, following a car accident. Unexpectedly, their second daughter, Kathy, had died in 2013. Brian, Robyn and David helped care for Ray in his later years.

As he moved towards his death, Ray said, "This could be a celebration of my life, but I do not want to be praised. Praise God instead!"

Churches respond to Ukraine

Rev'd Bruce Charles

Witnessing the heart-breaking atrocities in Ukraine, in the pandemic era, as Christians, we also experience the complexity of the church. On one level, the powerlessness and brokenness of global Christendom. On another level, Christendom's capacity to support and provide humanitarian relief.

Exhorted by Jesus to pray for enemies, we try to understand Russian President Vladimir Putin's vision, justifying these attacks.

Putin, as well as his claims of NATO's threats to Russian security, which might have some legitimacy when viewed objectively, says that Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a fight for Christian values and a fight to establish a transnational Russian sphere or civilisation, called Holy Russia or 'Holy Rus', which includes Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, as well as ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking people throughout the world. There are other more spurious claims, such as ridding Ukraine of a Neo-Fascist government.

Given the oppression and destruction of truth in Russian society, one wonders what this civilisation would look like.

Yet the tragedy for Christians is that Putin appears to have the support of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Patriarch Kirill is reported at the beginning of Lent claiming that Donbas

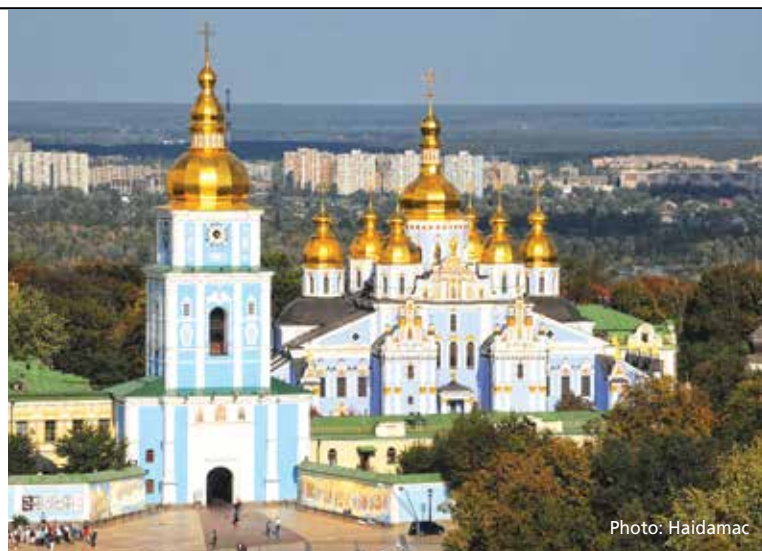


Photo: Haidamac

St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery in Kyiv, headquarters of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine

separatists were suffering for their "fundamental rejection of the so-called values that are offered today by those who claim world power." It is "a struggle that has not a physical, but a metaphysical significance."

He says the war is a battle against western decadence and consumerism. This is an extraordinary claim in the light of the estimated wealth of Putin and the Russian oligarchs. Some claim that the Russian oligarchs own 30% of the wealth of Russia; for western oligarchs the estimate is 15%.

He also reiterated some of these claims in responding to a letter from Archpriest Ioan Sauca, Acting General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, blaming the West for the conflict, the schism within the Ukrainian church and the Russia phobia spreading across the western world.

In making these claims, Patriarch Kirill seems blind to the atrocities being committed against the Ukrainian people, many of them members

of the Russian Church. Despite the establishment of a separate Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 2018, the Russian Church is still the larger of these two Orthodox churches. Of the 12,000 Russian parishes in Ukraine, possibly a third have joined the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

For many, the establishment of the separate Ukrainian Orthodox Church was inevitable, as 'one country, one church' is an accepted premise of Orthodoxy and virtually every Orthodox-majority country in the world (and indeed most countries with any Orthodox Christian minority) has its own autocephalous church. For Orthodoxy, the Spirit is only in one national church.

The Patriarch of Constantinople, His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, as the head of the Eastern Orthodox Church, first among equals, has recognised the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – much to the displeasure of Patriarch Kirill, who has publicly denounced him and excommunicated the Ukrainian Church.

Pleas to Patriarch Kirill from other Churches have gained momentum. On 16 March, both Pope Francis and the Archbishop of Canterbury held conversations with Patriarch Kirill. The Pope stating it was not a 'just war'.

A statement from Lambeth Palace reports that:

Archbishop Justin Welby expressed his grave concern about the war in Ukraine which he said is a great tragedy...

The Archbishop said we need to find ways to live as neighbours in Europe without the aggression and human suffering which have been too much part of our life and history . . . [and that] as churches we must be united in following the great call of Jesus Christ on his disciples to be peace-makers, to do what we can to enable politicians to do their work of establishing the freedom and rights of all people in Ukraine. He appealed to His Holiness to join him in speaking for peace in public, and spoke of the need for a ceasefire. The Archbishop said that he and the Church of England would do whatever it could to support refugees. Both leaders emphasised the need to achieve a lasting peace based on justice as soon as possible and agreed to continued communication.

Prior to these meetings, more than 100 US Christian leaders from several denominations wrote to Patriarch Kirill, asking him to help stop the invasion of Ukraine and "prayer-fully reconsider the support you have given to the war."

The horrific suffering from this war is increasing exponentially. Russia and Ukraine will take years to recover and the rest of the world will follow to varying degrees – already, a global food shortage is looming – without even entertaining the impact of any nuclear exchange. Some representatives from the Anglican Church in Europe fear this is only the beginning. Disturbingly, there are growing signs of Islamic Fundamentalists looking to join the Russian cause.

As Christians we need to pray for Ukraine and pray for guidance as to how we can have a stronger voice in the face of atrocities.

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What are lectionaries? And why do they matter?

Rev'd Charles Sherlock

Attending to the scriptures lies at the heart of Christian worship. It derives from the Jewish synagogue, in which the service consisted mainly of readings from Torah and prophets. Over the centuries various patterns developed in the churches: each lectionary is a system of readings ('lections') from the Bible. Hearing the same passages each Sunday across churches enables us to engage with the scriptures along with the wider people of God.

The English Reformation was distinctive in its approach to hearing the scriptures. Each *Book of Common Prayer* opens with the lectionary, and the bulk of each service consists of hearing from the scriptures. Both Rome and Reformers thought of the Bible as having *formal* authority in the Church: Archbishop Cranmer, however, saw the scriptures as the 'matter' of public worship, bearing *material* authority. People then began and ended each day in church before heading for the field or trade – so the *Book of Common Prayer's* Table of Lessons starts on 1 January with Genesis 1/Matthew 1 ... and keeps going!

But Sunday-only church was no longer the norm after the Industrial Revolution, so that continuity of hearing was

lost. So in 1871, the Church of England produced separate lectionaries for Sundays and weekdays. Holy Communion, until then following Morning Prayer, was allowed to be celebrated by itself, which saw a very limited range of readings heard at the Eucharist until the 1970s, and from the New Testament only.

Modern ecumenical lectionaries

A major step forward came from Rome. The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) wanted "the faithful" to engage with the scriptures "afresh": services were translated from Latin and a three-year reading system developed for Sundays (Years A, B and C) based around Matthew, Mark and Luke, with a matching First Testament reading and psalm and systematic reading of other New Testament books. This 'three-year lectionary' gained acceptance and was adopted in *An Australian Prayer Book* (AAPB, 1978).

But significant criticisms arose. One was the First Testament being heard only to support the gospel reading, rather than in its own right. Another was that women's participation in the biblical story is minimised – Ruth and Esther get no mention, and the gospel for Presentation (February 2) leaves out Anna! John's gospel is fragmented, and the omission of names in the letters gives the impression that they teach 'abstract' truths, rather than God's wisdom for particular contexts.

The ecumenical *Common Lectionary*, which was developed in North America, responded to these issues, and led to the *Revised Common Lectionary* in 1992. In Australia, the *Revised Common Lectionary* has been taken up by several Protestant churches, and is the basis for Sunday readings in *A Prayer Book for Australia* (APBA pp 462–642).



Kentaro Toma/Unsplash

But the *Revised Common Lectionary* could not do the whole job for Australian Anglicans. Fifty years ago many were 'twicers', in church morning and evening; now, one Sunday service is typical. So, rather than thinking in terms of morning and evening services, or Morning Prayer and Holy Communion, the *Revised Common Lectionary* is the base for the main service in *APBA*, with a supplementary set of readings for a second Sunday service.

The APBA lectionary and themes

Ever searched for a theme across the three readings and psalm? It won't work for most Sundays! Why not? Each First Testament, New Testament and gospel reading follows its own course from week to week in ordinary time: no theme is intended, and each reading speaks for itself. In Advent, Epiphany and Easter, however, their seasonal flavour is reflected in the readings chosen, which *might* relate to one another.

How then do the Sunday readings in *APBA*, covering 156 distinct Sundays over three years, hang together? It would take too much space to fill this out here – the scheme is set each year out in the introduction to *An Australian Lectionary*.

Scripture readings for weekdays

What then of weekdays? Holy Communion is celebrated daily in but few Anglican

churches, so *An Australian Prayer Book's* practice of using the Roman Catholic set continues with *APBA*: this runs over two years, with a psalm and two short readings, one from the gospels.

For Morning and Evening Prayer, interesting issues arise. The fixed date of Christmas but movable date for Easter means readings for 54 weeks are needed. Longer books like Luke, John and Acts are best read in several blocks (but not so for Job). And the length of each reading needs attention: how is Joseph's story (Genesis 37–50) best divided up?

In 2001, after extensive trial, readings for weekday Morning and Evening Prayer were approved by General Synod to complement *APBA*. Account is taken of the major seasons in placing books: Isaiah and Revelation in Advent, Jeremiah and Genesis to Exodus in Epiphany and Lent, in which Hebrews is read. The New Testament is covered yearly (including all of Revelation). The First Testament is read over two years, more fully than in the *Book of Common Prayer*: parts of Leviticus, Numbers, Joshua and Judges are omitted, but significant genealogies, lists and cultic practices are retained.

But these are details – what of the overall ethos of lectionaries?

Eating and drinking: the 'sacramental Word'

That *BCP* started with the lectionary reflects historic Anglican emphasis on the

scriptures as the matter of public worship. Rather than images from the schoolroom, the *Book of Common Prayer* typically uses eating and drinking for engaging with the scriptures. This sacramental approach is seen in the *Homily on the Reading of Scripture*, written for clergy with few preaching skills:

And as drink is pleasant to them that be dry, and meat to them that be hungry; so is the reading, hearing, searching and studying of holy scripture, to them that desirous to know God, themselves, and to do his will.

It concludes,

Let us ruminate, and, as it were, chew the cud, that we may have the sweet juice, spiritual effect, marrow, honey, kernel, taste, comfort and consolation of them.

Rather a mix of agricultural metaphors! Yet they point to the sacramental nature of the ministry of the Word as the primary means of grace.

Which is why lectionaries matter.

For further discussion and practical guidance, see chapter 3 of *Australian Anglicans Worship: Performing APBA* (Broughton Publications, 2020). This book offers an introduction and full commentary on *APBA*.

The Rev'd Dr Charles Sherlock was a member of the Liturgical Commission that drafted APBA, and is author of Australian Anglicans Worship: Performing APBA.

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Talking climate with kids

PART 2

Lachlan Gilbert

The science underpinning our understanding of the climate emergency is complex, and may seem a challenge at times for a layperson to explain to other adults, let alone kids.

So how do the experts have this conversation with their own children?

Professor Katrin Meissner is a climate change expert with UNSW Science and also the director of the university's Climate Change Research Centre (CCRC). Professor Meissner's focus is on large scale climate feedbacks and tipping points. She has two teenage children, 14 and 16.

Dr Ian Macadam is a member of UNSW's CCRC and leads the Knowledge Brokerage Team at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Climate Extremes. His expertise is in translating climate science for schools, businesses and governments. Earlier, he cut his teeth on the physical sciences with a PhD in climate projections and climate impacts. He has four-and-a-half-year-old twins.

Do your children understand what you do for work?

Katrin Meissner (KM): Yes, they're old enough to



Professor Katrin Meissner thinks it's important to be frank with kids about climate change, without fearmongering

understand that now. A few years ago, the older one wanted to go to the Fridays for Future climate rally. But I only let her and her friend go after they could answer a few questions about climate change. I wanted them to know why they were going. [Laughs] And my daughter was complaining saying "that's not cool, everyone else is going!" But I told them "no you've got to understand why you're going".

Ian Macadam (IM): I think they understand I work at a university. And they've been on campus, but that's probably as far as they understand. You know, they look for places to play and gravitate towards whatever's dangerous. But they're a little young to understand the concept of climate change and how my work relates to it.

Have you talked about climate change to your kids, and what did you or what do you plan to say?

KM: We always had a very scientific approach to education. When they ask a question, they get the answer, even if the answer is not pretty. Even when they grew up, they knew that Santa Claus was not real from early on, and we never made a big deal out

of how babies come into the world, we never made them believe in the tooth fairy... so climate change for me is just another fact we have to live with, a fact we can talk about with the kids.

Because we talk about climate change all the time, they were exposed to it from a young age. We would also take them on holidays where you can see evidence of it all around you, for example coral reefs. I think it was just part of their lives from the beginning, and they didn't need me pointing these things out.

KM: I don't think my two are that aware of climate change itself. So I'm trying to raise their awareness of environmental issues, but we're at the stage where I might, for example, point out an electric car, or that it's a terrible habit to leave the taps running. So at this stage it's saying things like don't waste things, don't use too much plastic because it ends up in the ocean, that kind of thing. I think that's a far easier thing to attack than the specific issue of climate change itself. I see climate change as just another facet of issues to do with waste and careful use of resources.

As for whether I'm worried about scaring them or other kids old enough to understand about climate change, to be honest, it doesn't worry me. I mean, there are things worth being scared of!

How old should kids be when you talk to them about climate change, and what tips would you give other parents?

KM: One of the problems with climate change is that it is not something that usually triggers fears in humans because we didn't evolve to be scared of a change in statistics – it's not something like a shark swimming towards you. So I don't think my kids were afraid of climate change when they were little. But I believe it's important for them to know the truth from a young age so I tell them what I know. But I also tell them what I don't know – like saying, "we think this works this way but we're not sure".



UNSW/Ian Macadam

Dr Ian Macadam says climate change is easier to understand for young kids when spoken about as a resources issue

I'm not an education specialist but I think kids can handle the truth as long as it is delivered in an objective way, without fearmongering. And I think we need to remember that kids live in this world with us, that they see animals dying, they see people that get sick, they see that we, as parents, cannot protect them from everything. That's just reality.

IM: I like the idea of seeing climate change as a resource issue – I think you have to relate it to things they see around them. So, you know, they've noticed that my car uses petrol, so pointing out electric cars is part of my way into talking about these things. So I think the next stage for me is to try and talk about why we don't just jump in the car for absolutely everything – not just because of climate change, but for other good reasons like reducing congestion and how it's good to exercise.

Do you worry about the world you will be leaving your children?

KM: Yes, I'm absolutely worried for their futures. I say so not because of one particular impact of climate change, but because all these impacts

will eventually happen at the same time. And that will lead to macroeconomic shocks and unrest. Imagine things like crop failure, water scarcity, fires, floods all happening at the same time in different regions of a country or continent. Plus whole regions, countries even, that have to evacuate because of rising sea levels. The pressures will just become so big that there will be more widespread civil unrest. It just won't be a very peaceful world, even if we do mitigate against warming.

Even if we stopped emissions now, temperatures will still go up for a while – the climate system is so slow in reacting. And that's without any tipping points – once we start to trigger tipping points, such as for example the West Antarctic Ice Sheet and part of the ice sheet goes, then we're really in trouble. So I think that even if we stopped emitting fossil fuels completely now, they won't have the peaceful and wealthy life we had. And the longer we leave it, the worse it will get.

Part 1 of this story was published in the March issue. Courtesy University of New South Wales.



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Sense of a spiritual journey

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958), one of England's most loved composers. He is best known for the soaring pastoral *The Lark Ascending* (see cover image) but in his long career he penned an astonishing range of work, from symphonies and ballets to song cycles, film scores and a vast amount of religious music.

Ralph was the son of a vicar and, as a student, he loved cycling to Ely to hear the cathedral choir. He wrote a mass for his Cambridge doctorate and had a deep love of the *Authorised Version* of the Bible, which remained a cherished companion throughout his life.

In fact, he was an atheist, later identifying as agnostic. It seems surprising, then, that in 1904 Vaughan Williams agreed to be musical editor of *The English Hymnal*, which was to become a landmark in Anglican church music. But he did not think this strange, once saying: "There is no reason why an atheist could not write a good mass."

With fellow editor, clergyman Percy Dearmer, he spent two years searching out "the best hymns in the English language," drawing together English folk songs (for which he had a passion), church anthems, Tudor music and his own compositions, including *Sine Nomine (For All the Saints)* and *Come down, O Love Divine*. In the 1920s he would go on to co-edit *Songs of Praise* and the *Oxford Book of Carols*.

Vaughan Williams saw the hymnal as a cultural rather than religious endeavour, and he was determined to include music on its own merits. For him music was a vocation, a source of solace and a way of creating a sense of community – he thought it should be available to all people, whatever their social background. He felt that great music should be for congregations, as well as concert-goers.

In *Strengthen for Service: 100 Years of the English Hymnal 1906–2006*, Robert Atwell writes that it is interesting to note which hymns Vaughan Williams and his fellow editors included, and which they left out. They selected hymns that "reflected a more generous vision of the Christian life, and a less stern and judgemental image of God," and in so doing, he argues, they were trying to set a new agenda for the Edwardian church.

When it was published on Ascension Day in 1906, the hymnal had a hostile reception from some bishops, including the Archbishop himself, for its inclusion of hymns to the Virgin Mary and other saints.

But the hymnal stood the test of time and the revised edition of 1933 remains in print today. Robert Atwell writes that the liturgical structure of the book, innovative for its time, "continues to invite and encourage a disciplined adherence to the rhythm of the Christian year."

The hymnal, he writes, "creates a rich and effective musical counterpoint to the Church's lectionary ... enabling a congregation to engage more profoundly with the great religious themes of the Christian story."

It has been argued that whatever Vaughan Williams' feelings on organised religion, his music is filled with the sense of a spiritual journey with its shifts between radiance and darkness, hope and longing, ecstasy and doubt, struggle and resolution.

Listening to the soul-lifting heights of *The Lark Ascending*, or the arresting moods of *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*, it's hard to disagree.

A recent episode of the BBC's *Faith in Music* radio program noted that this affinity with the spiritual can also be seen in Vaughan Williams' attraction to the work of poets Walt Whitman, A.E. Housman and William Blake, who "open windows and ask questions about the nature and fullness of human life" and "point to something bigger than we are."

The composer himself said: "The object of all art is to obtain a partial revelation of that which is beyond human sense and human faculties, of that which is in fact spiritual."

Where his spiritual journey led we can't know, but we do know the conclusion that he hoped for. When asked what he would choose to be if he were reincarnated, he replied: "Music, music. But in the next world I shan't be doing music, with all the strivings and disappointments. I shall be being it."

Sîân Thomas
Communications Officer, National Trust, UK



Yanguang Lan/Unsplash

Hardy Reef in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

Protecting World Heritage sites from climate change

Australian experts are calling for the challenges of climate change to be used as a catalyst for positive changes to help conserve the world's most precious heritage places.

The experts suggest that the adoption of a consistent and transparent climate change vulnerability index across all World Heritage processes would help countries better understand and respond when their World Heritage sites are threatened by climate change.

The proposal was among ideas put forward by 18 experts in natural and cultural heritage, climate change and diplomacy at a national roundtable late last year. The roundtable was convened by the Australian Academy of Science in consultation with the Australian Academy of Law.

The experts also proposed a new type or subset of the endangered listing system for World Heritage properties to reflect climate risk and that could also identify those properties facing novel or emerging climate impacts.

The Australian Academy of Science's Vice President and Secretary for Biological Sciences, Professor Helene Marsh AO, was one of the experts involved in the national roundtable.

She said it aimed to generate ideas to help the world deal with the operational and legal challenges to World Heritage sites posed by climate change.

"The World Heritage Convention will need to revise its operational guidelines to ensure it can continue to protect places of significance to humankind," said Professor Marsh.

"We look forward to the

ideas from this roundtable being tested and enhanced by others and considered by UNESCO's World Heritage Climate Policy working group.

"It is also hoped that other countries will be able to gather their experts and generate ideas in a similar way to find the most appropriate solutions for the challenges faced."

Last year, the operations of the World Heritage Committee made global headlines when it considered whether the Great Barrier Reef should be inscribed on the World Heritage In Danger List, mainly because of the impacts of climate change.

Australia has a high number of World Heritage properties threatened by climate change. In 2020, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature rated 11 of Australia's 16 natural and mixed World Heritage properties as being at high risk from climate change.

Additional ideas that emerged from the roundtable and the list of roundtable participants can be found in the World Heritage Convention and Climate Change Roundtable Statement at www.science.org.au.

Courtesy Australian Academy
of Science. World Heritage
Day is on 18 April.

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Who is your neighbour?

Christine Morris

Have you ever stopped and looked at the stained glass windows in St Paul's Cathedral? Not glanced, but *really* looked? Let's look at the Good Samaritan window, provided by Miss Marion Cleaver in memory of her father and brother. Her brother, Edward Randolph Cleaver, joined the army during the Great War. He died, aged 31, after serving in action at Palestine, in October 1917.

Jesus said, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39, RSV). The writing above the Good Samaritan window in Sale asks, "Who is your neighbour?"

Who are our neighbours?

St Paul's neighbours are from Gippsland and far beyond. They buy our books, attend Summer in Seaspray, Tadpoles playgroup, *mainly music*, Messy Church, funeral wakes, weddings, concerts and diocesan events. And there are many people who

ask for and receive food and other help.

How are we to love our neighbours in these difficult times – to 'go do likewise', as it says in the window?

1 Corinthians 13 doesn't tell us the 'who' but does describe the 'how', the 'love' part of the challenge to love our neighbours, God and ourselves – the love that Jesus demonstrated.

Any time you are in the Cathedral, allow these symbols, windows and stories to remind you that the Trinity – God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit – promises to be with us all, in this parish and beyond, into the unknown of 2022.

We don't know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future.

God of Love, we fall short so often of loving as you



The Good Samaritan window at St Paul's Cathedral in Sale, designed and installed by Philip Handel in 1976

describe; help us to love you, our neighbours and ourselves this year.

This article is adapted from a sermon Christine gave at the Cathedral on 30 January. Photos and descriptions of the St Paul's Cathedral windows, prepared by Max and Enid Davis, are available online at www.stpaulssale.org.au.



Connection is the key

Cathrine Muston

A local ad on television at the moment is encouraging Gippslanders to connect with one another for improved mental health. About eight local health providers have partnered to highlight the importance of having

someone to talk to in the wake of years of drought, fires and COVID lockdowns. Mental health practitioners have long espoused the importance of having someone to talk to when things are tough.

As the local church in Gippsland, we can have an important role in connecting

with people and helping them to connect with others. Connection is what our faith is all about: connection with God, with our neighbour, with a purpose. So it is perhaps a good time to encourage all of us to be even more 'present' in our communities in order to seek out the lonely or depressed

Two decades of Neighbour Day

Relationships Australia, during Neighbour Day's 20th anniversary year, has released the 2022 Neighbour Day Report, independently evaluated by the Australian National University. Findings show that, in addition to reducing loneliness across the nation, Neighbour Day is particularly beneficial in promoting resilience and protecting the mental health of Australian community members during times of collective change or crisis.

"Our research shows connected individuals and communities are more resilient in times of crises and that people involved in Neighbour Day across the years experience better mental health, sustained reductions in loneliness and reductions in psychological distress, which are all signs of ongoing resilience," said Mr Nick Tebbey, National Executive Officer, Relationships Australia.

Identifying with one's neighbours and neighbourhood diversifies people's networks and creates stronger individuals and communities when crises strike. "We now have

four years of independent research demonstrating that Neighbour Day is a useful model for building communities to reduce loneliness and promote wellbeing. When considered together with previous evaluations, we can be confident that Neighbour Day represents a scalable, grass-roots approach to building community connection that benefits wellbeing," Mr Tebbey said.

Neighbourhood identification is a key to achieving and improving respectful relationships throughout an individual's life, and in turn addressing loneliness and increasing resilience across the nation. Mr Tebbey says that "Neighbour Day engages in awareness raising and capacity building to increase neighbourhood identification across Australia – creating the connected communities we all want to live in, one relationship at a time."

The 2022 Neighbour Day Report is available at www.relationships.org.au.

Courtesy Relationships Australia

or anxious and sit alongside them as a friend.

If you are unsure how to find the lonely in your community, perhaps take some time to walk more. When we walk, we notice what is happening at the grassroots level of our neighbourhoods. It can change our perspective. There may be those who regularly walk past your house. Take your cup of tea or coffee into the front yard and say 'hi' to those walking past. Who is sitting on their own on the park bench? Try sitting alongside them. How many of us meet a friend for a coffee in a cafe? Perhaps we could invite someone for a coffee who we have noticed on the fringe of our church or social group.

As our communities open up more and we are in danger of filling our diaries in a way we haven't done for

years, maybe we could block out space to spend time with people who may live alone, or we haven't seen around for a while.

The work of building inclusive communities begins with us taking the time and the courage to walk to the edges and sit with people we would not normally sit with. We don't have to have in-depth conversations; it could be as simple as discussing the weather. It is in the simplicity of sitting alongside people we may not know well, and taking the time to listen, that we are being true to our calling and purpose – loving God and neighbour.

For more information about the Connect-well project, visit www.connect-well.com.au.

Cathrine Muston is Diocesan Community Development Officer at Anglicare Victoria.

Remembering Christchurch

The date of 15 March is etched into the collective mind of Muslims around the world. On that day three years ago,

51 men, women and children were murdered and many more injured at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. It was a massacre against a

people simply because of their religious belief and activity. The men, women and children were praying at the time in the mosques.



Governor-General of New Zealand, Dame Patsy Reddy, lays flowers for the victims of the Christchurch mosque shootings at Hagley Park in Christchurch on 19 March 2019

In New Zealand and around the globe, including in Australia, people continue to gather and mourn the victims and pay their respects to the families of the victims in commemoration of this tragedy.

The Australian National Imams Council (ANIC) continues to raise and address the issues of increasing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim prejudice and dangers of white supremacy. According to the ANIC Spokesperson and Advisor, Bilal Rauf:

This was a massacre committed by an Australian very close to home. The massacre was preceded by ignorance, hate and a pervading and publicly stated anti-Muslim sentiment which was left unaddressed and allowed to fester and be shared.

Ramia Abdo Sultan, ANIC Community Relations Advisor, stated:

15 March 2019 is a constant reminder that Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment is real, particularly for Muslim women who are readily identifiable by the religious attire they choose to wear. Vilification is real. Discrimination is real.

ANIC calls upon the Australian Government to acknowledge Islamophobia and anti-Muslim prejudice as being a real threat and danger to society. ANIC asks that Islamophobia and bigotry be addressed on a legislative level so that minority communities can be better protected.

ANIC extends its prayers and support to the brothers and sisters affected by the Christchurch tragedy and extends its sincerest gratitude to the people and organisations who continue to commemorate this sad tragedy and show their support.

Courtesy ANIC

Across the ages

Progress and plans for diocesan youth network

Alisha Moyle

The vision and journey of the Young Adults/Younger Anglicans Network began in 2018 from the heart of The Abbey, Raymond Island and was officially launched at Synod 2019. This brief overview and outlook is the first of several articles about the network for families, youth, young adults and intergenerations. During 2020/2021, God led our group to the important essence of prayer. By way of extended invitation, we now have a

prayer/support network. This is not just a younger collective – it involves all leaders who have the calling to intentionally pray in support for this movement established within the Diocese. In conjunction with our working role on Bishop-in-Council, we are seeking eager younger Anglicans to participate in Synod as we transition through the next three-year cycle. This is an exciting opportunity and working project as we start a brand new cycle. Thank you to Bishop Richard and diocesan committee for their support.

In 2020, Bishop Richard popped into one of our Zoom gatherings to chat to youth and families present. From this chat, we learned that faith, music, connections (friends) and fun is what our youth really want to experience. This will be our key working focus.

Coming up:

- Lenten/Easter Prayer Gathering: 6 pm 2 April, Drouin Anglican Church
- Diocesan Youth/Families Gathering: date to be advised
- The Abbey Raymond Island Retreat: proposed for September/October

- Anglican Renewal Network of Australia (ARNA) partnership: more details next month
- Any events, connections or prayer requests you would like the network to know about? Need to know more? We would love to chat!

Contact Alisha (Bishop-in-Council Representative): alishaj8@outlook.com,

0487 424 480 or The Rev'd Dave Perryman: davidp@gippsanglican.org.au, 0401 035 379. Dave is also the Young Adults/Younger Anglicans Chaplaincy support should you need to reach out to him.

Alisha Moyle is Bishop-in-Council Representative of the Young Adults/Younger Anglicans Network, co-led with The Rev'd Dave Perryman.



Our commitment to a Safe Church

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

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To find out more about Safe Church, and about Safe Ministry resources, visit www.gippsanglican.org.au/safe-church.

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School's Year 9 student, Asmi, recently received a medal for her great achievement in the 2021 ICAS Assessments' Spelling Competition. Asmi achieved an outstanding perfect score in the competition, which qualified her for the medal.

"Winning this medal is a wonderful achievement and I feel both proud and honoured to receive it," Asmi remarked.



Bullies and Saints

An honest look at the good and evil of Christian history

by John Dickson

Zondervan
Reflective, 2021

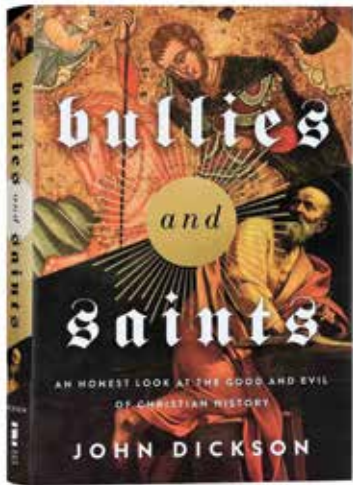
Rev'd Canon David Head

The Rev'd Dr John Dickson has written a number of helpful books over the years, particularly for teens and young adults to help in their faith search. He is an Anglican priest and scholar who comes out of the Sydney Anglican evangelical context, but he wears this often-constraining background with a degree of honesty and open integrity. This book has been for me his best yet.

I was even moved to send the author an email to express my thanks for his book, and within a few days I did receive a thankyou email expressing how much he appreciated my positive response.

Recently, we have been inundated with stories and news reports of aggression and bullying from people in national and international leadership, who deal very loosely with honesty, integrity and truth, and from fringe groups desiring that they be heard – forcing their views, sometimes violently, on others.

I have certainly known all too many bullies in the life of the Church, and of course



some wonderful saints as well. I believe that this book takes a remarkably honest look at both the bullies and saints across the realm of Christian history from the early church, through the Middle Ages, the Crusades, the Inquisition, the rise of Protestantism, the more recent violence of The Troubles in Ireland and the appalling instances of child abuse in the church. There are many bullies and saints in Christian history and this book seeks honestly to open our eyes more fully to the major figures of this both sad and glorious story.

The author is a scholar of the Middle Ages (c500–1300 AD) and a considerable portion of this book covers that period. He rightly points out that the often-used term Dark Ages for this period is very much a misnomer. John writes (p. 211):

I want to explore one of the most successful reinterpretations of the past ever attempted: the

designation of the period from the 500's to the 1200's as the 'Dark Ages'. It is a good reminder of the power of rumour and sloganeering to convince a culture about something that is simply not true – or at least is mostly not true. ... An exaggerated and selective kind of storytelling about the past happened on an industrial scale in Europe during the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods when artists and intellectuals and clergy popularized the expression "Dark Ages" which was an exercise in historical slander.

There was in fact much 'light' to celebrate in this period too.

This book is a fascinating look at the cultural, political and theological milieus that surrounded the bullies and saints of Christian history. Thankfully, the beautiful 'tune and music' of Christ and his gospel teaching of love, acceptance and compassion has played on throughout history and can always be heard, even in the darkest and most painful of times.

Unusually, this book also has a large group of 17 written commendations from eminent scholars and others (from Australia, the UK and USA) who all praise this book in various ways.

For example, Greg Sheridan, the well-known Australian author and foreign editor of *The Australian*, describes the book as "... an invaluable, thoughtful and at times rightly provoking consideration of the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, in the long Christian story."



Visions for a better future – Transitions Film Festival

Cathrine Muston

If we are interested in creating a better future for our children and grandchildren, it is probably a good idea to ask young people for their vision for the future. The Transitions Film Festival focuses on the grand challenges of our time and invites filmmakers to "throw a spotlight on human ingenuity, power, passion and creativity" in order to find innovative solutions to complex problems and envision a better future.

Climate change and its impacts, artificial intelligence, food security, plastics and forest defenders are some of the topics of the films that were on offer at this year's festival – both in short and long form.

Do we owe future generations a "right to a climate system that is capable of sustaining life?" ask the 21 young people who are suing the government of the United States of America. They argue that the decisions of successive governments since climate change was identified in the 1960s have not only been negligent, but also contributed to the acceleration of a climate catastrophe, and they have bravely turned the spotlight onto the duty of care that past generations owe to future generations. These brave, intelligent and resilient young people are the subject of the documentary *Youth Vs Gov* as they articulate their concerns for the planet and their fears for the future.

Dear Future Children tells the story of three young people who are taking a leading role in their cities in order to protest against the problems affecting them and their communities. Rayen (23) from Santiago, Chile, risks being blinded

by military who target protesters in the eyes as she protests a government that imposes disproportionate costs on the poor. Rayen wants future children to have more opportunities for education and work than she has had. Pepper (22) in Hong Kong has been bravely protesting the crackdown of the People's Republic of China's restrictions on freedom of speech and democratic values in the former British colony. In Uganda, Hilda (21) has experienced the effects of climate change on her family as persistent drought then flood forced them from their farm into the city. She sums up her frustration by quoting her university professor as claiming that climate change is "God's will". "Why would you study for a future that is not clear?" she asks.

Impact Shorts follows three photographers communicating the issue of recognition of Indigenous cultural history, the Black Lives Matter movement and the plight of refugees crossing the border into New Mexico. All use imagery to communicate and report on the injustices they see around them, aiming to inform and educate so that understanding might grow.

The issues are not unfamiliar, but the investment that young people make in addressing the solutions and in communicating it to the world is inspiring. In the face of such issues, many may feel as though there is nothing to be done, but with resilience, intelligence and creativity the children and young people in these documentaries show that there is hope for the future.

The Transitions Film Festival has been operating in Australia since 2012. Find out more at www.transitionsfilmfestival.com.

Events

Lenten candle liturgy in Leongatha

St Peter's Leongatha is using a Lenten nine-candle liturgy that began on Ash Wednesday and continues through the six Sundays of Lent (at the 8 am service), concluding on Good Friday. Each liturgy includes a meditation, followed by silence, a statement as a candle is extinguished, and a prayer. The prayers follow themes of the natural world, injustice, education, pandemics, basic needs, sacred space, war and oppression,



exclusion and, finally, suffering.

On Easter Sunday, all candles will be relit as the Easter message is proclaimed – *He is risen!*

Stations of the Cross in Bunyip

17 April, 11.30 am (Good Friday)

Stations of the Cross will be in the garden at St Thomas' Bunyip.

