

# The Gippsland Anglican

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## Faith in the future?

Young Christians want the Church to do more on climate change

Emma Wyndham Chalmers

In recent weeks, we have once again witnessed flooding across Greater Sydney, threatening people's homes, livelihoods and lives. The federal government declared it a natural disaster. Tens of thousands of people have been affected by evacuation orders and warnings. For residents in some parts of Sydney, it is the fourth flood they have faced in just 18 months.

The increasing frequency and intensity of disasters like floods is understood to be one of the consequences of climate change. Also, climate change is one of the biggest drivers of global poverty.

At Tearfund, we hear first-hand from the communities we work with in Africa, Asia and the Pacific about the dire impacts of increased extreme weather, drought, famine and disease associated with rising global temperatures and changing weather patterns.

The world's poorest 3.5 billion people are responsible for just 10 per cent of carbon emissions but are already facing the worst impacts of climate change. It is a profound injustice that those who contribute least to the problem of climate change are more vulnerable to its effects and the least resourced to adapt.

Through Tearfund's development and advocacy work, we know there are



*More than half a metre of mud was deposited in this house during the 2018 Kerala floods in India, where poverty is exacerbated by climate change*

many Christians who share our commitment to see compassion and justice shape the collective response to this threat. Yet for others within the Church, the issue of climate change doesn't connect or sit comfortably with their Christian faith.

To explore this further, Tearfund, in partnership with NCLS Research, undertook a major research project examining the views of Millennial and adult Gen Z Christians (aged 18–40 years in 2021) and church leaders in Australia towards climate

change and the role of the Church in taking action to address it. The project also looked at how climate change – and creation care more broadly – fit within their understanding of the gospel, the mission of the Church and the living out of their Christian faith.

Earlier this year, the results of this landmark study were published in a report entitled *They Shall Inherit the Earth* ([www.tearfund.org.au/splash/climate-report](http://www.tearfund.org.au/splash/climate-report)).

*(Continued on page 11)*

### Climate change “feels more imminent now”

For university student Hattie Steenholdt, being in Mallacoota during the Black Summer bushfires of 2019–20 was a visceral experience of climate change, and it's strengthened her conviction that Christians need to do more about it.

At the time, Hattie Steenholdt said it felt like being “in a dystopian novel.” As bushfires raged through Mallacoota in the early hours of 31 December 2019, she and her friends in Scripture Union's Theos beach mission team were hunkered down in the cinema-turned-refuge centre with hundreds of other adults, children, babies

and dogs. During the 14 hours they spent in that hot, tightly packed space they could hear gas bottles exploding outside as the fire passed through.

Hattie says that while for the most part she was aware that she was as safe as she could be in the circumstances, there were moments of panic as well.

“It was really helpful being there with a group of Christians. We had a couple times when we were just praying, all of us together, which was really calming and reassuring,” she says.

*(Continued on page 11)*



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# Challenges of change

Ven Graham Knott

Generally, before Christmas, although less frequently in recent years, there is a particular type of phone call to the Rectory. “Is that the Church of England?” a voice enquires. “Can you tell me the service times?”

Having a hundred and one things to do at that time of year, only the bravest priest would begin to suggest that Australian Anglicans haven’t been part of the ‘C of E’ in the way suggested since our Anglican Church of Australia Constitution was written nearly 65 years ago – but old habits and old allegiances die hard.

One way to view the results of last year’s Census is to suggest that religious nominalism is on the wane and that the figures reflect much more those who are fully committed to the cause of Christ. This might help to explain why the percentage of those indicating adherence to ‘no religion’ now stands at 38.9%, a huge increase from 30.1% five years before. Across Australia there are now the same number of Millennials as Baby Boomers in the population: 21.5%. Our nation overall will soon become younger.

The National Church Life Survey, which many of us will have completed recently, also holds some surprising trends



and results for Christians. A third of church attenders are aged 18–34, while those aged 65 and over constitute just a fifth. Further, that younger generation are much more likely to attend weekly, rather than the monthly attendances preferred by the older group. Perhaps most surprising is that 17% of those aged 18–34 nationally have tried to get involved in a church during the past five years but have decided not to continue to attend.

These few figures – especially the last – should challenge us all. I hope most of us think that our parish is welcoming, otherwise we probably wouldn’t be there! Perhaps we are welcoming to some people and not others. Perhaps our approach to and expressions of faith don’t allow sufficient space for exploration and personal discovery. Perhaps there are simply too few Millennials in many of our parishes, leaving those who cross the threshold feeling quite

isolated and lonely in a congregation of those much older. Perhaps our sermons and teaching aren’t answering the questions that Millennials are asking. Like attracts like so it is not surprising that churches devoid of a particular generation continue to be so. Yet if there is genuine thirst among Millennials to explore faith, we must take the opportunity to learn and be prepared to change where necessary. There are resources available to help, such as Ruth Perrin’s *Changing Shape, The Faith Lives of Millennials*, which I’ve begun to read.

One would be naïve to think that things are as simple as this. The Baby Boomer generation, which has been among the most consistent, faithful and loyal generations in our parishes, is so no longer. We cannot assume the continuing loyalty of people if they sense that they are not nourished by what the church provides. In other words – and the challenges of the past two years have exacerbated this – we can take nothing for granted as we plan and shape for the future. Communicating the good news of Jesus Christ to emerging generations demands of us a costly culture change that is much more than singing a few different songs. How we take our existing members with us in such a seismic change demands wisdom, skill, understanding

and very clear communication. Millennials have grown through several culture shifts demanding a similar change in the way we do church. My understanding is it’s not what we do but how we do it that baffles Millennials, who already have to navigate very complex environments.

These sorts of issues take us to the heart of our Diocesan Vision. In particular, what does it look like in these areas for us to be Creative in Spirit? Holy Spirit calls us to respond with genuinely transformative thinking, acknowledging that we don’t know the answers or the way ahead. We have never been this way before and we require humility, patient perseverance and the capacity to step aside from our pre-conceived notions. The diocesan clergy will have the opportunity to explore and discuss some of these matters during their Clergy Conference at the end of August. Please encourage those who minister among you to engage wholeheartedly in the struggle to understand and move forward effectively.

The Census and the survey provide insights into what is happening in our nation and churches. They can’t tell us why or how we might engage with the trends. That is our task as the people of God in our individual and diverse communities. That Millennials are searching for faith should encourage us. There is hope and a future if only we can discern the way ahead. May Holy Spirit bless us on that journey of discovery to be Creative in Spirit.

# Climate prayer

*Creator God, giver of life  
You sustain the earth and  
direct the nations*

*In this time of climate crisis  
Grant us clarity to hear  
the groaning of creation  
and the cries of the poor*

*Challenge us to change  
our lifestyles  
Guide our leaders to  
take courageous action*

*Enable your church to be a  
beacon of hope*

*Foster within us a renewed  
vision of your purposes  
for your world through  
Jesus Christ our Lord  
By and for whom all  
things were made.*

*Amen*



*Offered by the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, as a prayer for the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference and to mark the fifth anniversary of the Paris Climate Agreement.*



# Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week

Reminding us how to support Aboriginal Ministry in Gippsland

**Libby Willems and  
Cynthia Grove**

Recently, people across Gippsland joined in with activities and

education for the significant times of Reconciliation Week (27 May – 3 June) and NAIDOC Week (3–10 July), but support can be given all year round to the Gippsland

Indigenous Ministry Fund.

Cynthia Grove, Lay Reader at St Paul's Cathedral, commented on the gathering at St John's Church, Lake Tyers during NAIDOC Week:



The joyful gathering at St John's Lake Tyers during NAIDOC Week

*GET UP, STAND UP, SHOW UP. Such was the theme of this year's NAIDOC week, and of the service held at Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust on 10 July. The theme was well illustrated in the two testimonies offered. The Rev'd Edie Ashley spoke about the life and work of The Rev'd Ossie Cruse, while the Rev'd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy spoke of her own journey to this point. What came through to this attendee were two words, 'faithfulness' and 'constancy', attributes we can all aspire to.*

On the first Sunday in June, The Abbey, Raymond Island was host to a gentle Holy Communion service during Reconciliation Week that was supported by over 50 people from across the Diocese. Hymns that are significant to Aboriginal people were shared in the service – it was joyful to understand the importance of *Bind Us Together, Lord* and *Create in Us a Clean Heart, O God*. A happy lunch with fellowship was shared following the service.

These gatherings and times of awareness and celebration help to remind us of the work ahead. We see more clearly how Aboriginal Ministry supports Aboriginal people across Gippsland and helps non-Aboriginal people to deepen their understanding of injustices that are yet to be reconciled. Aboriginal Ministry in Gippsland is helping us all to grow.

The Rev'd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy and The Rev'd Kathy Dalton are well-known and well-loved Aboriginal Anglican priests in Gippsland who provide culturally appropriate spiritual support for Aboriginal people across the region, in East Gippsland, and in Central and West Gippsland.

"We ... make [ministry] significant in our cultural way," says Aunty Phyllis, Minang and Wotjobaluk woman and Anglican Priest in East Gippsland.

Kathy, a proud Taungurong and GunaiKurnai woman and Anglican Priest serving Central and West Gippsland, says "We are on this journey of reconciliation and healing together."

Their work often requires them to travel long distances to be with Community during Sorry business or in times of celebration. Rising travel costs have added to the challenge of supporting many families over a vast area.

How can Gippsland Anglicans help? People are invited to donate online to the Gippsland Anglicans Indigenous Ministry Fund and help reach the \$20,000 fundraising target.

Donating to the Gippsland Indigenous Ministry Fund is a really practical way to support the work of reconciliation with First Nations people in our region. We can trust that the work of Rev'd Aunty Phyllis and Rev'd Kathy is exactly what communities want from their spiritual leaders – we just need to support them to be able to do it.



Anglican Diocese of Gippsland

Position Vacant  
Safe Ministry Clearance Officer

The Diocese is seeking a person to contribute to our on-going commitment to providing a safe environment for all, especially children and vulnerable people. The Safe Ministry Clearance Officer plays a significant role in enabling ministry activities across the parishes and missional activities of the Diocese

A permanent part-time position is available for 3 days per week. This role is suitable for flexible working arrangements.

Essential Skills / Requirements

- \* Demonstrated experience in clerical / administrative roles
- \* Competency in Microsoft suite, Adobe PRO, data entry, database management
- \* Ability to be self-directed and work independently

For more information, and a position description, please contact the Registrar, Richard Connelly via email: richardc@gippslandanglicans.org.au Applications close 26 August 2022

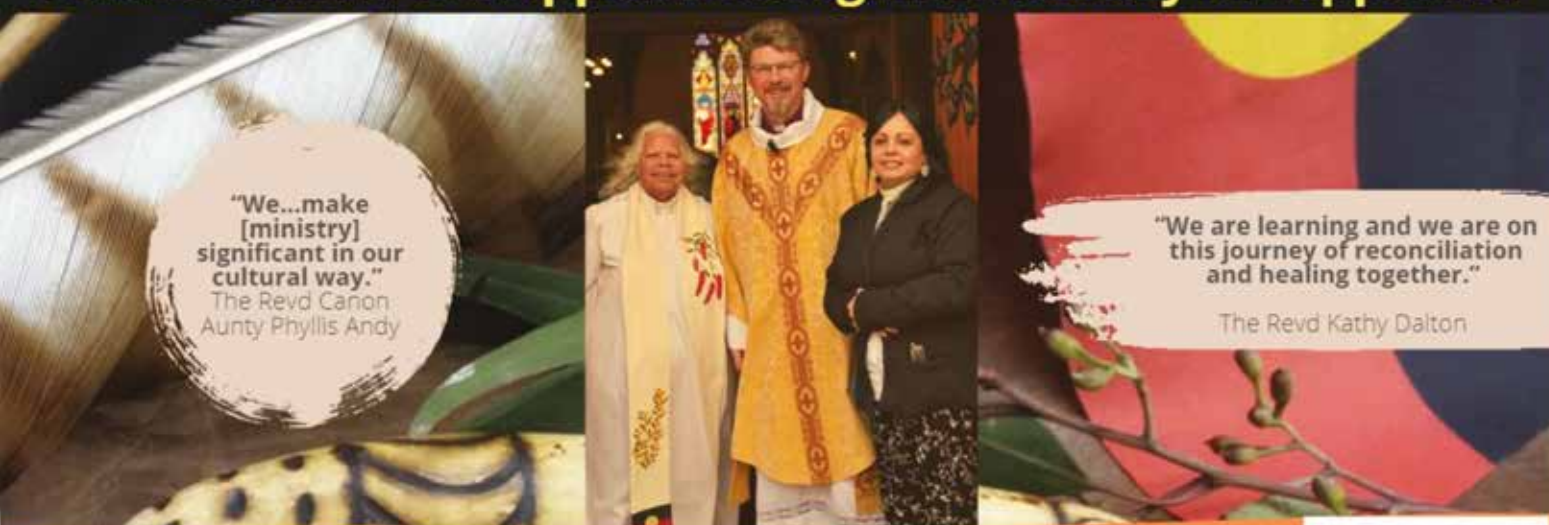
Committed in Christ

Connecting in Service

Creative in Spirit

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

## Please donate to support Aboriginal Ministry in Gippsland



*Donations made to the Gippsland Indigenous Ministry Fund directly support the work and activities of Aunty Phyllis and Kathy.*

*To make a donation to the Gippsland Indigenous Ministry Fund and help reach the \$20,000 fundraising target, visit [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au) or <https://campaigns.tithely.com/44902-anglican-diocese-of-gippsland/aboriginal-ministry>.*

*Read more about Aboriginal Ministry in the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland at [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/aboriginalministry](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/aboriginalministry).*

**Your donation to Aboriginal ministry is vital.**

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

**Please scan the QR code or visit [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au) for options.**





## MU AND ME

# Love, fellowship and support

*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, Jan Misiurka shares her story.*

I grew up in a wonderful church community and enjoyed my early teenage years in Hamilton. Life changed somewhat when my father died when I was 13, and my Mum and I moved to Geelong, for a fresh start, when I was 16. Here we again found a wonderful church community and I taught Sunday School and joined the Young Anglican Fellowship group, where my faith was nourished and grew.

Anton and I were married in 1972. We were time poor, which made it difficult to worship as regularly as I had done. However, moving to the Latrobe Valley, building our own home and raising a family we again found a

caring church community, and I was thrilled to be asked to join the Caritas Group, previously Young Wives Group, in 1982. Caritas' byline was Friendship in Action and was part of Mothers' Union.

In 1988, I was asked to take on the secretarial role of Diocesan Caritas, which I did quite happily. The next year I had the opportunity to attend the MU Triennial Australian Council Conference. It was only open to admitted MU members, so after attending some MU meetings, and reading and thinking about the aims and objectives, I was duly admitted. After long trips to reach the

conference, the group were all travel weary; however, I was absolutely drawn into the electric atmosphere in that place. I spent four days in awe of the articulate, friendly, prayerful and faith-filled MU members, and I came home fired up and hooked!

I have held positions at branch, diocesan, state and Australian levels of MU, and have seen much change over my more than 30 years of involvement. I have made lifelong friends. One highlight was the meeting held in Toowoomba, where diocesan presidents from India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Korea, the Pacific Islands, New Zealand, Australia,



Jan Misiurka

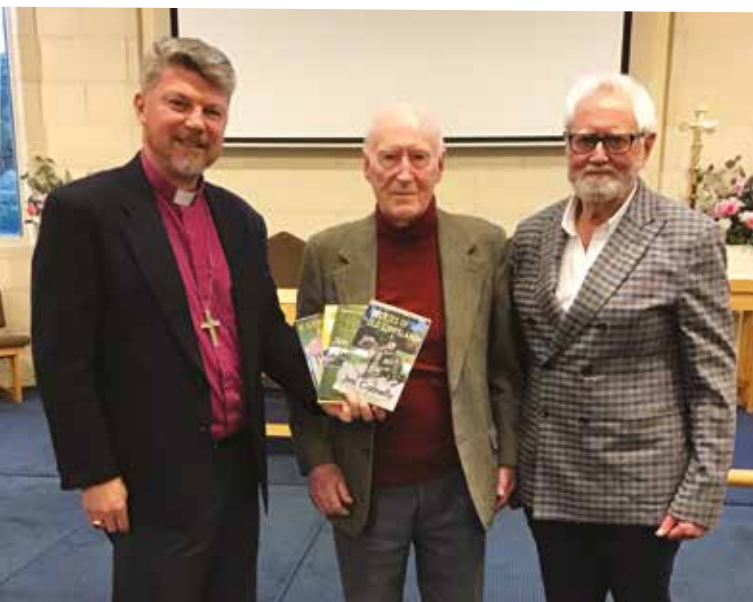
with prisoners, and so much more, made me reflect on why MU, now Anglican Mothers' Union Australia (AMUA), part of the worldwide MU, has meant so much to me.

My fellow members provide such love, fellowship and support. I speak from personal experience, having attended one conference the day after burying my beloved mother, and on having to leave another on the death of my dearly loved mother-in-law.

The theme for this year, 'Transformation – Now', encourages members to concentrate on transforming ourselves, our branches, churches and communities through the year as we surface from our COVID cocoons. My hope is that we in Gippsland can 'transform – now' and continue the AMUA vision, and develop a vision that is attuned to today's world and today's needs.

the US and Canada met to share ideas and plan in a changing world. It was such an inspirational time, and wonderful to come face-to-face with other members of our worldwide movement.

Our Provincial President, The Rev'd Anne Kennedy, shared with us at this year's June Join In. Her presentation, which included many examples of how worldwide dioceses and groups are working on gender violence, poverty, COVID education, working



(L-R) Bishop Richard, The Rev'd Canon Jim Connelly and Russell Brown at the launch

# Stories of Gippsland launched in Drouin

Bishop Richard Treloar spent a pleasant afternoon at Christ Church Drouin on 5 June. Not for a baptism, not for a confirmation, not even for a church service, but to launch four books by Jim Connelly, better known in the Diocese as The Rev'd Canon Dr Jim Connelly.

More than 100 supporters, friends and family attended the launch. Master of Ceremonies was Russell Brown, and Jim's

grandson provided a musical interlude on violin.

Jim wrote his latest four books – *Round and About in Gippsland* (see review p. 12), *Father Jeremy*, *Growing up in Garfield* and *Stories of old Gippsland* – over the last two years, but because of COVID restrictions they could not be launched until recently. *Father Jeremy*, which might appeal most to church folk, consists of 40 short stories

about an Anglican priest and the joys and sorrows of his daily work.

Jim has now published 13 books. "Maybe it's time for me to read some books instead of writing them," he said.

Published by Ingram Spark in Melbourne, London and the US, the books are available from booksellers worldwide. Half of the proceeds are donated, with over \$14,000 given to charity.

## Ecumenical and interfaith

# Pentecost party in Yarram

## Rev'd Jenny Wicking

On 5 June, the Christian community of Yarram decided to hold a Pentecost party, inviting all to join in. We had a great day, with an afternoon of fun, fellowship and celebration as we celebrated Pentecost.

The day began with recalling the first Pentecost by listening to Luke's account in Acts. Afterwards, everyone was invited to

participate in activities such as making origami peace doves, playing with balloons, building streamers and discussing the gifts of the Spirit.

In the midst of these activities, we were 'interrupted' by a group who came carrying banners and flags representing the outpouring of the Spirit on that first Pentecost. This challenged us all to reflect

on the significance of Pentecost for the churches.

These activities were followed by COVID-safe sharing of food, the singing of happy birthday to one another and the sharing of a birthday cake.

Much fun and fellowship was had as people chatted and caught up, some for the first time since the pandemic began. One comment overheard was, "... isn't it fantastic that we can be together ... it's been too long – please may we meet again, and soon?"

In Yarram there's a wonderful sense of oneness and cooperation as the

churches collaborate and work together to share the good news.



Making streamers at the Pentecost party in Yarram



# Feeding body and soul in Cowes

Rev'd Jo White

Cowes Chat 'n' Chew, a shared ministry of the combined churches of Phillip Island, is a drop-in centre that meets on Fridays, 11 am–2.30 pm, at the Emmaus Room of St Philip's Anglican Church.

This initiative of the Combined Churches of Phillip Island aims to provide a relaxed, caring environment for people of all ages and abilities, where they can find friendship, a kind, listening ear and a tasty, free lunch. It also provides a venue for Christians to share their faith and gifting, serve others, and fellowship with Christians from other denominations.



The Emmaus Room is the venue for Cowes Chat 'n' Chew

The Parish of Bass–Phillip Island provides the Emmaus Room without charge for the benefit of this important work in our community. We do this as part of our sharing of resources to support and enable this ministry, which

we share with Christians of all denominations on the island.

The drop-in centre is very important to so many people – volunteers and guests alike. Volunteers find fulfilment in being able to provide a listening ear to people who

just want to talk. Cathy says she loves feeding people and seeing people come together as community. Geoff says he absolutely loves volunteering at Chat 'n' Chew. "I love hearing people interacting with each other, serving them and seeing them enjoy the food." Another volunteer commented that she came along initially because a friend invited her, but now she volunteers once a month. For her, finding friends and making new ones is at the heart of her engagement with Chat 'n' Chew.

Those who come along find a safe place, where every gift is received with joy and without judgement. Volunteer Cathy said, "Everyone is here to share Christ's love however they can."

A quick ask around at a

recent Chat 'n' Chew found those who come along are there because sometimes they get lonely. Each Friday they look forward to the company and to eating with others. They find that here they can meet people and enjoy life, rather than just sitting around at home. It's a place to hang out and share ideas about how to cope with life.

Chat 'n' Chew does much more than give out free food: it feeds people, body and soul. I am reminded of the parable of Jesus about the final judgement when the king will say to those at his right hand:

*Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.*

(Matthew 25:40)



## The Abbey Chapel – 32 years on Raymond Island

A gathering in front of The Abbey Chapel on the occasion of its 32nd anniversary

Rev'd Edie Ashley

In June 1990, the then St Barnabas Church at Bundalaguah in the parish of Maffra was relocated to Raymond Island as The Chapel of St Barnabas. On 17 June 2022, we gathered to celebrate the 32nd anniversary of The Chapel of St Barnabas on Abbey soil.

The Rev'd Janet Wallis, the current Priest in the Parish of Maffra, preached and presided at the celebratory Eucharist. We were delighted to welcome those who came to share the celebration. Some had been members of the Bundalaguah congregation of Sunday School attendees from way back, along with Anne and The Rev'd Canon Jim Connelly, who was Priest in Maffra when St Barnabas Church was relocated.

During the service, Janet reflected on the readings set

for St Barnabas Day. She also spoke to the ongoing links between Maffra and The Abbey Chapel, noting the significant contribution made by the late Peter Down to the relocation of the Chapel.

Jim, who had been invited to offer special tribute to Peter Down, spoke of Peter's involvement in Cursillo and their time together on Raymond Island. Jim spoke personally and passionately. He said to the gathered congregation that he was "pretty sure" it was Peter Down's idea to relocate the Chapel, and it was Peter who also took the major role in getting the Chapel – in two pieces – from Bundalaguah to Raymond Island and then putting it back together!

We prayed and shared Eucharist, sang together, gave thanks, received God's blessing and left the Chapel to continue conversation over a shared meal.

## Leongatha luncheon continues support for Ukraine

Rev'd Belinda Seabrook

On 25 June, St Peter's Leongatha hosted their second Remember Ukraine fundraiser – this time a luncheon. The church was filled with 100 guests who enjoyed a Ukrainian three-course meal including borscht soup, Ukrainian meatballs and traditional honey cake. During the meal, a live link was set up with Daniel Gollan, an Australian missionary and Pastor currently in the Ukraine. He is one of the four recipients of the money raised. Daniel spoke directly with guests about the current situation in Ukraine and expressed his gratitude for the support of the South Gippsland community



Guests enjoyed a Ukrainian meal at the second Remember Ukraine fundraiser

and the Anglican parishes of Mirboo North and Leongatha for their fundraising efforts and continuing prayers.

More than \$10,000 was raised at the luncheon, bringing the total fundraising effort so far to \$31,551.

Donations continue to come in, with all money going directly to on-the-ground humanitarian aid.

To make a donation, contact  
The Rev'd Belinda Seabrook:  
belindaseabrookrevd@gmail.com

The Parish of Sale was delighted to welcome our new Dean, the Very Rev'd Keren Terpstra, on 26 June. During the service, representatives of all the parish centres presented Keren with a variety of gifts. Afterwards, the Cathedral catering team provided a warming lunch of soup and bread, and Keren cut the celebratory cake.

BRIGHT SPOT





# Vale Rev'd Graham Reynolds

6 June 1950 – 30 June 2022

Mary Nicholls

The Rev'd Graham Reynolds was regarded fondly as an energetic, faithful, pastoral, generous and proactive priest. After his priesting in 1975 he served in Bairnsdale, Traralgon, Trafalgar, Leongatha and Moe. From 1988 he transferred to incumbencies elsewhere in Victoria, and in NSW.

Supported by his wife, Judy (deceased 2016), and their three sons, Anthony, Andrew and Timothy, Graham served on many diocesan committees, and for a time as Chairman of the Diocesan CEBS (now The Anglican Boys' Society). He and Judy were passionate about children's and youth ministry, leading parish CEBS and Gippsland Girls' Friendly Society groups in Trafalgar and Leongatha, and supporting the existing groups in Moe. Together with Judy, who was a diocesan Anglican Women's Association office bearer/secretary of Gippsland Girls' Friendly Society, Graham helped ensure that many camps, sports and swimming carnivals, services, activity days and rallies were enjoyed by families across the Gippsland Diocese.

Graham had association with the Society of St Luke and their healing and wholeness programs. He was Warden to the Community of the Holy Name Melbourne Diocese in 2005.



In 2009 he became General Manager for Anglicare Victoria's Parish Partnership and Community Development Program. During his time there he assisted the Parish of Moe in its development and sharing with the new Dinka Sudanese community. As a priest and pastor, Graham certainly encouraged parishioners, providing opportunities for bible study, Education for Ministry, discipleship courses and leadership training.

The Reynolds household was always open, hospitality abounded and Graham's earlier catering training stood him in good stead for many a parish feast.

A funeral Eucharist for Graham was held at St Peter's Anglican Church Ballarat, the church of Graham's baptism, on 13 July. Our prayers are with his family. May he rest in peace.

# Learning and music at Lakes Entrance and Metung

Sandra Leggat

On 14 June, an enthusiastic group from across Gippsland met to learn more about the reverie harp and its use in assisting individuals in aged and palliative care. During the event, which was organised by Kath Grandy, Faith Brown introduced participants to the harps and provided examples of how she had successfully used them. Other participants joined in with their examples of the magic of music in general and the harps in particular. The Parish of Lakes Entrance and Metung is planning other events to promote the use of the reverie harps.

On the last day of term 2,

teachers and students from Metung Village School walked to St John's Church and provided an action-packed morning of entertainment for interested parishioners. We were treated to musical presentations, songs, dances, Auslan performances, and we participated in an energetic *Hokey Pokey*. During morning tea, the students and parishioners got to know each other, talking about shared interests. Thanks to Michael Harris and Principal Julie Henley for organising, and members of the congregation for baking and attending.

Contact Kath Grandy on 0419 889 659 for more information on the reverie harps.



Faith Brown (left) and Kath Grandy with the reverie harps

## Across the ages

# Collecting cans for a cause

Paula Walland

The value of giving back to the community is instilled in students



St Paul's Junior School students with the cans they collected

at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School, and students evidenced this recently by collecting 1818 cans for the 2022 Rotary Club of Traralgon's Give A Damn, Give A Can appeal.

Junior School students gathered an impressive 1418 cans, while secondary students contributed an extra 400 cans in their wish to assist people in need throughout our community.

To spark an extra element of fun for the cause, teachers established a friendly rivalry between classrooms to collect the highest number of cans.

Give a Damn, Give a Can is a community food collection that has been operating for 29 years. Around 10,000 cans of canned food are collected annually by the Rotary Club of Traralgon and provided to the St Vincent De Paul Food Bank in Traralgon for distribution.

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# Gippsland Anglicans commit to climate action

Jan Down  
(on behalf of ACTinG)

“We need to do this, and we can.” This was the mood as members of Gippsland Diocese’s 40th Synod voted in support of a motion for the whole Diocese to act on climate change. The motion asked:

*That this Synod makes action on climate change a major focus for the Diocese of Gippsland over the coming three-year cycle of Synod, with parishes and all Diocesan Bodies making a commitment to:*

- 1. Learn about climate change, including its current and anticipated future impacts*
- 2. Study the theology of creation and other relevant theology*
- 3. Act to reduce emissions from church buildings and vehicles and to adopt patterns of church life that work towards this end*
- 4. Encourage individuals to reduce household emissions*
- 5. Pray for the wellbeing of all creation.*

There was a very positive response, with many people speaking in favour of the motion, and at least one question regarding the availability of resources.

Bishop Richard assured Synod members that resources would be rolled out, and mentioned the generosity of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) in giving permission for links to their resources being made available through the Gippsland Anglicans website.

This is already happening. ACTinG (Acting on Climate Together in Gippsland) now has its own page on the website, and this will be the go-to place for further information and resources. Links to the UCA *Towards Zero* Vimeo series can now be found at [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/acting](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/acting), along with links to supporting resources. More information and news will be added to this page,



Photo: Anglican Parish of Gisborne

*Leonard French’s stained glass window at the Anglican Church of the Resurrection Macedon, built after the Ash Wednesday bushfires*

so keep an eye on it.

When Bishop-in-Council meets in mid-August, further decisions will be made about resources for parishes and agencies of the Diocese.

Two Gippsland events will be held during the Season of Creation, which runs from 1 September (Day of Prayer for Creation) to 4 October (the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology).

The Abbey will hold its annual Feast on 10 September, with a focus on sustainably produced local food. On 14 September at 7 pm, ACTinG will host a

webinar on climate change and what action we can take. The speakers are The Rev’d Dr Ji Zhang from the UCA; Sally Shaw, National Director of AROCHA Australia, a Christian nature conservation organisation (<https://australia.arochoa.org>); and Rod Horton from Earthworker Cooperative (<https://earthworkercooperative.com.au>) as well as NRGwise, a solar power business. These three brief talks will be followed by questions and discussion. Check the ACTinG web page for more details soon.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The climate change motion at the Diocese’s 40th Synod in June began, “That this Synod makes action on climate change a major focus for the Diocese of Gippsland over the three-year cycle of Synod ...” (moved by The Rev’d Edie Ashley and seconded by Jan Down). I rose to support the motion, which was passed unanimously, and this letter is a slight elaboration on the defence I gave for my support.

On the day that I matriculated to the University of Melbourne to study dentistry, a bushfire (which I thought was *large* because it had an *eleven*-kilometre front) swept into my home town of Macedon, destroying nearly everything in its path. That day was 16 February 1983 and it was also Ash Wednesday by the church calendar – the name by which we would remember those terrible fires in Victoria and South Australia.

Although I didn’t know it on that day, the fires swept away my aspirations to be a dentist; they also birthed aspirations to study theology and to become a priest. But since I was still only 17, The Rev’d Dr John Gaden (the theological college director at the college where I was a resident dentistry student) advised me to first study a science degree, also at the University of Melbourne. I finished that degree with an Honours research year in which I studied the regeneration of the eucalypt forests of my home mountain, Mount Macedon, under the supervision of one of Australia’s most highly regarded eucalypt ecologists, Associate Professor David Ashton.

The Ash Wednesday fires left two enduring impressions. One is the capacity of humans to mistreat and mismanage the environment in ways that could push it towards ecological disaster and destruction, through what we were beginning to understand as climate change brought on by overproduction of greenhouse gases; and the mismanagement, which was neglecting to perform controlled burns – slow-moving, low-intensity fires to reduce fuel loads (not unlike those performed with ancient wisdom by our First Nations people). The other enduring impression is the tremendous capacity of forests to regenerate in astonishing ways. And although the capacity for regeneration is not infinite, in regeneration lies our greatest hope for dedication to climate action and care for the environment.

Australian ecologist and missionary Tony Rinaudo has been featured in both *TGA* and *TMA* in the past year. Tony worked in Niger, where deforestation was causing failed crops and great poverty. In the past two decades, Tony has reforested Niger using a simple procedure called Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration. It took him over 25 years, and for the longest time he felt like he was beating his head against a brick wall, until he had a God-given revelation that the trees that he was seeking to restore to the environment were already there and that people simply needed to facilitate the regeneration by pruning the shrub-like remnant trees to have only a few ‘leading’ shoots.

If you looked closely at a white stole that I wore for the Synod Eucharist – my ordination stole – you would have noticed that one side of it is embroidered with the flames of a bushfire. Out of these arise signs of leafy regeneration and – at the interface of destruction and restoration – Christ our redeemer, slumped on the cross. The imagery was inspired by the Leonard French window in the Church of the Resurrection (see image above), built to replace two Anglican church buildings in the Macedon Ranges burnt on the night of Ash Wednesday. On the other side of the stole are depictions of Christ’s nativity and incarnation.

Regeneration is not only an appropriate topic for a science research project; it represents the hope for our world and makes a strong connection for what Christians believe about Jesus’ reconciliatory redemption – that is, that redemption extends to the restoration of the natural world.

Redemptive and restorative regeneration sits at the nexus of faith and scientific reason. And that is why, as a scientist and a theologian, I rose whole-heartedly to support this important motion.

Rev’d Dr Dean Spalding

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# Diocese of Gippsland, 1902–2022

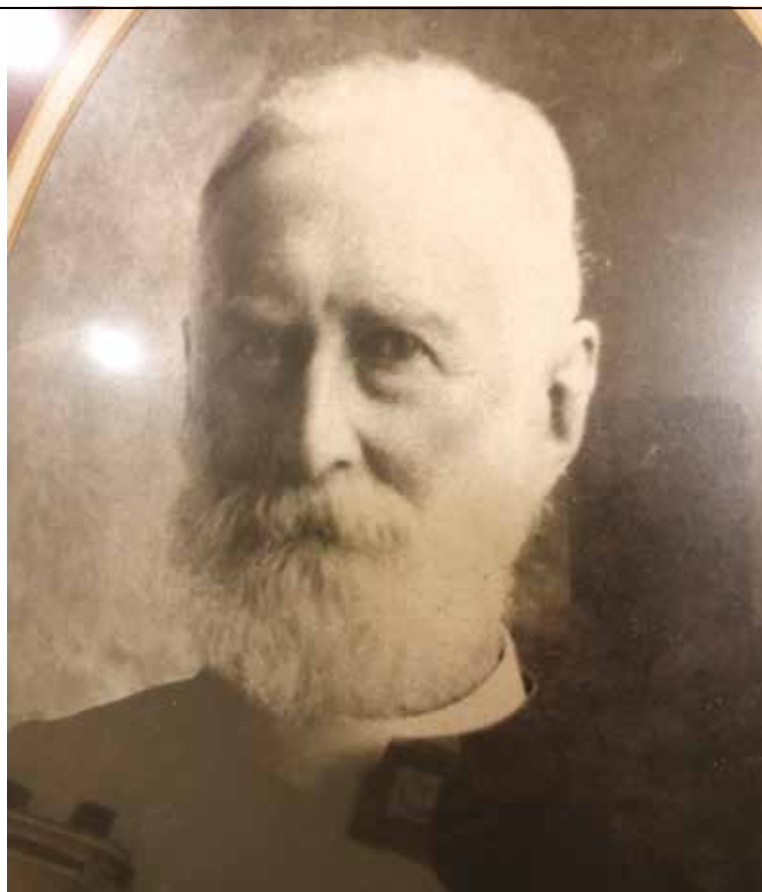
## Rev'd Canon Jim Connelly

The Diocese of Gippsland was created on 10 July 1902, when the vast Melbourne Diocese was split into four, with Bendigo, Gippsland and Wangaratta coming into existence. Ballarat had been hived off earlier. Our first bishop, The Right Rev'd Arthur Pain, from Sydney, found 26 parishes, 54 churches and 28 clergy in place.

Bishop Pain's first years were taken up with organisational and structural matters: the building of Bishops court, the establishment of a Home Mission Fund to secure the viability of the Diocese, and the establishment of the first Diocesan Synods. He was assisted by a very able group of senior clergy, including (with their placements in 1902) George Cox (Mirboo North), William Hancock (Bairnsdale), Henry Thomas Langley (Yarram), Edmund Frederick Pelletier (Leongatha) and Henry Forde Scott (Sale).

With these things in place, Bishop Pain could look to the future. A Divinity Hostel was built in Sale to prepare men for further theological training. Planning began for the establishment of hostels in Sale, Bairnsdale, Warragul, and Wonthaggi for girls and boys so that young people from outlying areas could have a secondary education.

George Harvard Cranswick, after wide experience in Sydney and the Mission field in India, succeeded an ailing Bishop Pain in 1917. Despite the grief brought to many in Gippsland during the years of the First World War and, later, the privations of the Great Depression, huge developments occurred during the 25 years of Bishop Cranswick's episcopacy. Missionary giving increased enormously. Thirty-two new churches were built. St Anne's School for girls was established in Sale. A lay brotherhood, the Brotherhood



*The Rt Rev'd Arthur Pain, first Bishop of Gippsland*

of St John the Evangelist, flourished for some years.

Perhaps the most significant of Bishop Cranswick's achievements was the introduction of a group of women, deaconesses, but known simply as 'the women of the church'. Here, the Diocese broke new ground for the Church of England in that the deaconesses were ordained according to the Ordination of Deacons, were given the prefix 'The Reverend', and took an equal place with the male clergy of the Diocese. The deaconesses established a Church Mailbag Sunday School throughout the Diocese, helped to run St Anne's School and were posted to growing towns like Wonthaggi and, later, the Latrobe Valley, but were celebrated mostly because of their steadfast work in the bush country in the western parts of the Diocese, where they brought comfort and encouragement especially to the women and children. Deaconesses like Winifred Shoobridge, May Lambert, Marie Sundell, Dorothy Allmond and Nancy Drew became household names and are still remembered fondly in many parts of our Diocese.

Bishop Blackwood was the first native-born Bishop of Gippsland. Prior to his appointment he had been

Archdeacon of Hobart. He had a distinguished record as a Chaplain on the Western Front in the First World War and was awarded the Military Cross for "conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in the field." Bishop Blackwood pushed forward with educational developments. He secured Lorna Sparrow as a legendary head of the Girls' Grammar School. He was a member of the National General Board of Religious Education and took a special interest in Diocesan Sunday Schools. A crusading teetotaler, it was his practice to 'ask' confirmees, after the service, to sign the pledge.

Edwin John Davidson, another First World War veteran and Sydney man, followed Bishop Blackwood. Sadly, he died from cancer after only two years. Bishop Davidson was a keen sailor. His ashes were sprinkled on the waters of the Gippsland Lakes in the company of a large number of friends and family, including clergy (robed) and the Bairnsdale church choir, who proceeded to the place in a flotilla of small craft.

David Arthur Garnsey, a sportsman and Rhodes Scholar, was a notable and very long-serving Bishop of Gippsland (1959–74). He came from the

headmastership of Canberra Grammar School, and education was a key concern of the new bishop's. Bishop Garnsey had responsibility for education taken over by Bishop-in-Council, while the work was spearheaded by the newly established Diocesan Board of Christian Education. A new appointment of Education Officer was introduced.

Lay people were brought into the centre of diocesan life and outreach. A whirlwind of activity was inaugurated through the Diocesan Board of Christian Education: camps for children and young adults, Sunday School teachers' conferences, Lay Readers' training courses, radio broadcasts, the distribution of Bible Reading Fellowship notes, the publication of materials on family life and welfare, and more. A Mission to Youth was held. A faith-enriching program – Mutual Responsible and Interdependence – was introduced. The Church and Life movement brought together people of differing denominations.

Bishop Garnsey was a keen ecumenist. Cooperating parishes have been a feature of Gippsland life – at Neerim South, Churchill, Boolarra, Mallacoota, Cann River, Bruthen and Ellinbank. Garnsey himself took part in international meetings of the World Council of Churches and the Anglican Congress. In a highly publicised moment, Bishop Garnsey, as President of the Australian Council of Churches, had the honour of welcoming Pope Paul VI to a meeting of the Council in the Sydney Town Hall.

Meanwhile, Gippsland Grammar was opened for boys under the first Headmaster, Mr Bert Neil. In 1970, the two schools – girls' and boys' – united, eventually to be known as Gippsland Grammar School. St Paul's Grammar School in Warragul was to follow in 1982.

The appointment of Graham Delbridge to succeed David Garnsey was greeted with much excitement.

The new bishop was a dynamic and exuberant figure, again from Sydney Diocese. More immediately, he had been bishop in Wollongong. He made an immediate impact on the Diocese, appealing particularly to young people. He also promoted interchurch interest and activity. To the horror and dismay of the whole church, Bishop Delbridge, with his daughter, Judy, was killed in a road accident in 1980, just five years after his arrival in the Diocese.

Bishop Neville Chynoweth, his successor, was a personal friend of Graham Delbridge. Both had Sydney roots, but Neville had gone on to Canberra, where he had been assistant bishop prior to his appointment to Gippsland. Neville's winsome personality, together with his deep pastoral concern and his musical talent, won over the Diocese. Family welfare was a major thrust in these years, with the growth of Gippsland Family Services and the inauguration of the Bishop's Family Appeal. The work in Gippsland of Anglicare Victoria developed from these foundations. By now Aboriginal ministry was a greater concern. Clergy such as The Rev'd Graeme Vines, together with lay people, laid a foundation that saw the eventual appointment of Aboriginal clergy in the Rev'ds Kathy Dalton and Phyllis Andy.

During these years, women played a growing part in diocesan life. An annual Lady Day rally at the Cathedral was held for Mothers' Union members. The Anglican Women's Association brought together women from the many parish organisations. Deanery rallies were organised and women's retreats held. Joan Chynoweth and others organised annual four-day bus excursions, which were hugely enjoyed. Meanwhile the movement for the Ordination of Women was growing in strength and was eventually agreed to by the Synod of 1994.



Women played an important part in the Cursillo movement. From 1988, separate women's and men's Cursillo weekends were held each year. More than 1000 Gippsland Anglicans had 'made their Cursillo' before the movement lost impetus after 30 years or so. Cursillo helped to bond people from different parishes together and heightened the sense of diocesan family. Cursillo was instrumental in building up the laity as they discovered their leadership capabilities. Above all, the Diocese was transformed by the experience of joyful Christian living experienced by so many.

Bishops Colin Sheumack and Arthur Jones saw the Diocese through to the end of the century. Colin Sheumack, a 'tried and trusted countryman,' guided the Diocese wisely and with grace. The Diocese was shaken to its core by the death of his wife, Ena, in a car accident almost immediately after leaving Gippsland. Arthur Jones was an inspirational preacher and had the honour of ordaining

the first Gippsland women to the priesthood, Sally Boothey and Caroline Nancarrow.

In the new century, the Diocese has been blessed with the reassuring leadership of Bishop Jeffrey Driver, followed by Bishops John McIntyre, Kay Goldsworthy and Richard Treloar. John McIntyre was like a prophet amongst us; his early death occasioned deep grief. Kay Goldsworthy was the first woman to be appointed bishop in the Australian church, and she went on to be Archbishop of Perth. Richard Treloar's scholarship, his gifts of teaching and preaching and his personal charm are being deeply appreciated.

Through the years of the present century, the Diocese's endeavours have continued to unfold. Spiritual development as well as environmental consciousness are being developed by the work of The Abbey on Raymond Island. Outreach to missions has been kept up, principally directed to Rwanda and New Guinea. Safe Ministry has become a matter of priority as the Church seeks to put



Photo: Graeme Peters

*Bishop of Gippsland (now Archbishop of Perth) Kay Goldsworthy, shown here at San Remo's Blessing of the Bikes in 2017, was Australia's first woman Anglican Archbishop*

all its work above reproach. The two Anglican schools have come to play an important part in the Diocese's connections with the community. Retirement villages are maintained. Liturgical enrichment and experimentation continue. In the face of the increasing secularisation of society, new ways of being church are

beginning to be developed. The role of women clergy continues to grow; two-thirds of clergy on the active list are now women. With difficulties being found in placing clergy in all parishes, locum ministry by retired clergy has become more common. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to new ways of doing liturgy and meeting together.

Still, in all the changes and chances of the years, the Diocese has retained the thing that is perhaps its most treasured gift. Gippsland remains a place where clergy and laity of all convictions of churchmanship remain in unfettered openness of fellowship and conviviality. That is a pearl of great price.

# Anglicare Victoria celebrates 25 years

**Ven Sue Jacka**

On 1 July, Beth Delzoppo and I attended Bishops-court in East Melbourne for a celebration of Anglicare Victoria's service to the community. Back in 1997, several different Anglican agencies including St John's Homes for Boys and Girls, the Mission to the Streets and Lanes, the Mission of St James and St John, and Gippsland's own Gippsland Family Services formally joined together to create a new care agency that would have consistency across the state and better ability to meet the changing needs of both society and governments who choose through which agency to deliver funded welfare services.

This required an act of Parliament! On the day the act was passed the proposed new committee (which included Beth Delzoppo) was meeting, awaiting the decision. The Hon John Delzoppo, who had recently retired from his term as speaker of Victorian Parliament, went down to Parliament House to get a copy of the new legislation to bring it back to the committee as they waited.

At the 25 years celebration, the current chair of Anglicare Victoria, Tony Sheumack (son of our former Bishop Colin Sheumack) spoke about the role of Anglicare Victoria in service, education about welfare and current societal needs, innovation in service delivery and advocacy. He explained that the great benefit of legacies and endowments are that these provide the



*Beth Delzoppo (left) and Ven Sue Jacka at Bishops-court in East Melbourne for the Anglicare Victoria celebration*

capacity to develop cutting edge programs not funded by current government grants. He cited the fact that young people can now receive funded care until 21 years of age, which came from an innovative but

not government-funded program for kids in care who were enabled to continue education or training beyond the former cutoff at 18 years of age. This meant they still had a stable home base with caring adults to

support them in a positive transition to adulthood.

At the delicious morning tea, the various speakers were encouraging and the long-term volunteers like Beth were acknowledged and thanked.



# Rev'd Canon Philip Muston retires

Richard Prideaux

Philip Broughton Muston was the son of a Sydney clergyman, but his early adult Christian influences were in Melbourne through people like John Smith and his God Squad church of Christian bikies, intent on taking Christian faith to those without any connection to Christianity or the church. Phil was also heavily into the new music of the swinging sixties and played very good guitar with the Stirrers, a band formed by then diocesan youth worker The Rev'd Peter Corney, who toured the coffee shops of Victoria with a blend of music and evangelism. Phil's close friend John McIntyre often appeared as a guest singer at these gigs and their outstanding band was called Nazrat. Phil's Master's degree from Edith Cowan University researched John Smith and his work.

Schools and coffee shops were accessible places for evangelism in those simple days when folk/rock music still lived. Phil was in the thick of it and still plays a mean guitar. He and partner Cathrine were bright young things of

their day (and still are!) Phil gained an Arts degree from Melbourne University and after a first short career in journalism studied theology at Nottingham University in the UK for three years, where his teachers included luminaries such as James Dunn and John Goldingay. In 1980, he returned to Melbourne for ordination by Archbishop Robert Dann. Previous to that he had worked for four years on *The Sun News-Pictorial* and later the *Nottingham Evening Post*, and was for a while a columnist on *Church Scene*.

After curacies at Richmond and Doncaster Phil became a Media Officer for Melbourne Diocese and editor of what became *The Melbourne Anglican*, where his sometimes radical ideas occasionally upset some of the more conservative readers. Phil's ministry career was varied: he successfully led parishes in Elwood, Nightcliff in Darwin, and Leederville in Perth, while maintaining media ministry through commercial radio outlets.

When his former colleague and mentor Barry Huggett retired from the Parish of Warragul in 2002 after a



The Rev'd Canon Philip Muston enjoying time with The Rev'd Canon Phyllis Andy

fruitful ministry, including the plans for a new church, my wife, Ann, was on the incumbency committee and Phil and Cathrine were first on the list. The committee interviewed the Mustons at Monash University on a brand new, life-sized computer screen, which was state of the art in its day. Phil and Cathrine were keen to come, and there began a memorable and effective ministry, which included transforming the former parish hall into a new

warm and modern worship centre while maintaining the original church for the 8 am congregation.

Phil's style was and still is casual, strongly evangelical and light on formality. I well recall his preaching style, which consisted of him moving to the centre aisle, bible in hand and what looked like a few handwritten notes. He would simply start to talk on the theme of the day, looking directly at the congregation, and

it was always thought-provoking, challenging and spiritually uplifting. Phil's latter years at Warragul were challenging: on two occasions, as Vicar General, he was called away to Sale to be the diocesan Administrator, on both occasions for periods of nine months. Phil's final parish was Lakes Entrance-Metung.

Phil Muston is one of a rare species. He is by nature quietly spoken and thoughtful. He never interrupts or speaks over anyone. When he

finally enters the conversation he is gentle, loving and forgiving and generous even to those he does not agree with. He is a survivor. He does not have to win every conversation. His ideas are still radical and far reaching and no doubt he is excited to be free of the limitations of formal ministry. Phil has been a true friend to me over many years and a most trustworthy go-to person. I wish him and Cathrine every blessing in the years ahead.

## Families on holiday at The Abbey Raymond Island

Rev'd Judith Lake

During the first week of the school holidays in June, four Gippsland families with connections to Anglicare enjoyed some time together at the Abbey and surrounds at Raymond Island. Abbey volunteers David and Deb Chambers and I spent time at The Abbey with them.

David and Deb organised the menu, catering for anyone with food allergies, likes and dislikes. They did the shopping, food preparation and cooking. I was there as Chaplain for the families and as

an extra kitchen hand.

At mealtimes we sat together, sharing conversations about activities that families may have been doing during the day and the possibilities for the next day. Young children were excited to see koalas and kangaroos, there were walks along the beach, the pier or in the bush, and trips on the ferry.

We set up a range of activities for families to do while at the Abbey: story books to read and share, painting, drawing and bubbles to blow. There was football and cricket gear, along with a table tennis table.

Thank you to Anglicare, Rev'd Edie Ashley, Anna in administration, Abbey volunteers and caterers David and Deb, and families who came along for a short break. Thanks to the Diocese for enabling this ministry to be offered in partnership with Anglicare Gippsland.

Being asked to be part of the team as Chaplain and kitchen hand was an opportunity to be with and hear the stories and concerns of others. Being able to share in this time with families is a position of privileged trust – thank you.



the abbey



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# Faith in the future?

Young Christians want the Church to do more on climate change

(Continued from page 1)

The findings highlight the growing levels of concern that younger Christians in Australia have about climate change, and their desire to see the Church doing more about it. More than three in five Christians aged 18–40 report being very or extremely concerned about climate change and two-thirds think local churches should be responsible for action to address it.

Alongside the quantitative studies, we invited theologians, development workers, Christian ministry leaders and young people themselves to share their views on why and how Christians can respond to this issue.

Tim Healy, who lectures in theology and ministry at Alphacrucis College and has a Master's degree in Theology with a research focus on Christian Environmental Ethics, sees a direct link between caring for creation, including taking action to limit climate change, and the Christian mandate to love our neighbour.

"If we truly love people, we will care deeply about the environment on which they depend for their very existence. If we care about humanity, we will care about the quality of air humans need to breathe and the quality of water they need to drink."

"Our actions toward the earth's systems and resources today will seriously affect the lives of those who live tomorrow and it's for this reason those actions ought to demonstrate the love and consideration for others that Jesus encouraged through His life and teaching."

Kuki Rokhum is Director of Training and Mobilisation for EFICOR India, a Christian organisation that serves people experiencing poverty and marginalisation in India and one of Tearfund's long term partners. Her journey to a deeper understanding of what it means to live as God's people in God's world has involved wrestling with the theology of creation care, while witnessing the experiences of people living

in poverty in India being made worse by the impact of climate change.

"In India, as in other places, we are feeling the effects of climate change in extreme weather events, changing monsoon patterns and record temperatures. EFICOR works with farmers who tell us how things have changed. Unpredictable monsoons have affected production. More frequent droughts and flooding are causing huge losses for farmers and having a disastrous impact."

"If we truly love people, we will care deeply about the environment on which they depend for their very existence. If we care about humanity, we will care about the quality of air humans need to breathe and the quality of water they need to drink."

The research indicates that the majority of church leaders are willing to encourage their church community to take action to tackle climate change. However, 35 per cent say they rarely preach on environmental matters.

One of the most important and powerful things the Church can do in response to climate change is to talk about it in ways that connect with the shared values of our

Christian faith. Talking about climate change helps people to feel less alone, easing their concerns or anxieties, while challenging what needs to change and spurring us on to action.

The research indicated more open discussion is also something younger Christians are looking for from the Church. They want the Church to be raising awareness, making space for discussion about climate change, and helping them to understand the connections between care for creation and their faith.

Twenty-year-old Christian Rohen Snowball has learned first-hand the value of honest, gracious conversations about climate change and urges Christians to "be bold" in doing more to care for the earth.

"I ignored climate change for a long time," Rohen says. "Then I did lots of reading and discovered what a huge problem it is, and became quite overwhelmed by it. But then I got active and found I was able to deal with it a lot better."

Rohen is now committed to starting conversations about climate change in his church community and with his friends and family.

Beyond opening up the conversation, there are many practical steps we can take as individuals and as communities of faith

to reduce the harmful impact we have on our climate, including changing and reducing our energy use, reducing waste and advocating for systemic and social change. While our individual actions can feel like a drop in the ocean, they play a part in turning the tide.

In the words of Torres Strait Island Elder Auntie

Rose Elu, "Climate change is a justice issue that God wants us to be actively engaged in."

"We need Christians to come together and join our hands to tackle climate change."

Emma Wyndham Chalmers  
is Head of Advocacy  
at Tearfund Australia

## Climate change "feels more imminent now"

(Continued from page 1)



Hattie Steenholdt

After the fire had gone through, the group opted to stay in Mallacoota for a few days before being evacuated on a navy boat to Melbourne.

"We had to figure out how we could help serve, but not get in the way," says Hattie. "We were really conscious of not being a burden on resources."

They helped in various ways, including volunteering at the op shop, helping with the clean-up and distributing masks to people who needed them. On New Year's Day, they put on a BBQ for the community and created a place where people could come and simply talk about what they'd experienced.

"We were giving people a space to decompress and process what had happened," says Hattie. "We wanted to let people react how they needed to react."

It was confronting at times. "At one point a girl came and sat down with us and she was holding a piece of wood which was what was left of her house."

Like many people of her generation, Hattie was already very aware prior to

the fires of the issue of climate change and its links with extreme weather events.

"But you become hyper-aware of it when you're in the middle of an event," she says. "It makes it real when you're really in it. What was most impactful was after we were out and gone [from Mallacoota], seeing that for months and months it was continuing to happen around the country. It was taking so much land and animals and people's places."

She says that this emotional connection makes it all the more frustrating when she hears people claim that there's no relationship between human-induced climate change and the bushfires.

"It feels more imminent now, post-fire. I think, 'I had such a visceral experience of this and I wish you could feel like I do'", she says.

She admits that for many people, taking action on climate "is hard, because we have to make sacrifices for it, give up things. It makes our lives less simple."

But this is our calling as Christians, she says.

Courtesy Tearfund Australia

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# Round and About in Gippsland

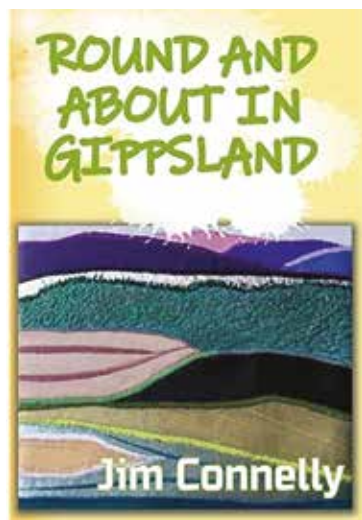
Jim Connelly  
Ingram Spark  
2020

Rev'd Canon David Head

**R**ound and About in Gippsland is a gem of a book for all those who live in or love Gippsland!

The Rev'd Canon Dr Jim Connelly is a well-known and loved figure in Anglican Church circles for his thoughtful creative mind and wit, and his care and inclusive love for all people. He has served either as Rector or Locum in many parishes across the whole Gippsland region.

Jim writes with an obvious great love for the geography and history of Gippsland and for the diverse peoples and cultures (both first nations and more recent multicultural influences) of this vast and disparate region of Victoria. He has lived all his life in Gippsland and has clearly driven, bicycled and walked vast parts of it. He writes with a deep admiration and perceptiveness for the First Nations peoples, and pioneers and current residents



of Gippsland. He also has enormous knowledge of early authors and poets, artists, and the men and women who settled and suffered enormous trials in this beautiful, hard country. He talks of the local and regional catastrophes of fire and flood and disease, which have been a constant and dangerous presence.

Every little town or community and every area of historical or natural interest seems to be covered, and all readers will come away from this book enlightened and with a deeper knowledge of Gippsland. I commend with enthusiasm this wonderful and easy-to-read book, which has all major towns (and their localities) in alphabetically ordered chapters.

## ADVERTISING FEATURE

### Leongatha hosts Daffodil Festival

St Peter's Anglican Church joins with the community for the August 2022 Daffodil Festival. The church will host flowers, displays and refreshments.

This year's theme is Life Celebrations.

Open Thursday afternoon, Friday and Saturday.

See advertisement in this issue.

The Leongatha Horticultural Society's Daffodil & Floral Show is held at the Memorial Hall.

It includes the Daffodil Festival, Camellia Show and Photo Exhibition.

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Rev'd Dr Dean Spalding

There is a deep joy when your oldest child (age 16) chooses a movie for you and your wife to go see on your anniversary, books it online, sends you off, and you both love it. (She really does know and understand us!) That was my experience of seeing *The Duke* in the cinema. I knew nothing of the making of this film, nor the true story behind its production. But it was a delight to watch.

Being born in the mid-sixties and growing up in Australia, my concept of paying a 'television licence fee' is a purely historic one thanks to the foresight of the Whitlam government who in the 1970s abolished television licence fees and the thankful failure of their re-institution by any subsequent Australian federal government. Not so lucky the UK. Despite protests throughout the years, these licences have been largely constant since television first appeared in the 1950s in the UK.

The most famous protester for the abolition of television licence fees in the UK for pensioners is the central protagonist in *The Duke*, Kempton Bunton (Jim Broadbent). In the mid-sixties, Bunton was sentenced to three months in prison for the 1961 theft of the Goya painting *Portrait of the Duke of Wellington* from the National Gallery in London. Bunton claimed he only stole the painting to attract attention to his cause.

There is a delightful and natural humour in Bunton's single-minded pursuit of justice in relation to abolishing television licences for elderly pensioners. Bunton is an eccentric autodidact and therefore an original thinker whose blend of honesty and naivete – particularly as he makes his defence in the court scenes – had folk gently laughing in



the cinema, as I am certain they did when the real trial transpired. This movie will greatly increase audiences' appreciation for the range and depth of Helen Mirren's talent for her portrayal of Bunton's long-suffering wife, Dorothy. Mirren plays a wife who is frustrated by her powerlessness to change the behaviour of her husband, who in turn is motivated by his deep but costly convictions. Although most of Mirren's performance conveys Dorothy's anger and frustrations, there are moments of tenderness and warmth in the relationship between Kempton and Dorothy — as when they spontaneously dance in the kitchen.

There are some great plot twists involving unreliable and misleading narration by Bunton and other characters. I won't write any more for fear of 'spoilers'. This is *not* a film to research before you watch it! The movie's utilisation of a well-meaning but unreliable narration by the central character makes this a very engaging movie, which is faithful to the true story of Bunton and his fight against the injustice of television licence fees, which in the UK are required from everyone with a television (including elderly pensioners).

The parallel plot, which adds a great degree of humanity to the movie, is the portrayal of a largely ungrieved death of Kempton

and Dorothy's daughter in a bicycle accident aged only 18. Although the debacle with the theft of the Goya and its connection to the protest against television licence fees sits in the foreground of the plot, the unprocessed grief for their daughter is the far more significant movement of this powerful film. In the end, the audience must decide what was more significant about the journey of this family, and it turns out to be far more about the fullness of life that is only available if great losses are well attended and openly grieved.

*The Duke* turned out to be the finale for director Roger Mitchell (well known for directing *Notting Hill*), and a fitting swansong for a talented director. The movie was filmed in 2020. Mitchell died in 2021. And, because of COVID, the Australian cinema debut of the movie was postponed until 31 March this year. Even then, it did not remain long in the box office, but thankfully it has quickly become available through many retailers as a DVD.

I would rate *The Duke* as a must-see. It inspires courage and action in the face of injustice, and compassion towards self and others in the face of great grief. And it is guaranteed to raise a smile. (The Potterverse will recognise actor Jim Broadbent as Professor Horace Slughorn.)

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