

The Gippsland Anglican

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Rebecca Hayman ordained Deacon

Jan Down

The Rev'd Rebecca Hayman was ordained Deacon in the Church of God on Saturday 12 February 2022 at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

Until recently, Rebecca was Associate Pastor at All Saints Greensborough. She has also lived in India and China, but grew up in Sale, attending St Anne's and Gippsland Grammar. She is happy to be back in Gippsland and says it feels like coming home.

Rebecca has been appointed to the Parish of Morwell, where she looks forward to working with The Ven Sue Jacka, Rector of Morwell, and The Rev'd Kathy Dalton, Aboriginal Ministry Support Group in the Latrobe Valley.

Following the processional hymn, the service began with the sound of the claspsticks, which Kathy played as she approached the microphone to give the Welcome to Country. Acting Dean, The Rev'd Liam Matthews, then welcomed everyone to the Cathedral.

The Rev'd Dr Joy Sandefur, who had spent the previous few days on retreat with Rebecca at The Abbey on Raymond Island, preached on the reading from Joshua 1:1-9 – the commissioning of Joshua by God, after the death of Moses.

Joy encouraged Rebecca and the congregation with God's instructions to Joshua: "Be strong and courageous, and God will be with you."

She pointed out that we sometimes think this promise implies having a sense of God's presence, but actually it means "God will make it



The Rev'd Rebecca Hayman with sister Anna Coverdale and brother-in-law Keith Coverdale

happen." The implication for Joshua is that he will succeed in leading the people across the River Jordan into Canaan. His responsibility was to obey God and to be faithful, and God would take care of the rest. And it happened.

Joy provided two further Old Testament and two New Testament examples of stories where God promises to be with someone as they are commissioned for a task, including the promise Jesus gave to his disciples in the Great Commission of Matthew 28: 19-20, "I am with you always, to the end of the age."

But does God make it happen today? Joy provided a very inspiring example from her own life. In 1976 she became a member of the Kriol Bible translation team in south-east Arnhem Land.

She worked on this project for 14 years in the face of opposition, difficulties and discouragements. But the whole Bible was eventually published in 2007 and Kriol is still the only Aboriginal language to have a whole Bible.

"Does God make it happen? Yes. I've seen it," she said, adding that when God calls us, he equips us. "Our part is to be faithful disciples of Jesus."

Rebecca was presented to Bishop Richard by The Ven Graham Knott, the Ministry Development Officer, and by The Rev'd Brian Norris, a representative of the Vocations Panel. Canon David Head led the sung Litany.

The ordination itself soon followed, during which there was the traditional laying

on of hands by the Bishop with prayer for the Holy Spirit to come upon the candidate to equip her for ministry.

Commenting on the service later, Rebecca said that while it was "totally overwhelming," those prayers meant a lot. "It was great to be prayed for that the Holy Spirit would come. That was super meaningful to me." She was especially grateful to The Rev'd Kate Campbell (a permanent Deacon), who mentored Rebecca as she served at the altar for the first time in Deacon's orders. At the Greeting of the Peace, when Bishop Richard presented The Rev'd Rebecca Hayman to the congregation, there was joyful applause.

After the service, Sue welcomed Rebecca into the parish of Morwell,

the Western Region and the Diocese of Gippsland, saying she was excited to see how Rebecca's ministry will unfold.

Rebecca responded with thanks to Sue, Kathy, Bishop Richard, Joy Sandefur, Edie Ashley, Graham, Brian, the people who had driven down from Melbourne, those from Morwell, everyone present, those watching online, and her own family, who were there to celebrate with her, including her parents.

The public celebrations concluded with a delightful boxed picnic lunch, supplied by the Cathedral catering team.

Bec is married to Michael Anderson and they have two young adult children, Megan and Esther. The family has moved into a house at Coalville.

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The following is excerpted from the text of an apology I offered to survivors of institutional child sexual abuse during a Service of Lament and Contrition at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale, on Ash Wednesday 2019. I reproduce it here following recent media coverage of historic abuse at Gippsland Grammar, as a reminder of our organisational failings and of our determination both to respond with compassion and justice to survivors and to ensure that our centres of ministry are safe places for all.



Bishop Richard Treloar

Tonight [6 March 2019] we echo the National Apology made to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse on 22 October last year by the Prime Minister. And we acknowledge the historic abuse that has taken place here in Gippsland within the orbit of responsibility of our own Anglican organisations.

We do so, quite intentionally, on Ash Wednesday: a day in the calendar of the Church universal when we are called to penitence, and recognition of our finitude and our frailty – both as individuals, and as the body of Christ; an ever-wounded body that, even in the light of Easter Day, bears the marks of betrayal, injustice, abandonment, the misuse of power, and violence – stories of which we will hear as Lent and Holy Week unfold, drawing us again to the foot of the cross to weep with Mary that something like that could happen to one so innocent, while we stood by.

Any such apology must be of a piece with that broader spiritual work, consistent with the practice of our faith, to which we seek to bring ever greater integrity: integrity that is a function of a collective, soul-searching honesty; for the truth, and only the truth, will set us and others free.

Reflecting on what makes us human, one of my former teachers of theology, Jesuit priest Andy Hamilton, had this to say:

When we are teaching our children a right way to live, we want them to learn three magic words: please, thank you, and sorry. If they make these words central in their lives and mean them, they will treat everything . . . as a gift and not an entitlement, and they will be well equipped to form and heal relationships.

Eureka Street,
‘The national apology 11 years on’, cited online 13/02/19

Hamilton goes on to observe that some apologies are made out of love, others out of fear. In its highest form, he argues, contrition is motivated by love for the injured person. However, contrition can also be motivated by concern for oneself, expressed in shame or guilt at not living up to expectations, or in fear of the consequences.

The gospel passage we have just heard [Matt 18:1–7] sets out these two sources and qualities of contrition.

The first is born of a sense of the inestimable worth of the person wronged. Jesus places a child in the midst of the disciples, drawing counter-cultural attention to the inherent dignity and worth of the child, not least as an embodiment of kingdom values, notably humility. At the same time, Jesus names the vulnerability of such ‘little ones’, which demands particular things of those less vulnerable.

The second sort of contrition referred to by Hamilton is born of a sense of a fear of judgement in relation to failure in this regard: ‘Woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes.’

Contrition that is motivated by fear of judgement – the world’s or God’s – is not ‘perfect contrition’ in the language of sacramental confession. Yes indeed, woe to us; and shame on us; but not in that kind of ‘woe is me’, indulgent self-loathing that becomes yet another form of preoccupation with ourselves and the Church as institution, rather than focusing on the vulnerable person, the child, the abused.

That kind of ‘imperfect contrition’ feeds back in to the structural brokenness which enabled such atrocities to happen in the first place, and – whilst our motives are

often mixed – must not be the impetus for the apology we offer.

So it is that Jan Richardson in her Ash Wednesday poem *Blessing the Dust*, urges ‘let us not be marked for shame’ – at least not in that self-serving sense; rather, let us be marked for the sort of contrition that is motivated by respect for the injured, by care for the vulnerable, which – in this context – is survivor-focused and trauma-informed, which includes the sort of repentance that leads to restitution and reparation, even if reconciliation must wait for the new creation.

Let us be marked (as Richardson implores) ‘for claiming what God can do within the dust’: redemptive work reflected in an unwavering commitment to child safety; reflected in cultural change driven not by compliance, or insurance, but by kingdom values, and a gospel-shaped worldview; reflected in a willingness to face into the clericalism, and the other systemic forces in our Church which we have allowed to erode transparency and accountability, to substitute power for authority, and to diminish the ministry of all the baptised.

Tonight we confess, with a contrition which places the child at the centre, our collective sin, our structural complicity in enabling the sorts of conditions in which such insidious but no longer unspeakable stumbling blocks could be placed before the vulnerable in our care, under our watch.

In that spirit, and with those assurances, I apologise to all survivors and victims of sexual abuse at the hands of those whom they trusted and upon whose protection they relied within the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland – in our churches and schools and other organisations. We have failed you. We are sorry for the evil done to you, and the harm and trauma you have suffered. Marked with ashes, we repent. Shrivens, we wait for what God will do within the dust.

+RHL

70th anniversary of accession of Queen Elizabeth II

Occasional prayer

*Almighty God, ruler of every nation,
we give you thanks for bestowing your wisdom
upon our Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth.*

*Thank you for sustaining her through seventy years
as a gracious leader in the United Kingdom
and the Commonwealth of Nations.*

*We thank you for her good counsel
and her steadfast faith.*

*Bless her, we pray,
with the strength of your Holy Spirit,
to continue to serve, encourage and inspire her people,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Amen.

Elizabeth Smith, General Synod Liturgy Commission, Anglican Church of Australia



Photo: C Davenport

National Pleasure Audit asks Australians what feels good

A nationwide survey investigating the nature and extent of Australians' pleasures has been launched by Southern Cross University Senior Lecturer in Psychology, Dr Desirée Kozlowski.

The National Pleasure Audit aims to provide a snapshot of where people find pleasure, how much of it they find, as well as how often and how strongly they experience certain positive feelings. The survey is open to all Australians over 18.

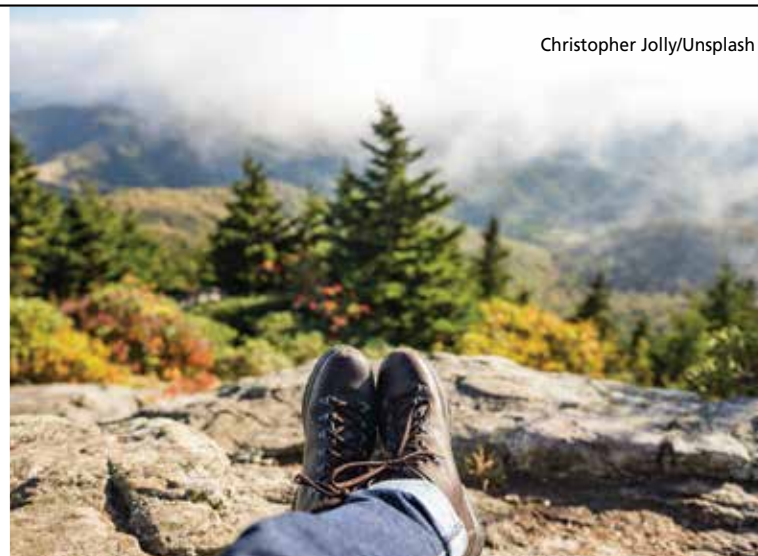
"We want to know more about the link between wellbeing and experiencing pleasure. The evidence is growing very strongly to show that increasing our range of pleasurable experiences is associated with a number of benefits, from reducing perceived stress,

depression and anxiety to boosting our immune function and even to longevity," Dr Kozlowski said.

A specialist in the research field of pleasure and emotional intelligence, Dr Kozlowski defines pleasure simply as "something that feels enjoyable", with the small things often playing the biggest part.

"If we build a variety of more small pleasures each day we increase our resilience. From stopping to enjoy the smell of coffee and the warm feeling of the cup in your hand, to stepping into a hot shower, or walking on the grass with no shoes on, all these things can reduce our anxiety and stress," she explains.

"The way this works is by activating the equal but opposite arm of the autonomic nervous system,



Christopher Jolly/Unsplash

the parasympathetic division, and that's all about rest and restoration," Dr Kozlowski said.

The National Pleasure Audit not only asks respondents to consider what gives them pleasure, but to quantify how much time and value they place on maximising the experience. This can be through positive anticipation

of a pleasurable experience, savouring the moment or positive reminiscing.

According to Dr Kozlowski, there is evidence that the act of savouring enhances the positive effects of pleasure, with some people more inclined to savour, or maximise, their experiences of pleasure.

"There is also evidence that savouring can be increased through training and that such increases can produce an upward spiral of benefits over sustained periods. This kind of intervention can also reduce anxiety and depression," she said.

Data from the survey will be used to inform Dr Kozlowski's research into pleasure and provide foundations for future work on boosting pleasure in order to improve health and quality of life.

The National Pleasure Audit is an anonymous online survey consisting of questions about experiences that people find to be pleasurable, together with validated measures of psychological wellbeing, positive and negative affect, and tendency toward savouring.

You can participate in The National Pleasure Audit and distribute the link to others who might be interested: www.NationalPleasureAudit.com. The survey is open until the end of March.

Courtesy Southern Cross University

La Trobe University launches violence prevention roadmap

Following an Australia-wide investigation and consultation, La Trobe University researchers have created a detailed roadmap to help prevent sexual violence and harassment against women and girls.

The roadmap provides a framework for policy-makers and organisations working to tackle the pervasive problem causing harm to a large number of Australians. It is published within a report that forms part of the Federal Government's National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.

La Trobe University researcher Dr Leesa Hooker said number of Australian women affected by sexual violence and harassment is shocking.

"In Australia, one in five women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15; 53 per cent of women have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime; and women account for 93 per cent of cases where the sexual violence victim-survivor was hospitalised," Dr Hooker said.

"Having reviewed global evidence of what works to reduce and prevent sexual violence and harm, and conducted our own extensive national consultation with experts in communities throughout Australia, we've identified a number of effective and promising actions that we believe will reduce the scale of this problem."

Dr Hooker, a senior research fellow at the Judith Lumley Centre and La Trobe Rural Health School, said the resulting roadmap was intended to be an early guide for the government and community health sectors. Its recommendations (detailed on page 26 of the report) include:

- workforce training for early childhood, maternal and child health sectors to support parents and caregivers
- A consistent, inclusive and adaptable national curriculum on respectful relationships and sex education, affirmative consent and critical

literacy of media, technology and pornography

- organisations to provide compulsory workforce and leadership primary prevention training
- transforming social norms through social marketing campaigns and other activities
- reforming regulations, laws and policies on harmful online content and technology-facilitated abuse.

The report highlights that all interventions need to be intersectional, trauma-informed and co-designed.

"If we want to eliminate sexual violence and harassment against women and girls in Australia, we're going to need sustained investment not just in prevention programs, but in evaluating those programs to measure the long-term outcomes of our efforts," Dr Hooker said.

*Read the full report at bit.ly/3oNe0zh and the Australian Anglican Church's Ten Commitments at www.anglican.org.au.
Courtesy La Trobe University*



Jacob King/PA Wire/PA Images

Celebrations for Queen's Platinum Jubilee

On 6 February, the Queen became the first British monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, marking her reign of 70 years.

As part of her message released on the eve of the 70th anniversary of her accession to the throne, the Queen wrote that the milestone "affords me a time to reflect on the goodwill shown to me by people of all nationalities, faiths and ages in this country and around the world over these years. I would like to express my thanks to you all for your support."

Speaking to the BBC shortly before the anniversary, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby

described the Queen's Christian faith as "the rock on which she stands."

Elizabeth learned of the death of her father, George VI, and her ascension to the throne while in Kenya, on her way to commence a royal tour of Australia. The trip was postponed until 1954.

In one of many initiatives to mark this anniversary, the Queen's Green Canopy has issued an invitation to "plant a tree for the jubilee."

Accession Day services were held in churches around Australia, including at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne. A range of national and community events are planned throughout this year.

Australia Day awards for two Gippsland Anglicans



Photo: Jan Down

Christine Morris with her dog Scamp

Christine Morris OAM

Jan Down

Christine Morris lives by a simple rule: “Love God, love others, love self ... and love my dogs!”

Christine, of St Paul’s Cathedral Parish, Sale, has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for “service to the community, particularly through the church.” Christine is thrilled with the wording of the award, as she feels strongly that the church should be out in the community. “I do what I do, as I can’t just serve the church; I need to be taking God out to the community,” she explained.

While delighted to receive the award, Christine is quick to acknowledge the many other hard-working volunteers at St Paul’s Cathedral who also “serve God, the church and the community.” She is encouraging others to “regularly tell or show someone they are appreciated.”

Christine’s service to the community includes compering the City of Sale Eisteddfod, organising the Community Carols program and delivering leftover bread from bakeries five days a week. Some of this goes to families she visits, some to the Marley Street Community Hub, and some to the Breakfast Club at the Grey Street Primary School in Traralgon, one of the schools where she works as a casual relief teacher.

Christine enjoys teaching, and she loves having fun with children. She has

been involved with various children’s ministries and outreach activities, such as Summer in Seaspray, monthly outreach at the Morwell Market (initially as Boppie the clown), mainly music, Sunday School and Youth Group. Her creative talent is often in evidence, as in the way she decorates the cathedral for festivals.

The sheer volume of work Christine manages in a day leaves those around her breathless. Fracturing her wrist late last year did not stop her from teaching a prep class for the last four weeks of term, or continuing very nearly all of her normal work at the cathedral, such as producing the Sunday bulletin, live-streaming services, managing church social media, coordinating the cathedral’s Giant Book Sale (not held this summer), running the church’s emergency food pantry, taking photos at baptisms, being verger for weddings, and all the duties of being a lay canon, lay reader and chapter clerk. All of this while also caring for her 96-year-old mother who, until a few weeks ago, was living with Christine.

Always the wit, just after her wrist was broken, Christine quipped, “People are always telling me to take a break, so I have!”

Christine has been involved in churches all her life. She grew up at Combienbar, where her family attended the Noorinbee Methodist Church, later incorporated into the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong.

Her other motto for living is to “share Jesus’ love, using words when necessary.”

Lorraine Kinrade OAM



Photo: Pauline Davies

Locum Rev'd Bruce Charles congratulating Lorraine Kinrade along with the congregation

Pauline Davies

In Drouin parish we were all delighted to hear that our own Lorraine Kinrade had been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day Honours list.

Lorraine has been an important part of Christ Church for half a century or more, a regular worshipper and having served the Drouin Anglican Parish in many ways, principally as churchwarden for 40 years. She remains a warden and a member of Parish Council. Lorraine was a member of the building committee, playing her part in the construction of our new church, and she has been a key member of the ladies fellowship.

Outside the parish, Lorraine has had leading roles in CWA, Meals on Wheels and Drouin Hills Probosc Club. She was President of the local Australia bicentenary committee and a member of the shire’s Australia Day committee.

Local kindergartens, schools, many sporting clubs and other churches and community organisations have received support from Lorraine over many years. Her involvement with the community started when her children were young, supporting their interests, and her involvement with other organisations grew over the years. With the support of her husband, John, and

for the Aged, Meals on Wheels and Drouin Ficus Festival. Lorraine has been on many committees and took part in major roles with the majority of them over the years, as well as generally volunteering wherever help was needed.

Lorraine celebrated her major award and 60-year achievements with a family barbecue on Australia Day. She was congratulated at our church service in Drouin on 30 January by our locum minister, The Rev’d Bruce Charles, and presented with a huge bouquet of Australian native flowers in recognition of her accomplishments.

Our community is honoured to have in our midst such an experienced and knowledgeable person who has given so much of herself to her church and community. She remains modest and humbled for being recognised with her award. Congratulations to Lorraine Kinrade for a lifetime of giving to others.

Parish Partnership grants now available

Twice a year the Parish Partnerships Steering Committee offers seeding grants to parishes to support their work in the community. Community Development Officer Cathrine Muston is now taking applications for the April grant round.

With the impact of COVID lockdowns fracturing connections and making the organising of gatherings complex, Parish Partnership grants are designed to enable parishes to put new ideas and projects into

action with some funding as well as strategic and planning support.

Parish Partnership grants are available to any Anglican parish in the Diocese of Gippsland. For funding guidelines and assistance with completing the application, please contact Cathrine Muston at Anglicare Victoria: cathrine.muston@anglicarevic.org.au, 0458 450 370.

Grant applications close on Friday 1 April 2022.



The St Paul’s Cathedral food cupboard updated its storage thanks to a Parish Partnerships grant last October

Living the Trinity at Tarraville

Glenda Amos

Members of the three churches in the Yarram parish gathered with visitors from other parts of Gippsland for our service at Christ Church Tarraville on 30 January. It was a traditional Holy Communion and, accompanied by Warren on the pedal organ, we sang *Here I am, Lord* followed by *Tell Out My Soul* during the service, concluding the service with *Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer*.

A jigsaw was the focus of the children's talk. The children began their task, and then discovered that some pieces were 'missing'. After a while, members of the three churches produced

some further pieces. Rev'd Tony Wicking found the final missing piece on the edge of the altar – the 'cornerstone'. The jigsaw was complete and our lives are complete with God as our 'cornerstone'.

Tony and the Rev'd Jenny presented their sermon in three parts. Jenny began by describing her stole as being yellow as well as blue and green because her background was in the community before coming to ministry. The blue in Tony's stole represents a more traditional background, with the green signifying growth in their shared ministry.

The third part of the sermon was over to the congregation – how are we doing as a parish and where is this year leading us? We want to continue our traditions and

build our connections with the community. Being able to have our Holy Trinity church open during weekdays again is a significant step towards achieving the goal of building community connections. Twice Blessed Op Shop is a vital part of the Yarram community for people to donate goods, for people to find items that they need, and for people to make contact with one another again.

Our monthly markets at Holy Trinity are also making these connections; so too are the coffee mornings in Yarram and Port Albert.

We have so many opportunities to live the Trinity – three churches, three colours and three community locations for finding our connections.



Three young members of the congregation ponder the puzzle of missing pieces, guided by Rev'd Jenny Wicking

We go with the Word of God on our lips, the truth of Christ in our hearts

and the Love of the Spirit to empower our lives. We go, for Christ goes with us. Amen.

Four St Mary's confirmations ... finally

St Mary's Morwell

The glorious morning of 6 February saw the confirmation of four candidates at St Mary's Morwell. The occasion had been postponed four times since March 2020 because of COVID-19 restrictions.

The four candidates were Chelsie, sponsored by her neighbour; Kiah and Vanessa, sponsored

jointly by their mother and the Sacristan of St Mary's; and Raymon, sponsored by his daughter.

Bishop Richard officiated at the confirmation with the time-honoured laying-on of hands – a proud part of the Christian tradition from and for all time.

The confirmees and sponsors together chose their own hymns or songs and each candidate was

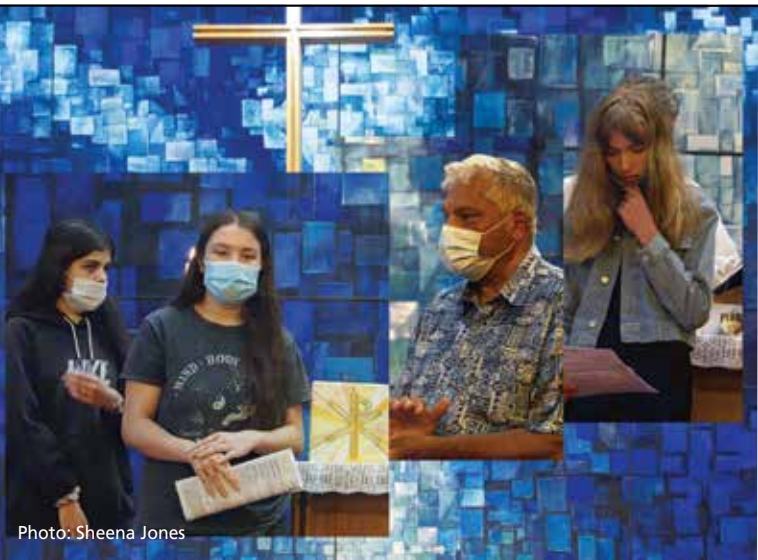


Photo: Sheena Jones

Confirmees Kiah, Vanessa, Raymon and Chelsie

presented by their sponsor with a description of their interests, parish involvement and future hope. A notable inclusion was the introduction of a Gunai-kurnai song, a translation by The Rev'd Kathy Dalton of *Jesus Loves the Little*

Children, which the entire congregation sang, and many used clapsticks to accompany it.

The candidates also read one of the short paragraphs of the fifth form of Great Thanksgiving Prayer, with Vanessa reading a special adaption of the first to include some of *God of Holy Dreaming*, the prayer by Aunt Lenore Parker.

After the confirmation, there was much clapping and exchange of endearments, and parishioner Rae Tresidder gave each confirmer a card to remember the happy day. Sue gave each confirmer a Bible to encourage them to read the scriptures.

All enjoyed a lovely community lunch with delicacies provided by the congregation.

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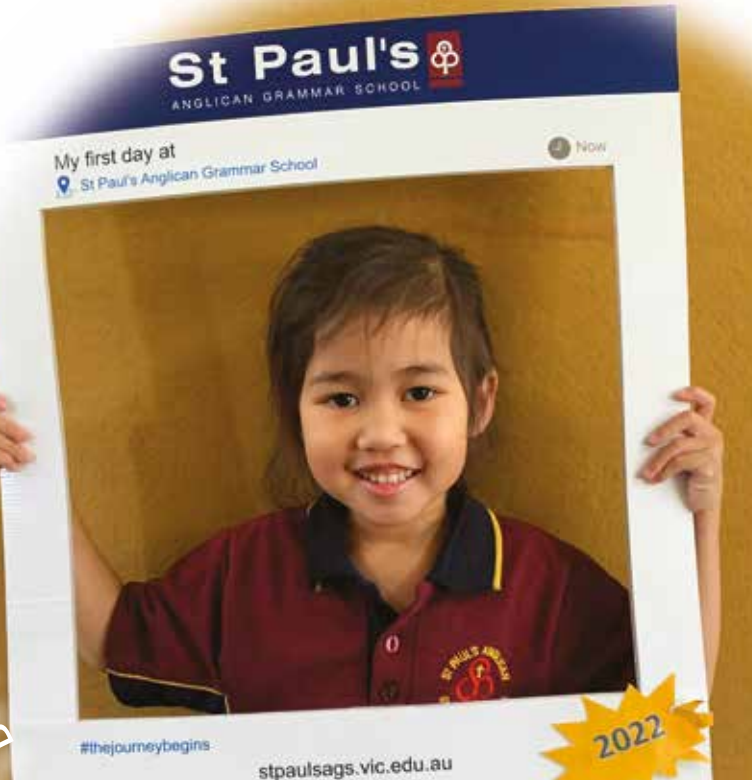
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The new preps at St Paul's Anglican Grammar have settled beautifully into school, making friends and learning new routines along the way. St Paul's prep Moonic enjoyed his first day at school, saying "I have really liked playing in the kitchen and going to sport with Mr Rilen."

BRIGHT SPOT



Faith as sword or shield?

Mark Woods

The legalisation of marriage equality in 2017 wrought a promise from the federal government to introduce laws to guarantee religious freedom. So with a gestation period roughly three times that of the African elephant, it might reasonably be expected that the bill introduced to the House of Representatives by the Prime Minister late last year would have it right.

After all, the bill, in its first iteration, was the subject of extensive consultation, with tens of thousands of submissions being made on it. Some might be surprised to see, then, that the criticisms of it differ only marginally from those directed at the first draft. A careful analysis of those criticisms reveals the fans and foes of the bill to be, almost predictably, ideologically divided.

The genesis of the promise of a bill at all was found in the concern of some faith leaders that the amendments to the *Marriage Act* (which legalised same-sex marriages) would cause those whose faith precluded solemnisation of same-sex marriages to be dealt with under anti-discrimination laws. There are, of course, several of these scattered across state and federal statute books. The promise, therefore, was to firstly inquire into whether there was a need to deal with religious freedom to discriminate based upon tenets of faith at all – and, if so, how to go about it. The government appointed former Attorney General

Philip Ruddock to undertake the inquiry. The first draft of the bill was a response to his report.

The bill introduced into the Parliament by the Prime Minister a few weeks ago was in substance the same as the first, with a couple of notable excisions, following the consultation process. Its structure was to:

- make it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of religious belief in areas of work, education, access to premises, provision of goods or services or accommodation
- declare that certain conduct is not discrimination at all, and therefore not unlawful (such as faith-based hospitals, schools, aged care, disability service, or accommodation providers that insist upon employees being adherents of the faith)
- declare that certain conduct that is discrimination will be exempt from the provisions of the new law (for example a householder advertising to employ only a housekeeper who is an adherent of a particular faith)
- provide for the appointment of a Religious Discrimination Commissioner within the Australian Human Rights Commission, which receives complaints about conduct a complainant believes is discrimination, and with power to act on those complaints if substantiated

allow the Commission to give exemptions from the operation of the law in certain circumstances

create criminal offences for certain acts of discrimination, which are justiciable in the courts.

The bill ditched the so-called Folau clause in the first draft, and introduced the concept of a Statement of Belief which would be, by force of law, immune from the provisions of the plethora of state and federal laws banning discrimination on any ground. A person could not offend against these laws if they make a statement (in public or private) which is of a religious belief held by a person that the person genuinely considers to be in accordance with the doctrines, tenets, beliefs or teachings of that religion.

Curiously, the bill also allowed for a person with no religious beliefs to make a Statement of Belief, although the circumstances in which a person would need to make a statement of something they don't believe are not immediately clear.

After manifold amendments, which saw government members cross the floor of the House, the bill ultimately passed. It received widespread criticism when the nation awoke the next morning, with even the Solicitor General warning against its enactment because of various unintended consequences. As a result, rather than an attempt to insist upon its passage through the Senate, the bill will be referred to a further inquiry.

It is this process that will in all likelihood see the proponents and their nemeses compete for air space to put their views. You might have been swayed by the view of (for example) Equality Australia CEO Anna Brown, who says the bill will "... allow insulting, humiliating, ridiculing or offensive conduct in the name of religion."

Or you may have preferred the opinion of Senator Eric Abetz that "... the bill strikes the right balance ...

I would have liked a few more things in it but some of my colleagues would have liked a few less. In a free society, men and women should be able to express their point of view without people running off to government authorities saying, 'Oh, I feel offended about what somebody said'."

Either way, if any legislation ultimately passes, Anglicans and their leaders will need to examine whether they want their faith to dictate anything at all when it comes to employing, educating, feeding, accommodating or in some other way caring for, people. It may be a choice between using any new law as a sword or a shield.

The Archbishop of Melbourne, in response to the legislative debacle, has revived his call for Australia to adopt a bill of rights approach to the subject of religious and other freedoms. Dr Freier has argued cogently that the piecemeal legislative approach to

ensuring basic freedoms while ending unlawful discrimination is bound to cause the grief the nation observed in the last few weeks. Based on the experience of other comparable democracies, he really has a point. Anglicans can ask candidates seeking their votes in the upcoming election where they stand on this important piece of social engineering – and exercise their vote accordingly.

Mark Woods is the Chairman of Committees of the Synod of the Diocese of Gippsland, and Chair of the Access to Justice Committee of the International Bar Association. The views expressed here are his own.

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Surely God was a lover

Ken Parker

Penola in South Australia is connected closely with Saint Mary McKillop, who began her first school there. John Shaw Neilson was born in Penola 150 years ago, but is little known today, though he is one of our great lyric poets. He celebrates the presence of the divine in the Australian landscape, and a rich spirituality pervades his work.

His life story echoes that of Albert Facey in *A Fortunate Life*, with a never-ending cycle of poverty and a constant search for work. He worked on his family's farms, first at Nhill, then in the Mallee, before becoming an itinerant labourer – in quarries at Spotswood and Harkaway, building the railway to Mirboo, digging the Yallourn open cut. *The Orange Tree*, his great poem, was inspired by the orange trees at Merbein but was written in the mud at Yallourn.

Across 15 years, from 1897, he faced the death of his mother, two sisters and probably a sweetheart. Each death broke him but, with courage, he found his way back to poetry. Then, at his creative peak, his eyesight failed. Although he could still work, he could not write.

He held his poems in his head and, at weekends, one of his sisters would write them down. Once I met his half-sister Lisette and she told me how she used to do this for him.

When Neilson was 56, some Melbourne friends found him a job – he became a glorified messenger boy at the Country Roads Board, based at The Exhibition Buildings.

His last years were spent living with his sister's family at Footscray.

Neilson's poems have two strong themes: love and death. Love it is that triumphs, as these two verses from his Christ-echoing *He Sold Himself to the Daisies* illustrate:

*The traders knew no pity,
They called him shapeless clown,
And they put long
prayers upon him
And chained him in a town.*

*But he rose ere the day
had broken,
He rose when the stars
hung high,
And his heart did hope
within him
To die as the daisies die.*

His strongest theological statement is in *The Gentle Water Bird*, where he tells of the journey from a harsh fundamentalist faith into a deep understanding of God alive in the world:

*God was not terrible and
thunder-blue:*

*It was a gentle water
bird I knew
Pity was in him for the
weak and strong
All who have suffered
when the days are long,
And he was deep and
gentle as a song.*

Neilson was at heart a sacramentalist, seeing the divine presence veiled by the created world. Parts of his late poem, *The Poor Can Feed the Birds*, evidence this:

*Ragged, unheeding,
stooping, meanly shod,
The poor pass to the
pond; not far away
The spires go up
to God.*

*But 'tis the poor that
make the loving words.
Slowly they stoop,
it is a Sacrament:
The poor can feed the
birds.*

You get a glimpse here of Neilson's thinking, his sense of love triumphant.

We'll celebrate his life and work at Bunyip on 27 March in the context of the Harvest Festival. A fine musician/composer, John Thorn, will put some poems to music and sing them to us during the Eucharist and over lunch.



Nick Fewings/Unsplash

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letter from Archbishop Tutu

In October 1992, Anglican Women of Australia, or AWA as it was commonly known as, gathered in Rockhampton for the national conference. Present were delegates from Australian dioceses, and Dr Patricia Gorralla was a visiting delegate from South Africa.

At that time I was Diocesan President for Gippsland, Victoria, and my husband, Ted, accompanied me to the conference. October in Rockhampton was hot, so many wore informal dress, including members of the clergy. Ted was wearing his white short-sleeved summer shirt, which had a gold cross on each side of the collar. Dr Gorralla was so taken with these and wished to obtain a set, so we removed Ted's, wrapped them up and gave them to her.

She was delighted with them, as I was when some weeks later I received a thankyou letter from the Archbishop of Cape Town, Desmond Tutu.

To this day it remains part of my treasures in my special "box", and I am delighted to share my story with other interested people.

Annabel Gibson, Bairnsdale

Editor's note: See page 3 of the February issue for a tribute to Archbishop Tutu, who died in December.

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Talking climate with kids

Lachlan Gilbert

It's important that we clean up after ourselves, we teach our kids, and not leave a place in a worse mess than how we found it.

But how do we explain the mess we've created on Earth that future generations will be left to deal with?

It's a difficult conversation to have. But the fact that more than four fifths of Australians believe that climate change will result in more droughts and flooding means this conversation will be dinner table banter for a long time yet, as ordinary parents try to navigate the path between hope and abject despair about the existential challenges facing humanity.

The science underpinning our understanding of this 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?

We asked three of our own at UNSW.*

First is Dr Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick, a climate scientist at UNSW Canberra with expertise in weather extremes, notably heatwaves and how they have changed over time. She has two children under five with a third on the way.



Dr Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick says when talking to kids about climate change, make sure to finish on a positive note

Do your children understand what you do for work?

I don't think so, not yet. Because of COVID and both of them being at home they sometimes sit in on Zoom meetings and the older one did ask recently "what's climate change?" And it kind of took me back a bit because she's four and a half she doesn't know much about planet earth. We still have trouble explaining to her that Australia is a country and we live in Canberra, that's a city. We do talk to her about it, but she hasn't quite grasped that concept."

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

The only way we've really talked about climate change so far is about the dinosaurs. Before lockdown, we went to

the dinosaur museum here in Canberra. And they loved it. My eldest has constantly been asking questions like "where are the dinosaurs now?" And I said "well, you know, they died out." "Why did they die out?" "Well, climate change?" "Okay, how did the climate change ..." and so she's kind of being very inquisitive. But I haven't yet had a sit down with her saying, "well, yeah, the climate is warming, it's getting worse. It's basically because of my parents and their parents before them – sorry about that!"

I have had a couple of conversations with my nieces and nephews. My niece, when she was nine or 10, asked me to come to her school and give a talk. So I actually started thinking: how am I going to talk about this? I don't want to get in there and scare them and say, "you're all doomed, you're all gonna die." I was never going to do that – I

would talk to them about how the planet's changing, the indicators of this and how we can fix it. I think you should always finish on a message of hope, especially with a younger demographic.

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

I see myself talking to them when they're in school – I think six-ish is a good place to start. But I'm thinking that in the meantime, if I get asked the question again from the older one, I won't necessarily brush it off at the start or quickly change the subject. She understands sickness and how it can take a long time to get better, so she gets those concepts. So I do see myself using that same analogy – that we've done some things that made the planet a bit sick. And it might get more sick unless we give it some medicine to fix it, and these are the ways that we can do that.

The important thing about having these conversations is to be age appropriate – use simple language and concepts that a child can understand. Be honest – you can definitely be honest without being brutal. And finish it on a positive. It's not too late, and we have solutions. Something that we're going to do as a family is instil in our kids how they can continually reduce their emissions. One of the reasons why we moved to Canberra

is we're building an energy-efficient house. So as we raise them, we give them the tools and, hopefully, the right voting influence to make those changes.

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

I do and it's become more prominent since becoming a parent. Especially with the recent events like the summer in the US and what happened in Canada in a tiny town called Lytton where temperatures almost hit 50 degrees. The town broke its own temperature record by five degrees Celsius, and that kind of margin is incredible and frightening.

I think there's a very high likelihood that we'll see warming by much more than one or two degrees Celsius – I'm hopeful of somewhere between three and four degrees. So I'm worried about those futures of my kids. Yes, we are in a developed country and yes, I can give them the tools and the resources to adapt and mitigate where possible to those changes, but it's still not a very nice world. Black summers will be so much more common. Those temperatures in Lytton will occur everywhere else. It breaks my heart to say that that's their future, and that it's not their fault.

* Part 2 of this story will be published in the April issue.

Courtesy University of New South Wales.

New diocesan group acting together on climate change

Acting on Climate Together in Gippsland (ACTinG) is a new group in the Diocese.

Conversations between a few people about the need for churches to act on climate change led to a meeting with Bishop Richard, who is also keen for the Diocese to play its part.

Why are we so concerned? The latest IPCC report shows that the need to substantially reduce greenhouse gases is urgent, but the task is not impossible.

Professor Will Steffen, climate scientist and

contributing reviewer to several IPCC reports, says "every choice and every fraction of a degree of avoided warming matters."

These words from such a person are encouraging and motivating. It matters how we live – 'we' being every country, every company, every church, every individual. It matters at every level of human activity.

Why the church? Many reasons were offered at our first meeting. There is the call to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with

your God" (Micah 6:8). We understand that the people suffering now, and who will suffer most in the future from the effects of climate change, have done the least to cause it.

We are also called to take care of the garden – the Earth that God created. This is core business for the church, as expressed in the fifth of the Anglican's Communion's five marks of mission: "To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth."

And the good news of Christ is for the whole creation, not just humans.

ACTinG would like to see climate change become a focus for the Diocese over the coming three-year cycle of Synod, the first session of which will be held 17–19 June. This would also be in keeping with one of the themes for Lambeth this year, 'Planet'. The Lambeth program notes:

Many parts of the Anglican Communion are experiencing first-hand the human impact of rising tides, drought, famine and species extinction. As one of the biggest emergencies of our time, the Anglican Communion is playing a vital role in climate action.

ACTinG is working in partnership with The Abbey as a Centre for Spirituality and the Environment and Anglican Earthcare Gippsland. The latter, with its tax deductibility status, may be helpful for parishes seeking to raise funds for climate projects, such as installing solar power for a rectory or church hall.

The group hopes to become the go-to place on climate issues for the Diocese, making resources available on climate change, relevant theology, practical action and climate advocacy.

Anyone interested in joining or finding out more, please contact

Jan Down: jeidown@protonmail.com, 0405 812 518.

New chaplain for Gippsland Grammar

Lisa Baker

Rev'd Dr Tim Gaden has been appointed the new chaplain of Gippsland Grammar.

Tim comes to Gippsland with a history of ministry appointments across both academic and pastoral fields, in Australia and overseas.

He was a postdoctoral fellow at King's College, London, Principal of the Trinity College Theological School, (training ministers lay and ordained for the Anglican dioceses of Victoria) and the Mother Esther CHN Canon



Rev'd Dr Tim Gaden at the Chapel of St Anne at Gippsland Grammar Garnsey Campus

Theologian for the Diocese of Ballarat.

He has also served as the Chaplain at Trinity College and held parish appointments in London as the Vicar of Battersea, in Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Never quite at home in either a fully academic or pastoral environment, Tim has found the perfect blend of both within school-based ministry.

In his most recent appointment as Senior Chaplain at Ballarat Grammar School, he managed the chapel life of the school and ensured Anglican values were at the fore at every level

of the learning community. He also taught VCE Philosophy and Latin.

"I look forward to enjoying the same blend of academic and pastoral engagement at Gippsland Grammar in a warmer climate, closer to the beach and the high country," Tim said.

Tim began his Gippsland Grammar appointment at the start of the school term. Complementing his chaplaincy role, he also enjoys teaching senior students RAVE (Religious and Values Education).

Tim is married to Selina, an administrator in the community health sector, and has two adult children, Ben and Mollie, who are both at university in Melbourne.

Wellbeing training for St Paul's teachers

Paula Walland

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School's teaching staff recently enjoyed enhancing their understanding of wellbeing and improving their craft at a presentation by wellbeing education expert David Bott.

David reflected on the challenges in the education sector due to the pandemic and invited

employees to incorporate three strategies to regulate stress in uncertain times. Advocated by Andrew Huberman, a neuroscientist at Stanford University, these strategies include a 'physiological sigh' (a breathing strategy), 'optic flow' (movement of light on the retina) and 'panoramic vision' (using peripheral vision).

David also spoke about the importance of

individuality among staff and students and empowering their differing characteristics. These strategies will shape the next chapter of education, directly affecting how teachers support the development of student wellbeing, performance and learning experience.

Staff appreciation for David's expertise in applied wellbeing and positive education is reflected by

St Paul's teacher Rick Battista, who commented, "He was fantastic, and it was a delight to be involved given everything he was speaking about was music to my ears!"

David's knowledge and strategies are an exciting addition for St Paul's staff to utilise in pursuing their own potential, and identifying and celebrating that of their students.



Wellbeing education expert David Bott offered the latest applied wellbeing strategies in education

Youth survey reveals young people's top concerns

Young people in Australia aged 15 to 19 years have revealed their greatest issues in 2021 relate to COVID-19, the environment, equity and discrimination, mental health, education and job prospects in Mission Australia's Youth Survey Report 2021.

With 20,207 young people surveyed for the 20th annual Youth Survey between April and August last year, this report provides rich and compelling evidence about young people's challenges, concerns, experiences and barriers to achieving their goals.

"These responses are given in the context of a crescendo of public dialogue accompanying national and international events such as COVID-19 lockdowns and outbreak responses, climate change campaigns, extreme weather events such as bushfires, drought and floods, and the Black Lives Matter movement,"

said Mission Australia's CEO, James Toomey.

For the first time, COVID-19 is the most important national issue according to young people, rising from second place in 2020 (38.8%) to the top spot in 2021 (45.7%). Survey responses reveal the pandemic and associated public health responses had a negative effect on young people's health, wellbeing and education in 2021. Young people said COVID-19 and the related lockdowns had adversely impacted their ability to participate in activities (68.3%), their education (62.3%) and mental health (50.3%). Female and gender diverse respondents reported feeling much more impacted by COVID-19 across almost all areas when compared with male respondents.

Following COVID-19 as the top national issue, close to four in 10 (38.0%)

young people say the environment is a key national issue – and one quarter (25.5%) are extremely or very concerned about climate change.

With equity and discrimination identified as an important national issue according to more than one third (35.4%) of young people, more than one third (34.2%) of those surveyed had been unfairly treated in the past year – which was higher than the 27.0% of young people who experienced unfair treatment in 2020. This treatment was most commonly due to their gender (37.3%). Other reasons for unfair treatment were mental health (27.6%), or due to race/cultural background (27.6%) which was endured by more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people than their non-Indigenous peers.

Health and wellbeing

issues were also highlighted in this year's Youth Survey. Four in 10 (41.9%) young people were extremely or very concerned about mental health and one third (34.6%) of young people felt mental health is an important national issue. Once again, young people's top three areas of personal concern relate to their mental health and wellbeing: coping with stress (46.0%), mental health (41.9%) and school or study problems (36.8%). This year was also very stressful for more than four in 10 (44.5%) young people who said they felt stressed either all of the time or most of the time.

Encouragingly, the Youth Survey Report 2021 shows that more than half of young people are very happy/happy (53.4%) overall with their lives and are very positive/positive (51.6%) about the future, although

these figures have dwindled since 2020. Nearly half (46.3%) of young people are confident in their ability to achieve their study and work goals, they highly value friendships (other than family) (81.9%), family relationships (77.4%) and their mental health (66.9%), and participate in a range of activities, most commonly sports (as a participant), sports (as a spectator), and arts/cultural/music activities.

The results of the survey are shared with governments, non-government organisations, schools and the media to inform the debate around the circumstances of young people in Australia and to support the development of policies, services and programs that have the needs of young people at their core.

Read the full report at missionaustralia.com.au.

Courtesy Mission Australia

1.7 per cent of PNG residents are vaccinated against COVID. Why are they so resistant?

Fraser Macdonald

Only 1.7% of Papua New Guineans have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.* This has been a cause of concern for the international community, who are watching the virus spread through an exposed population with high rates of co-morbidities and minimal access to healthcare.

The mood within the country, however, is very different. No doubt there is abundant fear, but this has centred on the vaccine itself.

Many Papua New Guineans have access to the vaccine, even in some of the remotest corners of the country. They are also fully familiar with injected medicines and vaccinations against diseases like polio and measles.

But millions of Papua New Guineans are not getting vaccinated against COVID because they are terrified of this specific vaccine. This is not “vaccine hesitancy”, but full-blown opposition, a genuine antipathy.

Community vaccine roll-outs have been targeted with death threats, attacked by furious crowds, and castigated as a “campaign of terror”.

The recently introduced “no jab, no job” policy, meanwhile, has met with lawsuits, mass resignations and the fraudulent acquisition of vaccination certificates to circumvent the dreaded vaccine.

So, why is there such a fierce resistance to the COVID vaccine? The key difference, as any good anthropologist will tell you, is cultural context.

Spiritual sickness

Any attempt to understand local views on the COVID vaccine must first appreciate that, within Melanesian societies, physicality is intimately connected to morality and spirituality. Because of this, biomedical explanations for disease are usually secondary to other causes or irrelevant.

This is mainly due to the small, sometimes non-existent role played by government education in the lives of

most Papua New Guineans, especially the roughly 80% that live in rural villages.

For example, should an otherwise healthy person suddenly become ill and die, sorcery or witchcraft may be deemed the cause. Accusations are linked to interpersonal conflicts and jealousies that may have precipitated the mystical assault.

Such interpretations usually occur with individual misfortunes – not much larger events like a global pandemic. This is where Christianity becomes hugely important, making sense of broader problems like this.

The role of Christianity

Nearly all Papua New Guineans (99.2%) are Christian. And the religious landscape in the country is powerfully influenced by Pentecostal and evangelical churches.

In PNG, Christianity provides not only the promise of eternal salvation, but biblically inscribed frameworks and prophetic ideas that inform how people live and view the world around them.

Many Christians, especially those believing in the Pentecostal and evangelical traditions, have a strong interest in the end of the world, as this signals the return of Jesus Christ.

Crucially, the imminent return of Christ is heralded by the world’s rapid moral decline and humanity being branded with the mark of the beast — a process mandated by Satan. As such, many Papua New Guinea Christians continuously and fearfully scan the horizon for this definitive sign.

Years ago, some Papua New Guinean friends declared barcodes were the mark. More recently, they insisted it was the government’s national ID card initiative. Now, in a completely different order of magnitude and intensity, it is the COVID vaccine.

As one group protesting a vaccine drive recently chanted, “Karim 666 chip goh!”, or “Get out of here with Satan’s microchip.”

From this perspective, the vaccine is a vehicle for much larger forces of global and cosmic tyranny. The speed with which the vaccine was developed, its global reach, and the apparent coercion of vaccine mandates all further strengthen suspicions of its evil origins.

However, Christianity is not the sole factor spurring anti-vaccination sentiment. Indeed, powerful misinformation on social media has also been influential, such as rumours the vaccine carries a microchip or commonly causes death. People also have a well-founded distrust of outsiders, and they view both the virus and vaccine as foreign assaults on PNG’s sovereignty.

In the absence of Western biomedical knowledge or a lack of faith in its validity, these theories flourish. Those with more sustained exposure to Western culture often try in vain to convince their compatriots against this kind of thinking.

Alternative treatments

While defiantly resisting vaccination, many Papua New Guineans nonetheless acknowledge COVID-19 is real and that it causes sickness.

With infection rates, hospital admissions, and deaths now surging, it would be hard to ignore this reality. The rising COVID-19 mortality across the country has scared some into receiving the vaccine, but even those open to vaccination are easily spooked by rumours of subsequent death.

In the absence of vaccinations, Papua New Guineans have turned to three main methods of treatment: prayer and healing, organic remedies, and reliance on a claimed strong natural immunity to disease.

As Christians strongly influenced by the evangelical and Pentecostal traditions, many people pray to God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit to not just mitigate, but annihilate, the evil sickness.

In addition, many are turning to organic traditional remedies to ward off illness. This mainly consists of spices and leaves

used in drinks and steaming.

Finally, there is a strongly held belief that Papua New Guineans possess an intrinsically strong immune system, buttressed by a diet of garden food, which makes them more resistant to the incursion of the COVID virus.

What can the authorities do?

For most westerners, vaccines are an obvious and intrinsic good. For many Papua New Guineans, vaccines are a dangerous, unknown, and sinister threat. This is due to a combination of forces – governmental neglect, strong religiosity, and a justified distrust of outsiders.

This local position needs to be very sensitively understood and respected, not dismissed or criticised.

them to be vaccinated. Insisting a population with minimal information be vaccinated is not ethical or fair.

Likely in response to the widespread apocalyptic interpretations of the vaccine, the PNG Council of Churches is now actively promoting its safety and benefits. The government also needs to step up its efforts and commit to a nationwide educational campaign if hopes for substantial vaccine uptake are ever to be realised.

The success of the whole endeavour – and steering Papua New Guinea away from a public health catastrophe – will likely turn on persuading ordinary people the vaccine is a divine blessing and not a Satanic curse.

Sir John, Cardinal Ribat: COVID-19 Vaccine Champion



If God blesses people with good knowledge, good intent and the wisdom to make a vaccine to control COVID-19, it is a blessing from God for us all.



We shouldn't be trying to confuse the facts and discredit the vaccine. The vaccine is here for our safety.

What made me take the vaccine...

My belief in God.

Sir John, Cardinal Ribat
Cardinal
Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands



For further information, call the COVID-19 Hotline: 1-800-200 or visit your nearby health facility for information on when you can get vaccinated.

Vaccine campaign message featuring Cardinal John Ribat of PNG.
(Papua New Guinea National Department of Health/Facebook)

At the same time, deaths must be prevented and the thick fog of opposition surrounding the vaccine must be dissipated. But how?

Detailed information about the vaccine, including its creation, contents, efficacy, and potential side effects, must be made fully known to people before asking

Fraser Macdonald is Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, University of Waikato.

This article is adapted from *The Conversation under a Creative Commons license*. Read the full article at bit.ly/3HI62yZ.

* Percentage when original article published in November 2021. This number is still less than 3%.

What is antisemitism and who decides?

Alex Ryvchin

In May 2016, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, an intergovernmental association of democratic states committed to Holocaust remembrance and education and the ongoing struggle against antisemitism, adopted a working definition of antisemitism. Its reasons for doing so were clear. How can IHRA and its member states track and fight something they don't fully understand?

A common, modern definition made eminent sense given that antisemitism is constantly changing – often peddled through euphemisms, dog-whistles and myths, latching onto popular movements for legitimacy and attacking its target through the dominant symbols of Jewish self-identification – the faith, the community, the nation-state.

Antisemitism is unique not only for the ruin it has brought to societies but for its complexity. All other forms of racism perceive the target group as inferior and treat them accordingly.

Jews are not hated because of ignorant aversions to skin colour or other physical attributes – such prejudices are so base and absurd that there is hope they can eventually be outgrown. Jews are hated for something much more penetrating and elemental. Jews are hated because of how they are perceived to think. Jews are considered to possess a cunning malevolence, a capacity to trick and deceive. They use their superior but perverse intellect to plot the downfall of all non-Jews, to murder their gods and prophets, to strip them of their wealth by the crafty accumulation of capital, to lead them into war, revolution and depression. No other ethnic group is subjected to such lurid formulations that immediately incite the highest feelings of fear and revulsion.

All this makes a current definition of antisemitism – some sort of framework for understanding this evil, how it evolves and how it is expressed – absolutely vital.

While there is an almost unchallenged willingness to listen to victims of racism,

understand their plight, and stand in solidarity, this is not necessarily so when it comes to the Jews. The IHRA definition of antisemitism attracted accusations that it was a rouse, a cunning ploy, a trojan horse to smear pro-Palestinian activists and to shield the Israeli government for any scrutiny or criticism.

This is despite the IHRA definition explicitly stating that “criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic”.

Nevertheless, in March 2021, Labor Senator Anne Urquhart assailed what she claimed was the “cynical use of the slur of antisemitism” as a “tool to silence critics of Israel for that state’s exhaustively documented human rights abuses against Palestinians”. One wonders if the Senator would ever think to accuse any other ethnic group of manufacturing claims of racism for some devious purpose, or whether such behaviour is confined to the Jews alone.

Endorsement of the IHRA definition by every major mainstream Jewish

representative body in the world, and by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the UN’s special rapporteur on religious freedom, hundreds of universities including Oxford and Cambridge, corporations and sporting associations, only heightened the suspicion that the definition was not a good-faith attempt to rally the world to better understand and defeat antisemitism, but that it was the product of Jewish power and shady influence.

The Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism seems to have been born of a similar distrust. Launched a year ago this month as a putative rival to the IHRA definition, its adoption both within the Jewish world and beyond has been virtually non-existent. On the face of it, the JDA is unobjectionable and duly notes the historical realities of antisemitism, the myths through which it is transmitted, and its existence in the Israel-Palestine discourse. Indeed, there is much overlap with IHRA.

But the motive for drafting a “rival” definition that no one requested and no one has adopted seems to be in stating

not what antisemitism is, but what it supposedly isn’t. The JDA asserts, boldly and without proof or reasoning, that anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions is a form of “commonplace, non-violent political protest” and “not, in and of themselves, antisemitic.” The issue of whether boycott of Jewish-Israeli artists, academics and businesses is or isn’t antisemitic is outside the scope of this article, but in simply dismissing the charge, the JDA’s intent is laid bare.

Ultimately, if we wish to understand how a people experience racism, what it does to them, and what ought to be done to stop it, we should listen to those who have lived with racism and to the mainstream voices devoted to its eradication. The attacks on IHRA serve to prove its necessity, exposing the habitual distrust and suspicion attached to Jews, and Jews alone.

Alex Ryvchin is the Co-CEO of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and the author of Zionism – The Concise History.

PNG: Poverty, isolation and a fragile health system

It is two years this month since the first case of COVID was reported in Papua New Guinea. Archbishop Jeffrey Driver, diocesan missionary to PNG’s Newton College in Popondetta, has returned there for the first time in several years to assist with the college’s accreditation process. Here, he comments on the factors that make COVID especially challenging there.

The health system in PNG is fragile with limited intensive care beds – even in the larger centres. In regional areas, the remoteness of many communities contributes to difficulties accessing care. Difficulties in organisation and logistics have meant that significant amounts of COVID vaccine have expired.

The geography of PNG means that COVID education

is difficult. There are few roads and people rely on what they can glean by word of mouth and social media (if they have access).

Melanesian culture, and the tendency still to see disease in terms of the working of spiritual forces, tend to exacerbate vaccination hesitation, which is high. Melanesian culture highly values community, so closeness and touch are important; this adds to the possibility of transmission.

Poverty is a major factor; people often cannot afford things like sanitisers and fresh face masks. They are forced to share transport, which is most often overcrowded and dirty.

On a positive note, PNG is an extraordinarily young country. This means comorbidity factors are lower.

#SetThemFree calls for end to indefinite detention

Australia’s religious leaders have launched a campaign calling on Scott Morrison and Anthony Albanese to work together to release asylum seekers in detention following the Novak Djokovic saga that drew international attention to their plight.

As the Australian Open drew to a close, more than 30 faith leaders urged the Prime Minister and Opposition leader to restore Australia’s reputation as a compassionate country.

Leaders representing a wide cross section of faiths launched the campaign at St Paul’s Cathedral in Melbourne in late January with the release of a campaign short film *#SetThemFree* from acclaimed director Richard Keddie (*Ride Like a Girl*, *Oddball*, *Little Fish*) and narrated by Baptist Minister Reverend Tim Costello.

The short film highlights the plight of refugees still held in indefinite detention, including in Melbourne’s notorious Park Hotel.

“Compassion is the core of every faith,” Rev Tim Costello said. “It is significant that religious leaders are urging the Prime Minister, a man of faith, to meet with the Opposition leader and together do something that is ultimately good for all Australians – agree on releasing refugees and asylum seekers held in indefinite detention,” he said.

“There is currently no legislated end to indefinite detention. The refugees have been sacrificial lambs to the politics of border control and immigration for many years. This could be a watershed moment in which Australians can feel good about embracing a kinder approach.”

Chair of the Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria, Jasbir Singh, said the refugees and asylum seekers had sought Australia’s care but instead had lost years of their lives in detention.” There is now a great opportunity for our political leaders to bring closure to the detainees and to the Australian community,” Mr Singh said.

Sister Brigid Arthur, coordinator of the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP), said, “The Prime Minister and Opposition leader have the power to set them free. It is a question of whether they will open their hearts and act, not a question of what to do.”

The film *#SetThemFree* can be viewed on Twitter at @SetThemFree_AU.

Courtesy Brotherhood of St Laurence

The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self

Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism and the Road to Sexual Revolution

by Carl Trueman
Crossway, 2020

Richard Prideaux

This is a demanding and challenging read covering some of the same ground as Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age and Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Trueman's title uses the term "expressive individualism" and by this term Trueman means how we in the "West" have come to identify ourselves. He is referring to the "chaos of identity politics" and makes the point that "we are all expressive individuals now. Just as some choose to identify themselves by their sexual orientation, so the religious person chooses to be a Christian or a Muslim ..." (or some other faith or orientation).

The format of the book consists first of a historical account of how such a cultural revolution has occurred in the West using in particular the rather arcane writings of Philip Rieff and



the more accessible work of Charles Taylor and Alasdair MacIntyre. In the simplest terms he suggests that Western civilisation has advanced in four stages from "practical man, through to religious man, economic man and into our current stage, psychological man (or, consumer/plastic man who can make or remake her personality at will.)"

Trueman begins with three ruling ideas:

- *The vast and unstoppable advance of technological invention.*
- *There is no golden age that was better than the present so stop pining for the past.*

- *When critiquing opponents, give their argument full weight. There is no value in refuting a straw man.*

Some key questions discussed in this book include how the self is to be understood, how ethical discourse operates, how tradition and history are valued, and how cultural elites understand the culture and purpose of art.

Following chapters on reimagining the self and reimagining our culture, Trueman moves to a more detailed analysis of the key historical players in this story of the progression to psychological man. These helpful chapters adumbrate the major impact made by Jean-Jacques Rousseau; the Romantic poets especially Wordsworth, Shelley and Blake; Nietzsche, Marx and Darwin; and Sigmund Freud. His chapter 'The New Left and the Politicization of Sex' gives a nod to Foucault and "his epigones and incomprehensible imitators." The book finishes with a 'Concluding Unscientific Prologue' with some suggestions for a way forward for Christian believers.

This book creates an understandable pathway through the current labyrinth of our dominant western culture. It is well worth the effort.

Quiet Afternoon of Stitching

2–4.30 pm, 19 March

Delbridge Hall, 149 Cunninghame Street, Sale

Cost: \$20 (all materials supplied)

Facilitators: Jenny Batten (spiritual director, creative arts therapist), Kate Campbell (textile artist).

Register with Jenny (0438 213 382, batjen54@gmail.com) or Kate (0402 514 829, khcampbell55@gmail.com).

Bunyip Harvest Festival

11 am, 27 March, St Thomas' Bunyip

This year's harvest festival includes a celebration of the poet John Shaw Neilson (see p. 7). Musician/composer John Thorn will sing some of Neilson's poems and Ken Parker will talk about him. We'll celebrate Eucharist in the garden and serve a ploughperson's lunch. Bookings: Raelene Carroll, (03) 9793 2215.

Lenten Pilgrimage

4–8 April 2022, The Abbey Raymond Island



Reflect with Dr Cath Connelly who comes with wisdom and experience, gifts to accompany us on the journey, with song and harp, with silence and laughter, in prayer and joy. Guided by Russell Smith, a person of pilgrimage and faith, we will walk the land together and listen for that 'still small voice' for each of us ... for life today.

Motel-style accommodation – all meals provided.

Twin/share \$690 pp; single \$890 pp.

For non-residential and daily attendance options:

info@theabbey.org.au or (03) 5156 0511.

Enquiries: Rev'd Edie Ashley 0423 400 359, edieashley@bigpond.com

EDITORIAL

Pillars of the community

Reading Ken Follett's tome *Pillars of the Earth* many years ago, I was captivated by the descriptions of the skilled work of stonemasons and other craftsmen, who painstakingly constructed the novel's Kingsbridge Cathedral, by hand, in the 12th century.

In Follett's novel, many didn't live to see the ultimate fruits of their labours – whether due to accident, disease or old age. Construction of Wells Cathedral, one of the grand Gothic buildings on which Follett's fictional building was based, commenced around 1175 and continued on and off until the late 15th century.

Ahead of the National Cathedrals Conference in England in May, the Church Times hosted a webinar in February on cathedrals

and social justice. To what appetites for the upcoming conference, they asked "What next for cathedrals in the wake of the pandemic? How can we best serve in our local contexts? In wider society?"

Webinar speaker Ann Richards, from the Church of England's Faith and Public Life department, said she often ponders a remark made by a former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, about his plan for a Lambeth Conference. He intended to institute a time of prayer and silence in Canterbury Cathedral and let the building do its work. What is this work, Ann asked, beyond spiritual tradition, pilgrimage, historical record and a sense of grandeur?

For those who don't connect with a local church

but still maintain a faith, a cathedral can be a spiritual home. London-based philosopher and author Alain de Botton, in *The Architecture of Happiness*, commented on our innate need for a sense of home:

We need a refuge to shore up our states of mind, because so much of the world is opposed to our allegiances. We need our rooms to align us to desirable versions of ourselves and to keep alive the important, evanescent sides of us.

Home in relation to a building, wrote de Botton, "is simply to recognise its harmony with our own prized internal song."

Further webinar discussion prompted by Ann was about the experiences of a cathedral for different people – its clergy, lay staff and the wider community.

Does the cathedral reach out far and wide? Ecumenical and interfaith dialogue are growing, but I'm less sure about conversations that are wider still.

In a later book, *Religion for Atheists: A Non-Believer's Guide to the Uses of Religion*, de Botton describes a reconciliation of his divided feelings about faith: "my continuing resistance to theories of an afterlife or of heavenly residents was no justification for giving up on the music, buildings, prayers, rituals, feasts, shrines, pilgrimages, communal meals and illustrated manuscripts of the faiths." Such a reconciliation has the makings of common ground – a welcoming place for both believers and non-believers that might be as close as the boundary fence.

In the week after the 70th anniversary in February of the Queen's accession to the

throne (p. 3), Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby gave his presidential address to the Church of England General Synod, with some words about what the world needs to flourish together: "We face the call to see every single person with whom we share this world no longer as a stranger, a foreigner, an alien: but as a neighbour. ... The challenges of our time go to the heart of understanding what it means to love our neighbour."

Lay Reader and longtime volunteer at Sale's St Paul's Cathedral, Christine Morris, recently awarded an OAM for "service to the community, particularly through the church" (see p. 4), is very much living her faith widely: "I need to be taking God out to the community," she says.

'Cathedrals and social justice: a Church Times webinar' is available to view on YouTube.

Sally Woollett