

# The Gippsland Anglican

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## Creative climate for op shops

Sally Woollett

This month heralds the Season of Creation, and perhaps a spring to the step. We might be tempted to spring clean the wardrobe to make room for some spring fashion.

What to buy, and what to throw out? These decisions affect people and ecosystems around the world.

Op shops are a good choice for some pre-loved items. Quality clothing that no longer fits can be loved by someone else, and op shops can use the income to continue their community work. However, many donated clothing items are never sold, and some items are far from suitable.

"It horrifies me," says Kerri Brown about the approximately six cubic metres of hard rubbish that she and her team of volunteers must send to landfill each week. Kerri has been volunteer manager of Moe, Newborough and Yallourn North shops for the past five years. In what will be a familiar story to the many diocesan op shops, she sees large volumes of these 'donations', as well as up to 40 bags, at 12 kilograms each, per week of unusable clothing.

Kerri and her volunteers must sort the rubbish from the donations. Lower quality clothing goes to op shops that don't receive many donations. About half of the three to five cubic metres of clothing donated each day is not cycled into stores. Anything unfit for resale might be used as industrial rags, or shipped overseas – ostensibly to markets in countries such as Ghana and Nigeria. The reality is that most of it goes to unmanaged landfill, where



Op shop manager Kerri Brown with some of the unsuitable donations

it causes health problems for local communities and their environment.

In the 2017 report *A new textiles economy: redesigning fashion's future*, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation reported that about half a million tonnes of plastic microfibres from the washing of plastic-based textiles such as polyester move into the ocean each year. Similarly, plastic pollutants from synthetic textiles can also move into the environment from rubbish dumps.

What's more, the industry uses huge amounts of fossil fuels and water, and emits significant amounts of greenhouse gases. Industry practices in unregulated countries include discharging untreated production wastewater, dangerous working environments, low wages and long hours. The collapse of the Rana Plaza garment

factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2013 caused the deaths of more than 1000 people and brought to light the appalling abuse of human rights happening in some parts of the textiles industry.

Cost is a significant limitation in the decision to buy sustainably, especially in low socioeconomic areas. Clothing budgets are dropping as food and utility prices rise. The impact of rising oil prices will eventually be seen in the cost of many consumer products, including synthetic fabrics. Plus there's a big temptation to preference new over old, says Kerri: "Kmart are a couple of kilometres up the road, selling kids' t-shirts for a couple of dollars; so do we, but the clothing quality and ethics are far superior. It's a massive problem and one that I fear will never be resolved until everyone is educated."

It's a huge transition to move from a linear to a circular industry but advocacy, consumer awareness and uptake are increasing. Consumers are being supported more and more to make informed decisions – knowing who is making clothes and under what conditions, what resources are used to make them and how long they last.

GOTS, the Global Organic Textile Standard, stipulates requirements throughout the textiles supply chain for both ecological and labour conditions in textile and apparel manufacturing using organically produced raw materials.

The Sustainable Apparel Coalition, joined by companies including fashion giant Uniqlo, has developed a suite of tools called the Higg Index, to "assess the social and environmental

impacts of the value chain and the environmental impacts of products."

Ethical Clothing Australia publishes a digital shopping map of where to buy ethically, as well as a guide to the Melbourne Fashion Festival. This accreditation body advocates for the rights of Australian garment workers. Charities such as Oxfam and Baptist Fund publish ratings for the bigger fashion companies, scoring them on such things as risk and governance, worker empowerment and environmental sustainability.

Shop Ethical! publishes a list for clothing as well as what's behind the products in your shopping trolley in terms of food miles, factory farming, overfishing, packaging and palm oil.

In the current climate, both environmentally and socioeconomically speaking, op shops may find themselves with more of a voice in the call for ethical fashion. Shopping 'vintage' has been popular for a while, particularly with a generation of young people very aware of the impacts of global warming. Upcycling and repair workshops are becoming popular. As awareness increases, op shops like Kerri's with affordable and more sustainable clothing, could become more attractive. Kerri agrees they could play a bigger role in the awareness-raising and education needed to make the clothing life cycle better for the planet.

Visit [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au) for links to lists of sustainable fashion outlets and things to consider before making your next clothing purchase.



# Lambeth calls Anglicans to a deeper unity



Bishop Richard Treloar

I am enormously grateful for the privilege of attending the Lambeth Conference in July/August, and to the Vicar-General who wrote to you in this space last month and who, with other colleagues, served you so well in my absence. It was a privilege to seek to represent the Diocese to the global Anglican Communion, and in the months ahead as the output from the Conference flows through to the provinces I am confident the wider Communion will be meaningfully present to the Diocese.

The contrast between the sense of unity and common purpose experienced at the Conference and the turbulence we encountered on returning home could not have been greater. Ructions in the Anglican Church of Australia (ACA) over recent weeks (see p. 3), however, will not ultimately detract from the significance of the Lambeth gathering, which – through a series of ten ‘Calls’ – has summoned Anglicans to a deeper unity than can be forged by agreement on any single issue.

Instead of the ‘Resolutions’ that previous Lambeth Conferences have made

(which had a ‘moral’ rather than a ‘legislative’ force for autonomous interdependent Anglican churches around the world) the 2022 Conference gathered around a series of Calls: invitations to provinces and dioceses to take up commonly held missional principles as is appropriate to our vastly divergent ministry contexts.

The Calls covered topics such as Reconciliation, Environment and Sustainable Development, Science and Faith, Human Dignity, Mission and Evangelism, Anglican Identity and Interfaith Relations, and in his addresses throughout the Conference ([www.archbishopofcanterbury.org](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org)) Archbishop Justin Welby urged bishops to be outward-focused, in keeping with the Conference theme: God’s Church for God’s World.

In his sermon at the closing Eucharist, the Archbishop reflected on Jesus’ words from the gospel of the day: “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). In light of recent developments in the ACA, his words bear quoting at length:

*When we fear we cling to what we know. We clutch at what makes us feel in control ... the story we tell about ourselves about who we are ... We make our worlds smaller ... because they feel safer, and they come to define and to constrain us. So the institutions that we hold onto out of fear –*

*personal fear, fear for the future of the church – end up fulfilling our fears ... And so we are continually being invited [by Christ] to begin a journey from fear to faith ... We are liberated to look outwards; to imagine a new way of relating to the world around us ... [for] the Kingdom breaks down our denominational barriers and overrules our frontiers and theological border guards ... The Kingdom leads us from tightly clutching, to freely receiving the grace of God, from zero-sum scarcity to abundance, hospitality, and generosity ... As we grow in love, our fear shrinks, and the Kingdom of God finds space, finds its rule in our hearts and in our lives as God’s people.*

The draft Lambeth Call on Anglican Identity reminds us that our ‘visible’ or ‘institutional’ way of being is not an end unto itself, even though some structure is a necessary condition for our life and work. In our provincial autonomy and interdependence we are gathered under a broad canopy stretched across four instruments of Communion: The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Lambeth Conference, The Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates’ Meeting. The draft Call makes clear that member churches of the Anglican Communion are defined “in relation to their fellowship with one another and with the Instruments of Communion.”

It goes on to summon us to a revitalising of Anglicanism’s Five Marks of Mission (see [www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx))

Like many others, including Australian bishops from a range of theological perspectives, I came away from Lambeth with a sense of renewed hope in the gift of our Communion as a window to the kingdom – hope grounded in our common call to mission – a call received singly, and expressed variously, like the stained glass in some of our churches that receives the sun’s steady light and filters it through a spectrum of colour and movement.

As your bishop, I am committed to drawing on the strength of our belonging to a global Communion of Churches so as to resource and encourage our local mission as Gippsland Anglicans. If we remain outward-focused; if we can be a non-anxious presence in an increasingly anxious world – secure in our identity as God’s beloved children, open to the sheer gift of the Kingdom, accepting of the freedoms and the limitations that come with our Anglican polity; if we seek daily to grow in that love which makes room for God’s just and merciful reign in my heart and yours; then we will come to that deeper unity – as a Diocese, as a national Church, and as a worldwide Communion – to which we are called in Christ who says to us “Do not be afraid.”

+RHL

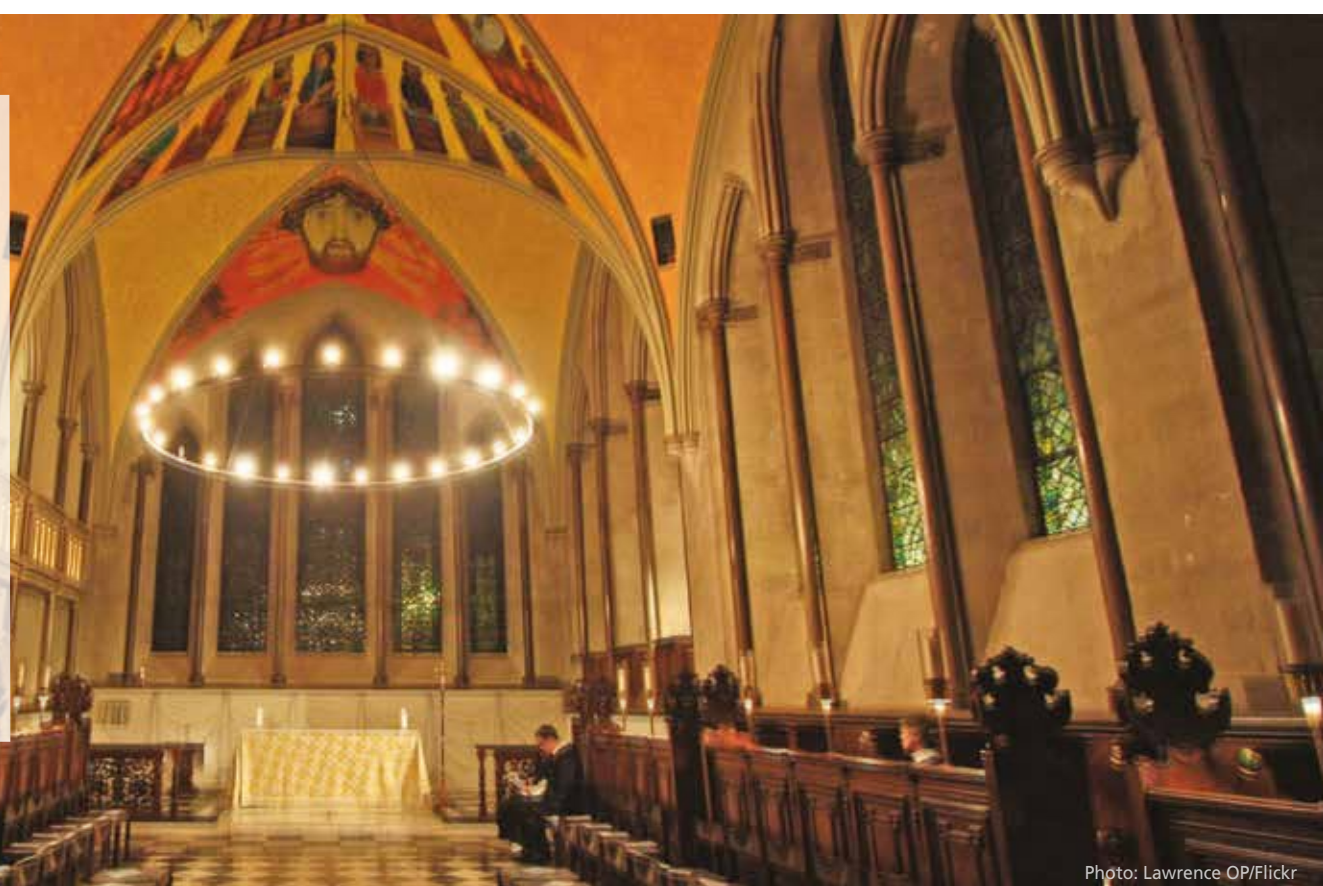
## Unity prayer

*Lord Jesus, who prayed that we might all be one, we pray to you for the unity of Christians, according to your will, according to your means.*

*May your Spirit enable us to experience the suffering caused by division, to see our sin and to hope beyond all hope.*

*Amen.*

(Part of the daily morning prayer at Lambeth Palace, for Christian unity.)





# GAFCON Australia launches new diocese

Sally Woollett

Former Anglican Archbishop of Sydney Glenn Davies is at the head of a conservative extra-provincial diocese launched last month: the Diocese of the Southern Cross.

Former Archbishop Davies and other prominent conservative Anglicans have begun what they describe as a “separate and parallel” entity to the Anglican Church of Australia.

The announcement was made during the GAFCON Australasia Conference held in Canberra in August. Part of a global movement claiming to represent orthodox Anglicanism GAFCON Australia is chaired by Bishop of Tasmania Dr Richard Condie.

The breakaway comes following the 18th General Synod on the Gold Coast in May, where a statement from the Diocese of Sydney that “any rite or ceremony that

purports to bless a same-sex marriage is not in accordance with the teaching of Christ and the faith, ritual, ceremonial and/or discipline of this Church” was narrowly defeated in the house of bishops. In 2020 the Church’s Appellate Tribunal ruled that the blessing of same-sex marriages was not contrary to the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia.

The Diocese of the Southern Cross opposes the blessing of same-sex marriage and has

yet to decide its position on the ordination of women.

The blessing of same-sex civil marriages is permitted in the Diocese of Gippsland under the Canon Concerning Services, as per the Appellate Tribunal’s Opinion and the outcome of General Synod. Women have been ordained in Gippsland since 1996.

In closing a recent Pastoral Letter, Bishop Richard said:

*If one member of the body suffers, all suffer with it*

*1 Cor 12:26), and we are diminished by this separateness. Let us trust that in God’s good and generous economy the Diocese of the Southern Cross will be a blessing to many, and that the pain and shame of our public brokenness may lead us all to self-examination and true repentance, lest our Lord’s prayer for our unity be forgotten, and our witness to his reconciling love be muted.*

*The full text of Bishop Richard’s Pastoral Letter can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/3dMGDiV>*

## Around the Diocese

## Parish of Trafalgar welcomes new Rector

The Rev’d Dr Dean Spalding was inducted as Rector of Trafalgar at St Mary’s Trafalgar on 16 August.

Ordained priest 18 years ago, Dean has served as Chaplain to Grimwade House (Melbourne Grammar School’s primary campus), as the Dean of Studies to Perth’s Wollaston Theological College, as the Rector of Drouin, and, most recently, as an assistant chaplain and teacher of mathematics and Christian studies at St Paul’s Anglican Grammar School, Warragul.

Dean attended an ecumenical school in the Macedon Ranges, where he found Christian faith and developed a love for ecumenism and expressions of Christian unity. Between his final year at school and his first year at the University of Melbourne and Trinity College to study Dentistry, Macedon was ravaged by the Ash Wednesday bushfires.

The experience birthed an aspiration to read theology and become a priest.

He first completed an honours degree in Science, majoring in bushfire ecology. This was followed by a Diploma in Education and 11 years of teaching science and maths in Christian schools. During these years Dean was a leader at SUFM ‘beach missions’ to Lakes Entrance, and at ESA camps in Halls Gap.

After a long-deferred gap year, Dean found a way finally to pursue theology and his love for ecumenism, enrolling in a Bachelor of Theology at the Bible College of Victoria (now Melbourne School of Theology).

Dean soon returned to Trinity College as an ordination candidate for the Diocese of Melbourne where he completed a Graduate Diploma in Theology and would subsequently become an adjunct faculty member.

With a passion for preaching

and music (composing and playing piano and tin whistle), and for intergenerational ministry, Dean is looking forward to the opportunities for both pastoral work and biblical teaching at Trafalgar, Yarragon and Thorpdale, and to encouraging the vocation of the laity there – as he has done for a number of years as a diocesan Lay Reader Chaplain until recently.

Dean loves gardening, and the natural environment, and is keen to explore the Strzelecki Ranges a little further. He also seeks to work closely with local First Nations people and their elders towards Reconciliation. He is married to Kate and they have three daughters, who attend Chairo Christian school in Drouin.

*Courtesy Bishop Richard’s Ad Clerum*

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I was interested to read Dean Spalding’s article about the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires in the most recent TGA. I was living in Melbourne at the time of the fires and had a little professional involvement in the follow-up. One consequence of the fires was the razing to the ground of the house run by the Society of the Sacred Mission (SSM) in Crafers near Adelaide, known as St Michael’s House. SSM was formed in England in 1893, and set up its first Australian house in Crafers shortly after the Second World War. It was a place of training of candidates for the ordained ministry as well as being a centre where people could go for retreats and the like. I spent two Easters (1979 and 1980) there myself.

By 1983, numbers in the monastic life were sharply declining, as were numbers of theological students, and the house at Crafers was starting to be too large. It contained a very fine theological library with some irreplaceable rare volumes, and that was totally destroyed in the Ash Wednesday fires. Many saw that as a greater cause for sorrow than loss of the house which, by that time, was no longer really suitable for its purpose. SSM in Australia continued, and there were houses in Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra.

Clifford Jones



Photo: Colin Oakley

Rev'd Dean Spalding receiving his licence from Bishop Richard

### From the new Rector

I won’t repeat the extensive list of thanks from the Rector’s Response part of my Induction and Installation Service but I want to mention two ‘snippets’ of delight from the evening for which I am thankful to God.

The group of accomplished musicians who came together for the Induction were an eclectic lot: Chris Newman is a guitarist and singer from the Parish of Trafalgar with a tremendous sense of intuition and musicality; Libby Willems, also guitarist and singer, is our Diocesan Development Officer as well

as Director of the Baw Baw Singers, a choir who meet in my former parish of Drouin (2015–2020); The Rev’d Daniel Lowe brought lively percussion on his djembe and represented my last location of ministry – St Paul’s Anglican Grammar School, Warragul (2020–2022); and Rev’d Dave Perryman, guitarist and Rector of Stratford, is our Bishop’s Chaplain; Anthony Hahn, our Cathedral Organist who accompanied the more traditional half of the hymn selection; and myself accompanying the more contemporary half. For a group who had never come together in this combination,

I thought we made a spirited and synergetic ensemble. I know we all enjoyed leading the worship together, and the congregation responded by raising the roof in praise of God!

A late addition to that congregation for the evening was my mother, Beverley, who was brought from Lyrebird Village in Drouin to which she moved (from Macedon) in January this year. Her attendance was made possible by the kindness and care of two close friends, Robert and Elizabeth Fensham. It was a thrill to see the joy of the whole evening reflected in my mum’s obvious delight.



# Bradshaw family gather for Drouin baptism

Pauline Davies

The morning of Sunday 24 July was a special one for parishioners at Christ Church Drouin, who celebrated the baptism of Ronan Arthur Bradshaw. Ronan's family reside in Drouin and the congregation were delighted to acknowledge and receive the family, which included his three older brothers and his godparents, for this special occasion.

Locum minister The Rev'd Bruce Charles produced a beautiful pamphlet with Ronan's picture on the front cover, as both the baptism and Holy Communion were celebrated during our normal Sunday morning service. Bruce's sermon and the readings centred on the importance of prayer and how prayer is a way of connecting with God to develop a personal,



Dean and Amy Bradshaw with children Hudson, Ronan, Kayden and Lincoln, and godparents Ben and Caitlin (left)

meaningful relationship with him so that we all may grow in his knowledge

and wisdom. It is through baptism, Bruce explained, that God offers and gives

forgiveness of sins and life eternal through his son, Jesus Christ.

Prayers were offered for Ronan, both for his family and for the congregation, as he was incorporated into the Body of Christ, reminding us that baptism is a gathering of the whole family of the church. Ronan was presented with a lit baptismal candle, depicting receiving the light of Christ. He also received a gift from Drouin Mothers' Union as a way of welcoming Ronan as a new member into the church family.

The service ended with the prayer Christ taught us, *Our Father in Heaven*. Bruce had arranged for this prayer to be laminated onto small sheets, which were handed out to the children.

Ronan is only two years old, so he may not remember this special occasion of taking his first steps in beginning a journey of faith in his life, but his beautiful smile won us all over as we were all united in this joyful welcoming of a new Christian into the Church.

# Mothers' Union remembers Mary Sumner in Leongatha

Maryann Ashton

Archdeacon Graham Knott reminded us in his address



Ven Graham Knott and MU Diocesan President Maryann Ashton with new MU member Stacey Williamson (centre)

that we needed to both mourn and be thankful as we celebrated Mary Sumner Day at St Peter's Leongatha on 19 August.

A small group of members and friends attended the day and, during the service, Stacey Williamson was welcomed into membership of Mothers' Union.

The day is one when we remember MU's founder, Mary Sumner. As we were reminded, she probably never realised or thought that her desire to help the women in her husband's parish would grow into a worldwide movement.

Although we seem to be a shrinking organisation with fewer members, the need to support family life and encourage others is just as vital, if not more so, in society now.

During our celebration we in turn focused on others, raising funds for the forthcoming St Barnabas Family Retreat at The Abbey at Raymond Island. There was a ticket entry with a door prize and, for lunch, delicious home-made soups for sale. After lunch we took part in a Beetle Drive,

where there was much fun, laughter and some frustration as dice refused to turn up desired numbers. A few books and cakes were

available for sale. Despite our small numbers we raised over \$200! Many thanks to those who came and supported so generously.



the abbey



The Abbey Raymond Island  
1-25 First Parade, Raymond Island 3880 email: [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au) Phone : (03) 51566580

**MU Family  
Respite**  
26-29 September 2022  
at  
The Abbey Raymond  
Island

Calling any Families looking for a break!

A holiday at The Abbey with two or three other families as guests of Mothers Union Gippsland.

- family time out
- a little space to relax

**Interested ?**

Know someone who might like to come along?

Speak with  
Rev Thelma Langshaw  
0428 458 367

If you would like to partner with Mothers Union Gippsland to support this ministry

please contact

Maryann Ashton

[maryannashton423@gmail.com](mailto:maryannashton423@gmail.com)



# Talking Tithe.ly in Korumburra-Poowong

Libby Willems

You would have to agree, a drive into South Gippsland is always a beautiful thing to do, but on a recent Friday afternoon, the visit was made all the better for spending time with members of the Parish Council of Korumburra-Poowong to discuss possibilities connected with a key project of the Diocesan Development Officer role.

This meeting was an opportunity to ask further questions and discuss the pros and cons of investing in an administrative management system, Tithe.ly. This administrative product is a tool that supports church organisations to securely manage and access their information using a cloud-based system. If this sounds



(L-R) Fiona Beggs, Rev'd Canon Dr Fran Grimes, Annie Brown, Diocesan Development Officer Libby Willems and Martin Shaw

unfamiliar, compare it to how you might use internet banking, or log in to your telephone account to pay a bill or see your usage. Perhaps you buy your supermarket groceries online. Cloud-based management systems

are very common and help modern organisations meet the expectations of their people and customers.

Marg and Martin Shaw hosted this meeting in their home and provided a lovely cuppa and afternoon tea,

with some other home-style treats added by Annie Brown, purchased from a store in nearby Loch Village.

So, next time you are looking for a Sunday tour, keep South Gippsland in mind – Leongatha, Korumburra, Poowong, Loch and all the other fine towns, coupled with the expansive views across the ranges, do not disappoint!

*Libby Willems, Diocesan Development Officer, works part-time and is a member of the Drouin Parish. If you have a question about her role, please email [hello@gippslandanglicans.org.au](mailto:hello@gippslandanglicans.org.au) or call 0458 265 198.*



BCA nomads and church folk enjoying a pot luck dinner

## BCA Nomads give generous gifts of time and talent

Rev'd Jude Benton

After 22 years as a place of service to the community, St Peter's Op Shop in Mallacoota has been refreshed for the benefit of our dedicated team of volunteers, as well as all who come through.

In 2020 we began a make-over project of the St Peter's Op Shop. During that year the inside of the main shop was emptied, old carpets and shelving removed, and the shop was given a new paint job, flooring, shelving and refit. The response from customers was fantastic, with many commenting on how

much cleaner, fresher and more inviting the shop was.

The makeover volunteers ran out of time and energy to complete the project by upgrading the kitchen, storeroom and staff area. For two years we've waited for a suitable opportunity to finish – and it came in July in the form of three travelling Bush Church Aid (BCA) Nomad couples, who spent a week attending to the bulk of the storeroom renovations for us.

Gone is the leaking roller door, carpet with 20 years of dirt and dust trampled into it, and a kitchenette with doors that were no longer shutting properly.

Now we have a fresh, clean, airtight storeroom with flooring that matches the rest of shop, and a new kitchenette – including dishwasher, which will be a great help when dealing with crockery donations that need a bit of a clean.

We were able to reopen the shop in late July, and since then we have had no end of positive comments about how fresh it looks. The volunteers are greatly enjoying the new kitchen and dishwasher.

As a remote parish with a small congregation, we really are appreciative of assistance through teams like the BCA Nomads.

## Tribute

### Vale Bishop Arthur Malcolm

Anglican Board of Mission

ABM is sad to report the passing of Bishop Arthur Malcolm. Bishop Arthur was Australia's first Aboriginal Bishop and an outstanding leader and pastor in the Australian church. Bishop Arthur retired from his episcopal role in 2001 but continued to inspire and encourage from his home in Yarrabah, North Queensland. ABM expresses sincere condolences to Aunty Coleen and the entire family.

Bishop Malcolm was born at Yarrabah (Queensland) and began training as a Church Army Officer in Stockton (New South Wales) where he completed a Certificate course in Evangelism in 1959. During his time as a Captain in the Church Army he served at Lake Tyers (Victoria) and Brewarrina (New South Wales). People from Victoria and New South Wales express great affection for their beloved "Captain".

He returned to Yarrabah in 1974 as Chaplain and was ordained by the Bishop of North Queensland in 1978. As well as ministering to his people at Yarrabah he had responsibility for Anglican people at Palm Island. He was made a Canon of St James' Cathedral, Townsville in 1984 and consecrated Bishop with special responsibility to Aboriginal people in 1985.

During this time he developed an outstanding leadership amongst Aboriginal people and encouraged them in their education, community life and in the many struggles which Indigenous people in Australia encounter.

He had also been engaged in leadership and pastoral support in the non-Indigenous community and was well respected and admired for his sensitive and reconciling counsel.

Arthur Malcolm had great involvement in the ecumenical community and was foundation Chair of the Aboriginal and Islander Commission of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

In 1992 he and Aboriginal members of the Anglican Church of Australia met together and formed the body which became known as NATSIAC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council). Arthur Malcolm was elected as the first Chairperson.

Bishop Arthur Malcolm made an extraordinary contribution to the Anglican Church of Australia. His committed leadership and his faithfulness to the Gospel of Christ, devotion to the wellbeing of all Aboriginal people in Australia and unstinting service to his church are gifts which we have treasured and which we honour.

*Story courtesy Bishop Clyde Wood and The Rev'd Gloria Shipp. Text originally from the 2001 General Synod resolution giving thanks for Bishop Arthur's ministry. As the Gippsland Diocese prays for all Aboriginal Christians we especially remember The Rev'd Kathy Dalton and The Rev'd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy, uniting our prayers with and for them.*



# Stories of faith and fabric at Southern Deanery meeting

Rev'd Jo White

Members of Southern Deanery, both clergy and laity, meet a few times each year for fellowship and mutual support. We pray together and share stories about parish life. We share in Holy Communion and enjoy fellowship over a simple meal. Each meeting includes a guest speaker. This month, in Yarram, we heard from The Rev'd Kate Campbell, Distinctive Deacon and member of the Registry team of the Diocese. Kate reminded us that even office work is more than just a daily grind. It is a pastoral encounter. Her work is both personal and administrative.



Photo: Jenny Wicking

*One of Kate Campbell's many pieces of creative work*

"There is always a person at the front of their question or need," she said.

Kate spoke to us about her faith journey and about the

story and symbol behind the many stoles, copes and other liturgical garments she has decorated. It seems that this creative process is never a

chore for Kate because, for her this form of creativity is *soul time*, a time of spirit-filled creativity as she listens to the stories of those who would like a special garment for liturgical use. As Kate works, she allows God to whisper to her what is needed to express the person's story in symbols and colour and texture.

Archdeacon Graham Knott commented that, since women's ordination, garments for liturgical use have become more beautiful and more meaningful. Once upon a time the men (and it was only men) went to the liturgical outfitter and chose from a selection of generic symbols. Now our stoles, chasubles and copes can express something of our story, which is imbedded in God's story.

Members of Southern Deanery were treated to a display of Kate's needlework, which shows not just her skill

but a precious expression of love. This is possible because, person to person, Kate and the one who has commissioned the work have spoken at an intimate level – heart to heart, spirit to spirit. Recurring themes in the designs were those of nature (especially as it relates to Gippsland), the centrality of the Trinity and the cross of Christ.

The Rev'ds Jenny and Tony Wicking hosted our gathering, coming away from their usual day off to offer the hospitality of the church hall.

Our next event will be held at All Saints Poo Wong on 14 October at 9.30 am, where Kevin Broughton will speak about leadership, integrity and authenticity, and introduce a product to help churches create an online community.

*Rev'd Jo White is Regional Dean of the Southern Region.*

## Ecumenical and interfaith

### Christian connections, and all that jazz, in Inverloch

Geoff Boer

For several years the local churches at Inverloch and Wonthaggi have had the opportunity to be involved with the Inverloch Jazz Festival. Music is performed at several venues throughout the town area. The Inverloch Connections church uses the Inverloch Community Hub every Sunday and on the weekend of the festival it becomes a jazz music service. The Salvo Big Band

provides the music and local churches share responsibility for the rest. After the service, the venue hosts further jazz sessions.

After a few years of COVID interruptions and a changed date, the latest jazz festival was held in early August. Rev'd Graeme Liersch, Rector of the Anglican Parish of Wonthaggi-Inverloch, led the service, with Susan Liersch providing the children's spot and Jeff Robertson from the Connections Church



*The Salvo Big Band at the Inverloch Community Hub for this year's Inverloch Jazz Festival*

giving the sermon.

Accompanied by the Salvo Big Band, Susan read the *Wordless Book* to a congregation of about 150

people, telling the story of what God has done for us through Jesus Christ. Jeff continued this theme, challenging people to put

their faith in Jesus or renew their faith in him.

It's hard to know the impact of this service on both local parishioners and jazz visitors. Speaking personally, I've met people there after having known them in another capacity but only then discovering that we have a Christian connection. For those visitors who come just for the jazz? They see what we have in common, as well as a vibrant ecumenical congregation worshipping God together.

*The service can be viewed at [www.basscoastanglican.org.au/sermons](http://www.basscoastanglican.org.au/sermons).*

## Drouin drop-in centre turns 30

Pauline Davies

Founding members were among the 60 people attending the 30th anniversary celebration of the Crossing Drop In Centre in Drouin on 24 June.

The Crossing Drop In Centre came into being because of the determination and faith of Jenny Roach and Ivor Jones, who both had similar inspiration. Jenny Roach was assisted by discussions with Jan Petersen.

The original centre, the result of ecumenical

cooperation, was opened in June 1992, in the former Drouin Ampol petrol station restaurant, by Buln Buln Shire representative John Austin. When the Ampol site was sold, the Crossing moved to a house next to the Drouin Library, and then spent time in both the Drouin Uniting Church Hall and the anteroom of the Drouin Library. Under the leadership of John Ballantyne, the Crossing committee purchased the building next door to the Drouin Library in 2004.

Since then, the Crossing

has developed and flourished in its own building, continuing to meet everyday challenges and staying true to its mission of providing an opportunity and environment for people experiencing personal need of any kind to find new direction and support.

Currently situated in Princes Way and coordinated by Pauline Ward, the centre is open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10 am to 3 pm. A large selection of Christian books and gifts can be purchased, and the cafe serves light

meals daily and provides emergency food to people in need. Small Bible group study series are held at minimal cost.

*The Crossing is a not-for-profit organisation run by volunteers from the Combined Churches of Drouin and District. New volunteers are always welcome.*



*Drop-in centre founding member Monica Clark cutting the cake at the anniversary celebration*



# 40th anniversary service at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School

Paula Walland

Forty years ago, local families founded St Paul's Anglican Grammar School, and in the decades since the school has amassed a rich history and a collection of remarkable stories.

The six principals of St Paul's, past and present, recently united to commemorate this historic milestone as part of a special 40th anniversary service. Prep students joined the principals in a candle-lighting ceremony to wel-



*St Paul's Prep student Sayarah Dassanayake lighting a candle during the ceremony with St Paul's current Principal, Mr Cameron Herbert*

current students to "Explore the possibilities. The possibilities of life motivate us and the experiences they bring define us."

St Paul's commenced with 19 students in 1982 in the Sunday School rooms of St Paul's Anglican Church in Warragul. Since then, the school has grown to approximately 1600 students across two campuses in Warragul and Traralgon.

The school's history encompasses steady growth, expanding from the original secondary school to include a primary school in 1998 and a kindergarten in 1999. It established a Traralgon campus in 2002, which began with Pre-Kinder to Year 3 students but is now home to more than 450 students through to Year 10, and has committed to further expansion to include Years 11 and 12 by 2027. The school is now also planning to offer Early Learning through to Year 2 at a new campus in Drouin from 2024.

## New Head of Garnsey joins Gippsland Grammar leaders



*Gippsland Grammar's Leadership team includes (L-R) Jie van Berkel, Virginia Evans, Richard Price, Emilie Davine, Rohan Jayatilake, Michele Wakeham, Justin Henderson and Kate Ray*

Zoe Curtis

Gippsland Grammar's Leadership team welcomes the School's new Head of Garnsey Campus, Rohan Jayatilake, who joins Gippsland Grammar from the British School in Kathmandu, Nepal.

During his time in Nepal, Rohan developed a year level-specific wellbeing curriculum and created opportunities for student leadership. Prior to the British School, he taught at Perth's St Mark's Anglican Community School and Christ Church Grammar School. He is a keen sportsman and has been involved in coaching numerous sports at his previous schools including volleyball, tennis, athletics and cross country. Outside of school Rohan enjoys exploring the outdoors and likes fishing, camping and diving.

The trials of the COVID pandemic saw Rohan's return to Australia with his wife, Sona, and young daughter,

Kaiya. He said the transition to Gippsland and to Gippsland Grammar had been both welcoming and seamless.

come their return, with the passing of the flame symbolising one principal passing on responsibility to the next.

Members of the Board, life governors, previous students, and current students and staff from both the Warragul and Traralgon campuses, gathered at the service to memorialise the momentous occasion.

Class of 1987 alumnus Mr Malcom Watts, now the National Director of SIM Australia, delivered the keynote address, encouraging

"The genuine care and generosity of the community has made us feel immediately at home, and we are so pleased to be here," he said. "My family and I feel extremely privileged to be part of both the School and Gippsland communities and I am so excited to be sharing in the forward growth and achievements of Gippsland Grammar."

His arrival coincides with a reinvigoration of the School's Leadership team. Acting

Principal Michele Wakeham said the school's current Leadership team brings an influx of energy and ideas.

"Being in the same room and at the same School as these professionals, who have each excelled within their own areas of expertise, is incredibly inspiring for me as an Acting Principal and I'm incredibly excited and invigorated by the discussions and ideas that are not only being shared, but also being implemented," she said.

## Gippsland Grammar sings at Yarram



*Photo: Vicki McLeod*

*Gippsland Grammar Choir performed at the Yarram Eisteddfod in August, delighting the audience with their singing under the direction of Choir Master Dr Kevin Cameron, with accompanist Tanika Richards. In the Open Section (pictured), the choir received an equal first for their performances of Embraceable You and Festival Gloria.*



# Communion Forest takes root at Lambeth Conference

A worldwide environmental initiative – set to include tree planting, the creation of wetlands, and coastal restoration projects – was launched in August at the Lambeth Conference.

Bishops from across the globe pledged their support for the Communion Forest as part of a focus on the environment.

The Communion Forest is a global act of hope which involves a wide range of creation care activities. Together, these projects will form a virtual, global “forest”. The forestation activities will be determined locally so that they are geographically, culturally and environmentally appropriate. The “forest” will therefore look very different in different parts of the Communion.

Each area of the Anglican Communion will decide locally how they wish to create and enhance landscape protection. This will mean the “Forest” could include woodland, grasslands, meadows, wetlands, coastal habitats and more.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, spoke of the possibility of the Communion Forest becoming the “most widespread and diverse” environmental project in the world.



Photo: Lambeth Conference

*Bishops attending the Lambeth Conference join with project members in blessing a tree in the newly launched Communion Forest initiative*

Archbishop Julio Murray, Primate of Iglesia Anglicana de la Region Central de America (IARCA), who leads the Anglican Communion delegation to the COP meetings on climate change, spoke to bishops.

He said: “The response to the climate crisis has been inadequate, in the level of resources and in the level of urgency.

“With this as part of the facts, here we are: Bishops of the Anglican Communion at

the Lambeth Conference, we will have an opportunity to prepare a call to government leaders and other actors, to re-imagine actions and strategies to slow down the devastating effects on the life of human beings, locally and globally.”

He added that the Church could “be influencers” on the issue of climate justice.

Bishops were meeting in London as part of a day focusing on the environment. The Conference discussed

two Lambeth Calls on environmental protection and sustainable development.

In a video message António Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, said: “Your inspiring teams, summoning us to walk, listen, and witness together, offers a blueprint for progress.

“It calls upon all people to bring value to life not through words but through action and service to others and to deliver economic and environmental justice,” he said.

“By living these values every day we can move one step closer to the sustainable, equal and just world that every person deserves.”

The first tree of the Communion Forest was planted in the Lambeth Palace garden by Archbishops Justin and Julio, together with the Archbishop of Cape Town Thabo Makgoba and Elizabeth Wathuti, a Kenyan environmental activist.

Archbishop Justin said: “Scripture is full of rich descriptions of our natural world and God’s love for His creation.

“It’s the call of the Church to treasure this gift, to stand alongside our brothers and sisters around the Anglican Communion who are already affected by climate change, and to safeguard the environment upon which all of us depend.

“I pray the tree planted today in Lambeth Palace will be the beginning of one of the world’s most widespread and diverse environmental projects.”

Churches can find resources and be involved with the Communion Forest through the official website, [www.communionforest.org](http://www.communionforest.org).

*Courtesy  
lambethconference.org*

## Gippsland Diocese to host climate action webinar

In June, the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland, at its Synod forum, made a commitment to taking action on climate change. A webinar to be held on 14 September will support us as we take up the challenge of sustainable living at home and in our gathering places.

Bishop Richard Treloar will chair a panel of guest speakers:

- The Rev’d Dr Ji Zhang, Uniting Church in Australia – Rev’d Dr Zhang is the producer of a video series *Towards Zero* that brings together our theology along with practical actions to reduce emissions and, importantly, tools to measure our impact. Reflecting on his own personal journey, and drawing on his experience in the renewable energy industry, Rev’d Dr Zhang shows us the real possibility of becoming carbon neutral as a household, a congregation, a network of agencies and a whole church.

- Sally Shaw, National Director of AROCHA Australia – AROCHA is a Christian nature conservation organisation. Their projects are frequently cross-cultural in character, and share a community emphasis, with a focus on science and research, practical conservation and environmental education.

- Ian Southall, Baw Baw Sustainability Network, is a passionate, knowledgeable and active Gippslander who has supported education and action on sustainability for many years. Returning from the inaugural Gippsland New Energy Conference, Ian is across the latest news and options for sustainable energy. Also a member of the Mirboo North Uniting Church, Ian understands the work and opportunities facing churches.

*See page 12 for details and a link to register for this free event.*

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# Local, seasonal, sustainable

Jan Down

*You cause the grass  
to grow for the cattle,  
and plants for people  
to use,  
to bring forth food from  
the earth,  
and wine to gladden the  
human heart,  
oil to make the face shine,  
and bread to strengthen  
the human heart.*

Psalms 104:14,15

Food is a serious subject – seriously enjoyable, that is!

What abundance and variety of food God has provided on this planet for humans and animals to enjoy.

And yet not everyone has their share of this abundance. With climate change, COVID and war, 49 million people are on the brink of famine, according to Tearfund Australia. Many of the gains made in addressing world poverty have been lost.

Even here in Australia, where we have access to so much choice of food, we have since COVID noticed gaps on supermarket shelves. This cannot be compared to the desperate situation of people in refugee camps overseas, or those trying to grow crops when the rain doesn't come. However, it does show our growing vulnerability when it comes to food security. Sometimes towns have been cut off completely by floods or fire. And we also depend very much on overseas imports, even for our basic foods. We have long supply chains.



What can we do? We can give to agencies like Tearfund or Anglican Overseas Aid to help those in extreme poverty, and we can call on our government to increase foreign aid. Closer to home, we can play our part in strengthening food security (while also helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions) by choosing to buy local, seasonal and sustainably grown food where possible. Do we really need asparagus from Peru, or Californian oranges?

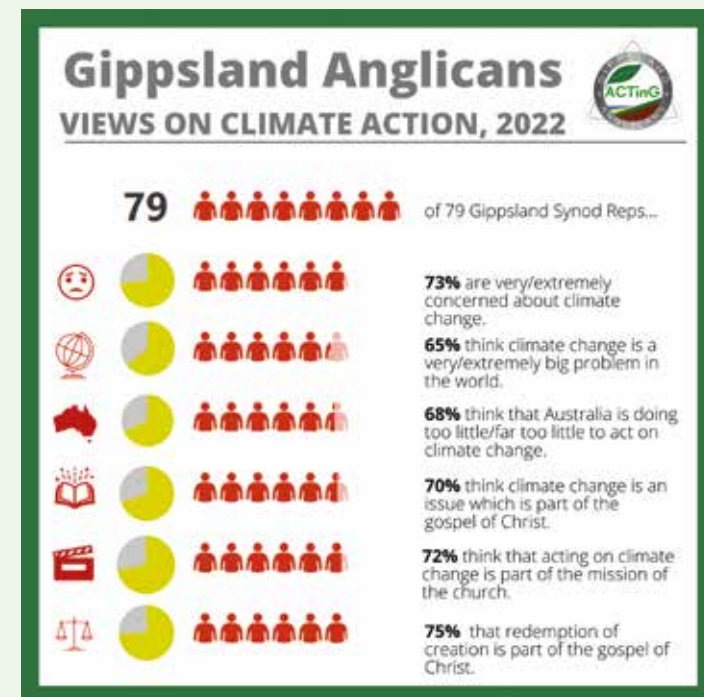
However, it must be acknowledged that in a globalised economy this is a very complex issue, and one that's easy to over-simplify. Farmers must be able to make a living and those on low incomes must be able to eat, as journalist and farmer's wife Gabrielle Chan argues in her recent book on why farming should matter to everyone. Despite the provocative title (*Why You Should Give a*

\*\*\*\* *About Farming*), I found this a fascinating and eye-opening read.

Chan says that we "eaters will be the ultimate arbiter of where and how food is grown and how the land is cared for," which implies that we have more influence than we might think.

Could churches start growing more edible plants – perhaps some of the 6000 indigenous to Australia? Community gardens and food swaps could help build some resilience. What about a parish locavore feast, where everything eaten comes from within 10 or 25 or 100 kilometres? Maybe that could be a fun fundraiser for the next parish climate project.

## ACTinG climate change survey results



The key finding evident in this infographic, prepared from results of a survey administered by the new diocesan group ACTinG (Acting on Climate Together in Gippsland), is the consistently high concern about all aspects of climate change measured from respondents drawn from a rural, older, middle to higher socioeconomic demographic.

The respondents were members of the Gippsland Anglican Synod held on 17–19 June 2022. Synod members are the clergy of the diocese and several selected lay people from each parish. As such, it is not necessarily a representative sample of Gippsland Anglicans.

Michael Down, ACTinG

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## Sunday to everyday

# Sharing tips on caring for climate

Rev'd Edie Ashley

I met up with Rhondda Millner from Mirboo North at the Diocesan Synod in June, just after Synod had passed the motion to make climate change a major focus of diocesan action and prayer over the next three-year Synod cycle. Rhondda was "totting up all the everyday things" she regularly did to reduce climate change.

Following Synod, at my request, Rhondda sent me her list. May we learn from each other and together work towards the wellbeing of the earth and all creation.

Rhondda's tips for reuse and recycling

- If it springs back when it's screwed up it's soft plastic. When your bag of soft plastics is full, put it on the front seat of the car – so you don't forget to take it to the supermarket for recycling.
- Reuse elastic from shoes. There are lots of uses such as for COVID masks.
- Rinse and squash milk cartons before recycling. They will end up at one-third of their original size.

- Leave batteries in the dedicated bins at supermarkets.
- Use cardboard and paper skip bins at locations throughout Gippsland, including the corner of Princess Drive and Tramway Road in Morwell, and in Traralgon at the end of Eastern Way Road.
- Recycle aluminium confectionery wrappers.
- Carry a large, clean handkerchief as a portable hand towel – it saves paper towel and electricity at public toilets.

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PHOTO: Rev'd Edie Ashley LOCATION: Raymond Island, VIC



# The People's Movement

Perspective on Tony Rinaudo's *The Forest Underground – Hope for a planet in crisis*

Ray Thomas

It's not surprising that Tony Rinaudo, having grown up in the beautiful Ovens River valley in the mountains of north-east Victoria – always out in nature, bushwalking, fishing and bike riding – would some day work to protect nature. The close experience established his values for life, and led him to do some extraordinary things.

As eldest son of a migrant family in the 1950s, he saw the hard work of his poor, marginalised forebears to earn their way in tough times. He understood the family values of honesty, listening before speaking, and trying to see the underlying values that drive others' decision-making; it was about earning respect, and not privilege.

In his teens, he saw the environmental damage from pollution and oil spills on the global front, massive deforestation of his own local hills, and was shocked at the passive acceptance of such "violence against nature." It made him angry that so-called progress could justify the destruction of natural processes that keep the planet healthy.

Equally in focus were the immense struggles of people suffering poverty and famine in poorer countries. His mother's devout Catholic faith had guided Tony's deep sense of caring for others less fortunate, and indeed for the earth itself. However, I suspect it was not Christianity alone that prepared him for his later work in Africa; family modelling played a large part once again. This migrant family had always chosen to work hard to make something good out of difficult situations.

It was time for action, so he began a degree in rural science, aiming to work where poor farmers really needed help. He met his life partner Liz during that time, and it became clear that they both felt a calling to make a difference overseas.

Then they were off to Bible college together, studying hard, and living simply on a low income. It was a case of really sticking their necks out, with faith that they would

find a way forward to where they'd be useful. The dreadful famine in Ethiopia had long captured Tony's attention, so it was Sub-Saharan Africa that continued to call. Eventually an opening came through Service in Mission – as manager of a farm school in Niger.

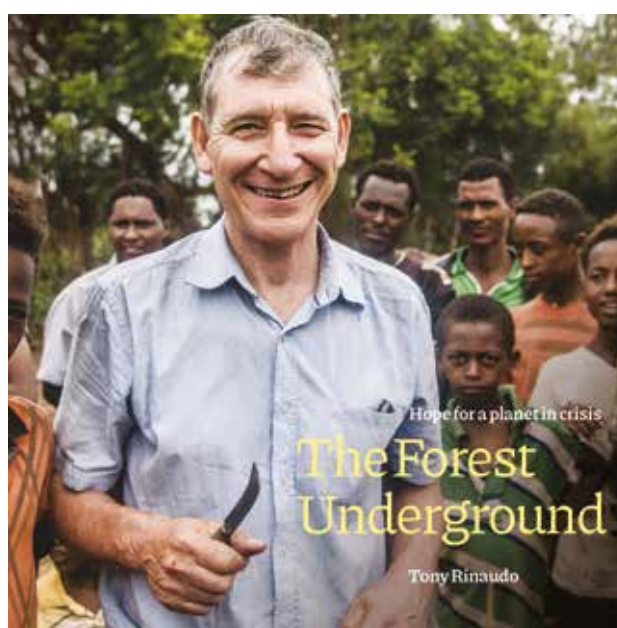
More steep learning curves followed – this time in the language, customs and livelihoods of a very different culture. This must have been an especially tough task for a basically shy person, who was picking up managerial skills while just starting a new job, in a new country, with a new language.

Travelling around the project area, Tony became all too aware of the desperate state of the treeless landscape, and he was well placed to recognise this as the main cause of farming difficulties. So tree growing and planting became an important focus for several years.

Success rates were dismal for many reasons, but Tony pushed on doggedly until a 'Eureka' moment, when a new approach became "embarrassingly obvious." The low, leafy sprouts scattered around the farmlands were not shrubby vegetation, as presumed, but tree stumps that had been trying to regrow ever since the land was cleared several decades earlier.

Drought and food shortages had forced farmers to cut their trees and sell the firewood, just to stay alive; if they didn't, someone else would steal the trees anyway. The economics of such catch-22 situations meant that farmers had fewer and fewer options available, and things just spiralled downwards, beyond their control.

Tony eventually appreciated that people had developed their practices for their own good reasons, so he asked lots of questions in his broken Hausa language, to learn about the people and their situations. That earned their respect –



he wasn't being the outside expert telling people what to do. With that deeper level of trust, an old village chief shared a very wise comment on how one's pre-conceived ideas can steer our actions in the wrong direction:

*It's not that we believe what we see, but that we see what we believe.*

After several years of trying to plant trees in a desert landscape, Tony was ready to learn more, and humble enough to recognise his error and start again; to see the economic pressures that forced people to cut trees down, and then work within the constraints that farmers actually face. "What's going to work for them now?"

A major turning point in gaining wider community trust was the serious famine of 1984. This time, it wasn't nameless people on the other side of the planet, but friends in nearby villages. There was much urgent work seeking help from government stores, dealing with bureaucratic hurdles, feeling powerless, helpless, exhausted ... but staying; not going home.

Teaming up with the local mayor and contacts in all the villages, Tony and Liz organised massive grain distribution for 70,000 people over 18 months. Under the government-declared Food for Work program, farmers undertook to protect their tree stumps, allowing these to grow without grazing. The massive scale of this project resulted in 500,000 trees across 12,000 hectares, giving wind

breaks between the trees, and the cooler conditions boosted growth of the crops in between.

People could easily see that trees actually did benefit farming, and realised the significant change in income security. That direct experience and new understandings drove change from the bottom up as local people became models that others could trust and emulate.

To quote Tony:

*The biggest change in people was their sense of self-worth, hope, self-determination, feeling respected, valued, proud of who they are, instead of ignored, not cared about, helpless.*

It was the start of a "People's Movement", as Tony expresses it, not a project that stops when the funding runs out.

I see this as an enormous example of Tony's love and care for people – the common humanity that transcends cultural and religious divides. The 'Christian' label actually got in the way at times, with some locals clearly suspicious and mistrusting of foreign values.

So this certainly is a success story, albeit one of very rocky beginnings. Initially, one perceives the well-meaning 'outsiders' coming to help people living in dire circumstances. Well educated, but in ignorance of local wisdom and real economic pressures, Tony initiated actions

that local people viewed as crazy – and, to begin with, those actions were. Tree planting in a semi-desert area was never going to work.

This initial approach can be seen as a failure of the old missionary model of presuming to know "what's best", where an ecological perspective was really required. Whatever one's viewpoint, it was the Rinaudos' lovely human qualities of compassion, humility and serving others that helped.

The latter part of the journey is much richer than the awkward start. Tony's intimate knowledge of how such change is driven led him to work for World Vision, spreading this learning across the globe. Service in mission had always been a central theme in Liz and Tony's vocation, and they both certainly lived that out.

Liz, too, had always made her own contributions, particularly through caring connections with many women. Her support for Tony's work was enabling and encouraging through all their trials; indeed, it underpinned the success of their team effort. After decades of her own enormous experience in Niger, Liz was eventually able to work with World Vision as well – first in Asia, the Pacific and Central America, then side by side with Tony, working as a team again.

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A crowning moment came five years after leaving Niger, when Tony was able to return and visit the villages where it all started. The tree restoration had spread from farmer to farmer, and farmer managed natural regeneration was now practised on more than half the country's cultivated land – more than 10 million hectares. You can see the difference from space!

On a similar World Vision program in Ethiopia, farmers managed the restoration of tree cover on an entire range of bare hills. Only six years later, the extra 2700 hectares of tree cover had cooled the whole district enough that the yearly rainfall increased, and the adjacent farmland had better crop yields. Farming communities that had been aid-dependent for 22 years were now selling their surplus

grain. It was a huge success!

From the ecological perspective, important natural processes are coming back into balance in the restored landscapes, and that guarantees a sustainable future for the whole venture. The extra birds, lizards, spiders and other wildlife are markedly reducing insect pests in the crops. Fallen leaves and crop stubble are left to rot into the soil rather than burnt, so soil fertility increases. Extra organic matter in the soil allows rain to soak in, so moisture levels are maintained.

By increasing tree cover, and working with nature rather than against it, farmers can see a more secure future for their land, and for their families. And rolling that out across millions of

farmers has huge significance for a planet that's facing both ecological and climate crises. For this groundbreaking work, Tony received the Right Livelihood Award – the Danish “Alternative Nobel” – in 2018 “for practical and exemplary solutions to the most urgent challenges facing us today.”

For Tony, this wasn't an end in itself, but an expanded

opportunity to continue his work – most fittingly in this current United Nations Decade of Reforestation.

*The Forest Underground* is an inspiring story that gives real hope to communities and nations that are desperately trying to help humanity, and our one planet. And it encourages me further in my own life's work with nature conservation.

*As a lifelong learner and teacher, Ray Thomas is dedicated to sharing his love and knowledge of the Australian bush. He and many generations of enthusiastic volunteers have planted more than 700,000 trees in north-eastern Victoria.*

*Read about Tony and ISCAST (Christians in Science and Technology) in the June issue of TGA ([www.gippslandanglicans.org.au](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au)).*

## RIVER RED GUM VOTED FAVOURITE NATIVE TREE

Australians have chosen the river red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) as their favourite native tree in ABC's national poll.

“The river red gum is the perfect Australian tree. No two trees are the same, and each has its own personality. I love the way the twisted limbs, the gnarly hollows and dead wood, and all the scars and broken branches reflect a tough life but one well lived,” says Professor Tim Entwistle, botanist and Director and Chief Executive of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

With a widespread distribution across Australia, river red gums provide shade along inland waterways. Forests of these trees also contain significant Aboriginal sites.

“These trees are used by First Nations People to make canoes, shields, coolamons and other tools. First Nations People burn the leaves, and the smoke is inhaled to help relieve coughs and colds,” says Renee Cawthorne, Project Manager of the Aboriginal Strategy and First Nations Engagement, Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney.

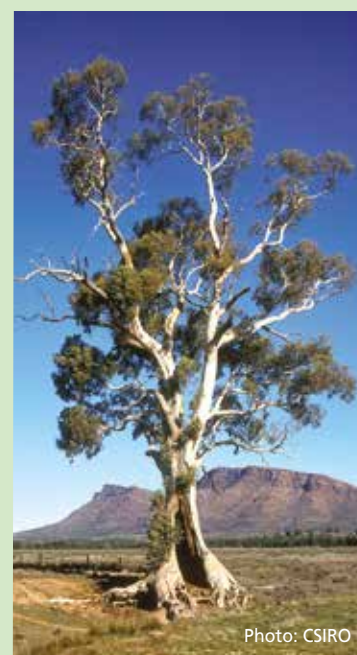


Photo: CSIRO

Gum trees rated highly in the poll with second and third place going to the much-loved snow gum (*Eucalyptus pauciflora*), found in eastern Australia, and the ghost gum (*Corymbia aparrerinja*), found in open woodland of Central Australia.

“Many tree species are keystones for ecosystems. Without keystone species, ecosystems are dramatically different or cease to exist. Trees can provide microclimates and play essential roles in symbiotic relationships with other organisms

in their ecosystems,” says Peter Feilen, Horticulturist, Australian National Botanic Gardens.

Over 265,000 votes were cast during August to select the most loved native trees from a diverse list of 33 from across the country. Australia's Favourite Tree was the online project for National Science Week 2022, undertaken by ABC Science with funding through the Australian Government's Inspiring Australia strategy.

Courtesy ABC



Photo: Chris Reij/World Resources Institute

*Farmer managed natural regeneration provides farmers with fodder for their livestock; south of Zinder, Niger*

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# Distinctively Christian Retirement

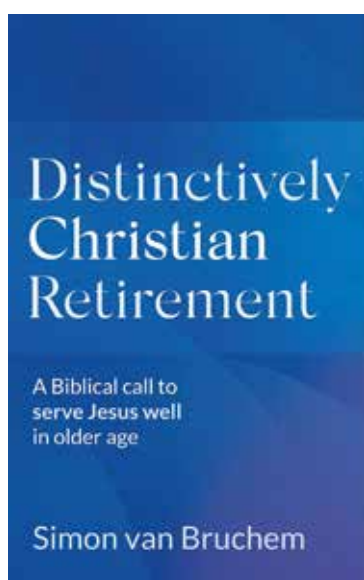
A biblical call  
to serve Jesus well  
in older age

Simon van Bruchem

Written for Our  
Instruction, 2022

Rev'd Canon David Head

This self-published book is written by Simon van Bruchem, Pastor at All Nations Presbyterian Church in Perth. He has a Master of



Divinity from degree through Trinity College Theological School in Melbourne and was an industrial chemist before he became a pastor.

The chapters in this book are arranged in four sections: “Retirement is not the paradise we are looking for”, “What the Bible says about age and maturity”, “Practical challenges retirement poses” and “Living out a godly life in retirement.” This easy read, in relatively short chapters, would be helpful for both lay people and clergy, and especially those considering the prospect of, or who are now in, retirement.

The book begins with some useful secular reflection on modern-day expectations and cultural dynamics surrounding retirement. The subsequent reflections on more Christian focused ways of being in retirement are generally helpful and perhaps fairly obvious.

However, there is some degree of repetition, which does seem to pad out the book a bit, and the author’s more literal and conservative biblical views are a bit unsettling in places for a well-read and more liberal biblical student like myself.

Retirement is not always the golden age we so often look forward to enjoying – for a number of reasons. The author writes: “So many retirees are not happy at all. Statistically, the divorce rate spikes ... as spouses who previously spent much time apart are suddenly forced together. Many struggle with unstructured time. Men in particular often struggle with feeling that they are not being useful or contributing to society.”

Overall, van Bruchem’s book does positively challenge the reader to consider the ways we use our time and live out our retirement lives as people of faith and Christian conviction, and “what serving Jesus might look like in the latter stages of life with the time and resources we have.”

This book seems a little more focused on those who are able to retire with a degree of financial stability and with enough good health and personal freedom to make more Christian volunteer work choices. Nevertheless, the ideas in this book can be useful for us all to contemplate, no matter our years yet to retirement, or our health and wellbeing when we do retire.

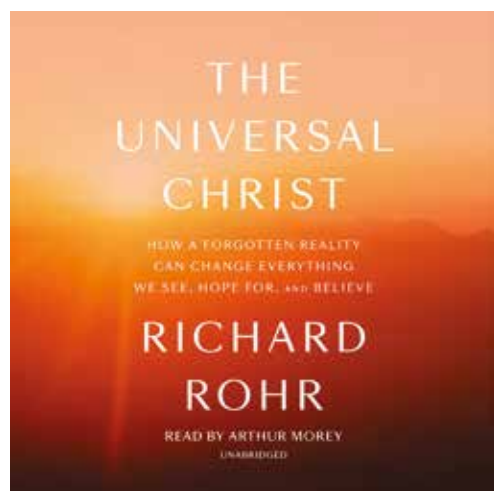
## THE UNIVERSAL CHRIST

Richard Rohr  
SPCK, 2019

Richard Prideaux

Richard Rohr is an American Franciscan Catholic priest and founder of the Centre and School for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He has written many books and has a high media profile, especially in Australia, due to his online writing and classes. He is currently in remission from cancer but has said publicly that he is ready for death. He has called *The Universal Christ* his “end of life book.”

*The Universal Christ* is a high-octane read! Rohr has an energetic, almost frenetic, writing style, which pushes ahead at an alarming rate – throwing ideas, biblical quotations and thought-starters at the reader from start to finish. Rohr’s focus is on the positiveness, the joys, the goodness and the power of the Christian gospel and other world faiths, especially Buddhism.



There is not much at all in this book about sin, evil or Satan. In this regard there is a strong similarity with the Creational Spirituality of former Dominican monk and now Anglican priest Matthew Fox, especially his powerful book *Original Blessing* (1983).

I believe there are two books contained in *The Universal Christ*. The first book contains the establishment of Rohr’s thesis that there is a clear distinction between Jesus of the New Testament, a map for the time-bound and personal level of life (p. 20) and the figure of Christ, who is the blueprint for all time and space and life itself (p. 20). Such a thesis will be contested not just by Christians but I am sure by those of other faiths as well. Christians will have difficulty with a sentence like “Jesus is a Third Someone, not just God and not just man,

but God and human together” (p. 19). It has been hard enough for Christians to attempt to explain the idea of the Trinity! Jesus as not just God and not just man, a Third Someone, is not going to do the job, I think. Similarly world

leaders of other faiths are not necessarily going to fall in line to install “Christ” as the unifying power behind the world’s great religions.

Universalism itself has never been far away from the thoughts of many theologians, including John Hick, Karl Barth, liberal Catholics Teilhard de Chardin and Karl Rahner, and evangelicals like Clark H. Pinnock in his persuasive book *A Wideness in God’s Mercy* (1992).

Laying aside this energetic argument in the first three chapters, Rohr proceeds to 14 memorable chapters, which will challenge and at times upset many earnest Christian readers but will make them pause, reconsider, think again and read again. Not all will agree with Rohr’s conclusions about such topics as original goodness, and there are many more challenging ideas and themes.

## Events

### Abbey Feast

10 September, 12 noon  
The Abbey, 1–25 First Parade, Raymond Island

The Abbey Feast is a gathering during the Season of Creation to share a delicious meal and remember the ways that we can support a healthier climate through local and seasonal food consumption.

\$60 per person  
Bookings: (03) 5156 6580, [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au)

### Free climate change webinar

14 September, 7–8 pm

This webinar will support us as we take up the challenge of sustainable living at home and in our gathering places. Bishop Richard Treloar will chair a panel of guest speakers. More details page 9.

Register at [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/calendar](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/calendar)

### Diocesan Retreat

21–22 October  
The Abbey, 1–25 First Parade, Raymond Island

The Retreat leader will be Dr Cath Connolly, a highly regarded retreat leader, pilgrimage facilitator and Celtic harpist who is also Co-Director of the Living Well Centre for Christian spirituality.

Bookings: (03) 5156 6580, [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au)

### Sing a New Song

5 November, 10.30 am – 2.30 pm  
St Paul’s Cathedral, Sale

This workshop is for clergy, choir leaders, choir members and anyone interested in extending their knowledge of church music in local parishes and communities.

Conducted by Stuart Connew  
BYO lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

Cost: (cash only) \$25, \$15 concession  
Bookings: 0438 220 878  
[kerent@gippslandanglicans.org.au](mailto:kerent@gippslandanglicans.org.au)