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The ^{Gippsland} Anglican

Published in Gippsland Diocese since 1904 April 2023

*Very truly, I tell you,
unless a grain of wheat
falls into the earth and dies,
it remains just a single grain;
but if it dies,
it bears much fruit.*

(John 12:24)



Through the eyes of Mary Magdalene*

My name is Mary. The twelve call me 'the Magdalene' because I come from Magdala, by the shore of Lake Galilee. Others call me all sorts of things – especially the men. He always just called me Mary. And how I ached to hear that one word from him again.

Sunday morning, very early. A dome of bluish light over to the east of the city as Mary, James' mother, set out with me. A grisly, unwanted task lay before us: one best performed before the sun could begin its baking work. We staggered out of the gates together under the mixed weight of sweet-smelling spices and the gall of grief. If you've ever lost someone, you'll know what it's like two or three days afterwards: the fuss has abated; life goes on for the living; but the pain burrows deeper – like a smouldering coal in your chest.

Scarcely a word was spoken between us, beyond what was necessary to make our way to the place where Joseph had directed us on Passover eve. It felt as though a lifetime had passed since then – as though the life I knew before had ended.

I don't really know how to describe what we experienced next ... Several accounts of these things are already going about like wildfire, as you'd expect – none of which capture what 'happened': that's not what such stories are for.

We had heard the tomb was being guarded by Roman soldiers at the request of the chief priests. As we drew nearer to the garden we began fretting about whether they would allow us to tend his body and, if so, help us move the entrance stone aside.

Just as we arrived, some soldiers came thundering past us, running every which way in flat panic. The ground seemed to shake with their stampede – or was it us who shook in alarm? Other guards were standing stock still up ahead, as if frozen to the spot, staring into the suddenly blinding light, for the sun must just now have risen, spearing its rays over the top of his tomb.

We dropped our fragrant burdens to



Richard Stodart, *Mary Magdalene*, 1995. The artist says "the egg is white to express Mary Magdalene's faith that it will turn red and confirm the truth of the Resurrection."

shield our eyes – was it open? Had the soldiers taken him from us in death as well as life? Then a voice – whose? – forgive me: although some time has passed I feel like I'm still catching my breath ...

You see, we bolted from that place like startled goats, tripping and gasping, for I don't know how long. When we couldn't run any more we just stood and held each other, a single quivering mass of wonder, and terror.

The voice wasn't his, but it had named him: 'the crucified one'. He is always to be the crucified one, even – but wait, that is for you to discover ...

"Galilee, return to Galilee, he is not here, he is going ahead of you to Galilee, there you will see him." These words filled my head like a psalmist's refrain as we fled. Galilee ... where this all began; where I first saw him – or rather, he first saw me.

Why, having come to a stone-dead end, would we go back to the start? And what could we possibly tell the others? They'll think us mad!

Head down, rounding a corner, my path was blocked by feet that could only be his. Scarred from the nails, but somehow

bearing him to us – those feet I had wept over, anointed, kissed. We threw ourselves down at them, and again the tears came – tears of disbelief, of relief, and of joy ... Then gone from us, or we from him, and running again with hearts pounding, bursting.

We were not the only ones, it seemed, to have been disturbed by an unthinkable possibility: the crucified one is risen; in truth he is risen! If this was madness, and surely it was, then the alternative was a greater madness: for death to hold him was madness; for the giver of so much life to lie in the grave was madness.

In the end, we did return to the beginning. We searched the scriptures, and began to re-receive, to re-claim our own story – our faith tradition – to try and make sense of it alongside our baffling experience.

I guess that's what people of faith have been doing ever since Abraham: shaping their lives with the stories; shaping the stories with their lives. It's what you do, isn't it? For this is your story as much as mine, and you will find your own words for its telling, and retelling; indeed, you must. They'll think you mad, of course, as they did me. But anything else is madness. For Adam is restored and Eve consoled. And we are refashioned, as once, in a parallel story, I was refashioned by a single word – in a different garden, but spoken by one and the same gardener as called to Adam and Eve: 'Mary'.

+RM

* This original imaginative reconstruction, in the Jewish tradition of 'midrash', is based on the gospel for Easter Eve in Year A (Matthew), as part of a series I offered during the 'locked-down' Holy Week of 2020. There is no scriptural support for the convention that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute, nor for her frequent identification in medieval Western thought with the nameless woman who anoints Jesus' feet, both of which are alluded to here.



Anniversary celebration in Bunyip

Bishop Richard blessing the new gates on the original gateposts commemorating Arthur and Beatrice a'Beckett

■ Rev'd Ken Parker

On 28 December 1902, on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, the first Bishop of Gippsland, Arthur Pain, dedicated St Thomas' Church in Bunyip. On 22 January we celebrated the anniversary with a special service, with Bishop Richard presiding and giving an excellent sermon. A good crowd gathered and, afterwards, there was a fine afternoon tea, over which Lou Hunter presided. We blessed a renewed gateway, which remembers the remarkable Beatrice a'Beckett and the enigmatic Arthur. As well, Bishop Richard blessed a wandering altar, made originally for Christ Church Berwick by William Gilbert a'Beckett, brother of Bunyip's Arthur.

For many years this beautifully fashioned altar languished in a shed in Berwick, then in a garage in Mount Martha. Now it is at home in the Lady Chapel at Bunyip.

Among those gathered for the anniversary celebration were a significant number of the a'Beckett clan, all connected to Arthur and Beatrice, who gave the land on which St Thomas' is built (and also the land on Raymond Island called a'Beckett Park). The bishop's sermon made wonderful connection between the various a'Becketts and the altar, and he used the image of the Boyd mural in St Mary's Morwell as a central motif:

Boyd's Ascending Christ is a magnificent and arresting work, a thin space in which we behold Christ rising up, as it were, from the altar itself, gathering together all that has been laid before it, all that has been offered upon it, all the world's brokenness and its fragile beauty, and bearing it to the Father's heart, restored and made whole, where nothing is lost, nothing is wasted, nothing is beyond redemption. (The artist Arthur Boyd was also an a'Beckett descendant.)

It was a good and uplifting time. At the end of the day we returned home tired but satisfied both in spirit and body and, most certainly, happy!

Age on farm – even without kids to take it on

The *Ageing on Farm* guide provides the next generation of farming families with new pathways to farm ownership, while helping older farmers make the transition to retirement.

- Explore options for retaining ownership.
- Mentor a new family.
- Ensure your community thrives through fostering the next generation of farmers.

You don't have to sell and walk away from your farm; plenty of options allow you to 'age on farm'.

Download your free copy of the guide at:
www.cultivatefarms.com/retiringfarmer

Cultivate Farms is a social enterprise focused on matching people to share ownership in a farm. Their new guide, launched after a recent tour of Gippsland, aims to rejuvenate regional Australia.

We are Gippsland Anglicans – Committed in Christ, Connecting in Service, Creative in Spirit. We are committed to providing a safe environment for all, especially children and vulnerable people. We acknowledge the First Nations people of this region as the traditional custodians of the land on which the Diocese of Gippsland serves, and pay our respects to past, present and emerging Elders of the GunaiKurnai, Boonwurrung, Bidawal and Ngarigo/Monero peoples.



Faith and potatoes in Thorpdale

The gathering at St Mark's Thorpdale to celebrate 'faith and potatoes'

■ Rev'd Dr Dean Spalding

On the same morning as the Thorpdale Potato Festival on 12 March, 25 folk gathered at St Mark's Anglican Church in Thorpdale for a service of Praise, Prayer and Proclamation in celebration of 'faith and potatoes'. The worship music for the day was a blend of ancient hymns and contemporary songs with Celtic connections.

The sermon included accounts of faith through two contrasting potato harvests. The first, the 'blighted' potato harvests of the 1840s and 50s in Ireland, led to the death of one million people and the emigration of a further million. Through this most devastating disaster, Irish culture spread far and wide. Australia was one country blessed by the Irish diaspora and this is especially noticeable in places like Thorpdale, Trentham and Koroit, where there has been a long history of growing potatoes. Koroit for instance is home to the Lake School of Celtic Music, Song and Dance. Celtic Christian spirituality has also enriched the church in Australia through Celtic hymnody, prayer traditions such as the *Carmina Gadelica* (with a prayer for just about every common event in a day), and a distinctive tradition of evangelism with great emphasis on hospitality and 'belonging before believing'.

The contrasting potato harvest, a bountiful harvest, was that of evangelist and farmer Angus Buchan. Before his conversion to Christianity, Buchan was a broken, angry and violent man with little respect for Africa's indigenous people. After his

God of wilderness and water, guide us through fruitful seasons and difficult seasons, that we may open ourselves to your blessing, through the reconciling depths of repentance and faith.

conversion, Buchan developed a deep respect for his farm's Zulu foreman and labourers; he learned their language and prayed for reconciliation in South Africa. During one of the worst droughts in South Africa's history, Buchan spoke before a great crowd he had invited to Kings Park Stadium to pray for rain, reconciliation and an end to violence. He told the crowd that his faith in God was calling him to plant potatoes in the dust

of his drought-ravaged farm. Four months later, and with only the smallest amount of rain, Buchan lifted a surprising crop of giant potatoes. His radical conversion to Christianity and the remarkable harvest inspired a book and then a movie called *Faith Like Potatoes*.

Whether in times of plenty or hardship, Jesus stands beside us. Jesus knew what it was to live in a country susceptible to drought and famine, exacerbated by hard-taxing imperial rule.



Giving a gift that lasts

Bequests to Anglican Diocese of Gippsland

The Gippsland Diocese has been blessed with the generosity of Anglicans and others in support of its mission. One form of support you can offer is a bequest in your will – to the Diocese, your own parish or for a particular purpose.

To find out more, visit www.gippslandanglicans.org.au and search 'bequests', or contact Richard Connelly (03 5144 2044).

Always consult a solicitor when preparing or amending your will.



Climate conversation with Jonathan Cornford

Supplied by Jonathan Cornford

Jonathan Cornford, co-founder of Manna Gum, a ministry in 'good news economics' (mannagum.org.au), was the guest speaker at 'Securing Food in a Changing Climate' on 15 February. This was the third in a webinar series delivered by ACTinG (Acting on Climate Together in Gippsland).

What is one of your favourite scripture passages that relates to care for Creation, and why do you like it?

Genesis 2 is profound. The human ('Adam') is formed from the soil ('adamma') and given a vocation to 'work (for) and keep' the garden. The Hebrew could also be translated as a vocation 'to serve and observe' the garden. We are soil creatures commissioned to ensure the good of the whole creation. What a responsibility! (By the way, Paul describes Jesus as "the Second Adam": it is only in Christ that we can properly fulfil the vocation given to the first Adam.)

What does food security mean? Or what does it mean to be in a state of food insecurity?

Food security is the ability to produce, distribute and access food, even if there are shocks to the food system such as from war, weather or epidemic. Climate change poses massive long-term challenges for food security all over the world.

Apart from transport and farm machinery, how are fossil fuels used in the production of food at the moment? How can we produce food without them?

Fossil fuels are also the base for most fertilisers and some pesticides. We are growing our food in oil! These seem to work in the short term, but in the long term they destroy the fertility of soil, and also its ability to store water and carbon. They also kill waterways and place farmers at the mercy of a handful of massive multinational corporations. Used sparingly, fossil fuel-based inputs can have a place in good agriculture, but our big need is to recover biological methods of farming that support ecosystem health.

In relation to climate change and food security, what has changed in the past 10 years, and what do you predict will challenge us in the next 10 years?

Each decade, climate change deepens, and that will only continue. We are really going

to struggle until we face up to that and begin to take much more serious action now to help farmers and communities prepare for flood, bushfire and drought.

What helps you to feel hopeful that we – locally, nationally, globally – can find our way toward food security?

Despite many challenges facing the global food system and in Australia, we already know enough to ensure we can feed the world in a changing climate. We don't need new science (although that can be helpful too). In Australia, the regenerative agriculture movement is doing amazing things in producing climate-resilient food using biological methods, which also helps restore overall ecological health.

How important is it for parishes and church communities to engage in actions that support food security?

Eating is primary to people's lives in so many ways – not just to survive but as a central activity that binds families and communities together. If the gospel addresses the important stuff of life, then churches being involved in food in some way is a no-brainer.

Questions by Libby Willems and Jan Down. All webinars in the ACTinG series can be viewed at youtube.com/@AnglicanDioceseofGippsland



The caring, highly experienced and qualified team at Latrobe Valley Funeral Services have been servicing the Latrobe Valley community and greater Gippsland area for over 70 years. Providing a caring environment and personal touch to accommodate each individual's needs in remembering your loved ones.

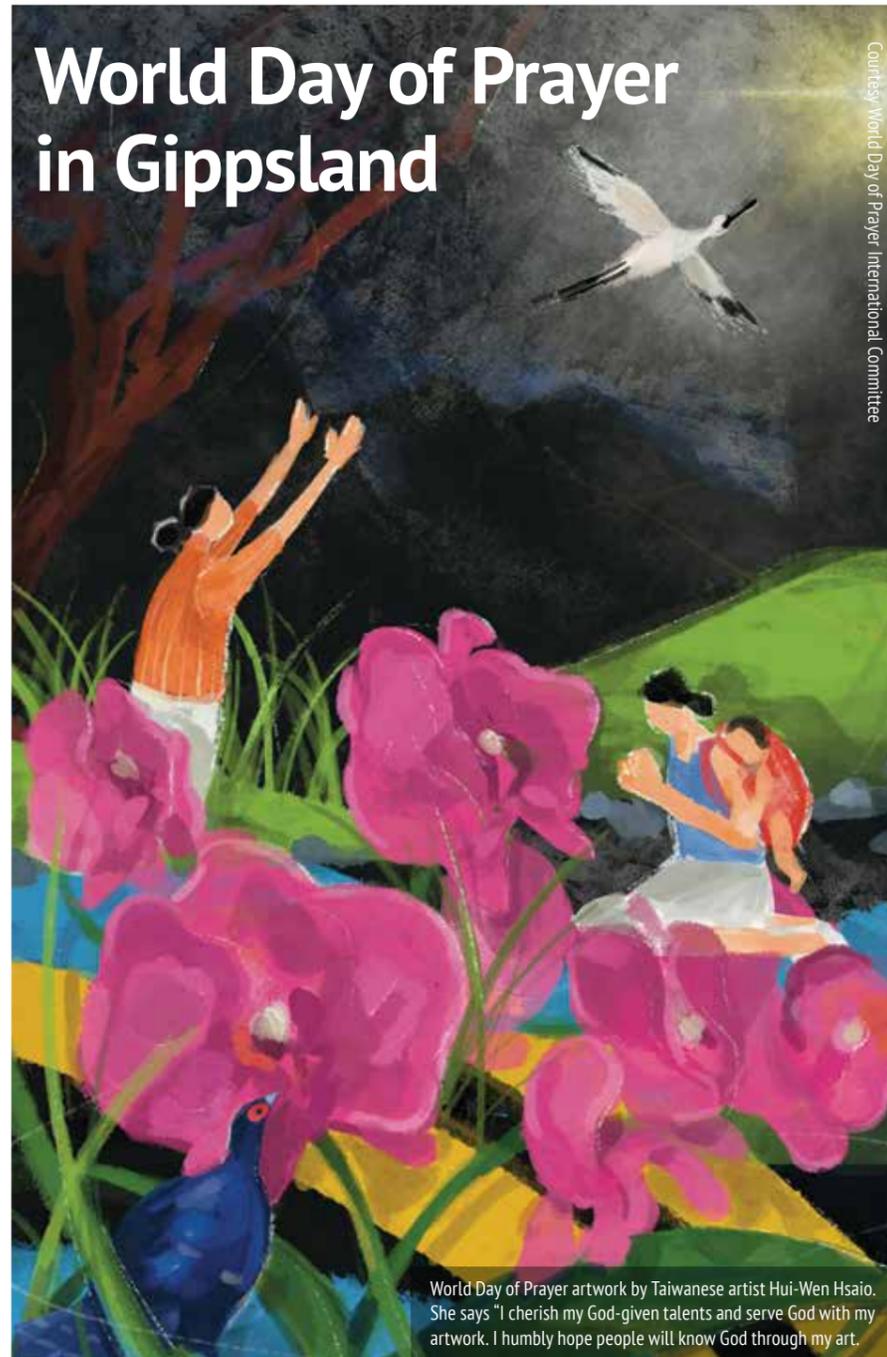
Contact Latrobe Valley Funeral Services

Moe
6 Ollerton Avenue Moe, VIC 3855
03 5126 1111

Morwell
437A Princes Drive Morwell, VIC 3840
03 5134 4937

Traralgon
260 Princes Hwy Traralgon, VIC 3844
03 5174 2258

World Day of Prayer in Gippsland



World Day of Prayer artwork by Taiwanese artist Hui-Wen Hsiao. She says "I cherish my God-given talents and serve God with my artwork. I humbly hope people will know God through my art."

Courtesy World Day of Prayer International Committee

Prayer service at Drouin Anglican Church

■ Pauline Davies

A World Day of Prayer service was held at the Drouin Anglican Church on 5 March. This service is held annually in 170 countries to celebrate prayers for the women of a particular country, as well as the rest of the world, to encourage them in their Christian faith. This year's chosen country was for one of the smallest countries in the Asia-Pacific region and the most densely populated: Taiwan.

The gathering area of the church was decorated with a big vase of orchid blossom. Orchids are the national flower

of Taiwan, which has more than 2000 species.

An orchid was set on each of the tables for afternoon tea, together with 50 red paper lanterns, and coloured printed Taiwanese flags decorated the foyer. Six members from other churches in Drouin participated in the service, reading stories written by some of the women of Taiwan, explaining how they live their lives, and their journeys of faith. Although no member of the Taiwanese community could be located in Drouin, the host for

the service read out some very interesting facts about this beautiful country.

Two-thirds of the main island is mountain forest and the country has a population of over 23 million people. Although a very small country, Taiwan has achieved much to help the rest of the world in agriculture, technology, medicine and humanitarian assistance. It has been occupied by various foreign forces, and has experienced ethnic, cultural, social and political conflict, but by the grace of God the people of Taiwan live together in peace today.

The Order of Service is well prepared and beautifully put together, including relevant prayers, which the congregation joined together in reading. A collection was taken throughout the service with the money donated through the World Day of Prayer committee, to the Bible Society in Taiwan, where the money will be used to encourage women with their faith and provide assistance where needed. At the end of the service it was announced that next year's World Day of Prayer gathering would be at the same time of year, and the country selected is Palestine. This was handed over to the Drouin Christian Fellowship, who will be the hosts.

Ecumenical service in Warragul

Beryl and Jack Goodrich, Jenny MacRobb and Bev Foster attended the World Day of Prayer service, which included the Church of Christ, Salvation Army, Anglican Church and Uniting Church. They report that the service brought the focus on Taiwan to life.

The theme was God's promise in the letter to the Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 15 to 19. (For more information see worlddayofprayeraustralia.org.)

The speakers were a couple from Ballarat. The woman, being Taiwanese, spoke in her language about her faith journey from childhood while her husband interpreted. Taiwanese items symbolising some aspects of Taiwanese life were placed on a table, for example a woven tapestry from a poor widow who had to weave to support her family and an academic robe worn by a young girl whose family strove to give her an education against all odds.

As yet there is no confirmation of the host church in 2024 but the country of focus is Palestine.

Courtesy Warragul parish news

Music festival returns to St Peter's Paynesville



Conductor Karen Caithness and the East Gippsland Symphonia in the St Peter's church garden

■ Sue Fordham

The first Sunday in Lent saw a return of the music festival to Paynesville and to St Peter by the Lake.

As has become customary, the East Gippsland Symphonia played at the Eucharist and, following that, for an hour or so in the church gardens overlooking the lake.

Having sweltered through a hot Saturday, it was disconcerting to wake to light drizzle and dark skies.

However, during the recessional hymn, a burst of intense sunlight broke through, guaranteeing a garden setting for the concert to follow.

The Symphonia (mainly brass), headed by Ernie Walker and conducted by Karen Caithness, served up an eclectic treat of music to satisfy all tastes.

Beginning with a medley from Mary Poppins, the band segued into music from Henry Mancini, Louis Armstrong, Elton John and a popular bracket of music to dance by.

For an hour, the audience relaxed with morning tea in our beautiful garden, listening to wonderful music.

Parish of Tambo to host East Gippsland Symphonia

On 30 April, the Anglican Parish of Tambo will host the East Gippsland Symphonia at its 10 am service at St Matthew's Bruthen.

The Symphonia regularly plays at church services and other events around East Gippsland, a community service that is very much appreciated. After the service and morning tea the Symphonia will give a concert in the church.

All members of the community are invited to both the church service and the concert.

Locum Priest The Rev'd Brian Norris said that he and the parish were very pleased to welcome the Symphonia and he hopes that the community will support the event.

The East Gippsland Symphonia currently has around 25 active members and plays an important role in the community, performing at many events in East Gippsland. These include Opera by the Lakes, Relay for Life, ANZAC Day ceremonies, church services, school fairs and other local functions, as well as many Carols by Candlelight events during the Christmas period. From time to time the group also travels to other regions to be involved with other community ensembles.

The East Gippsland Symphonia comes under the umbrella association Bairnsdale Citizens' Band Inc., which also incorporates East Gippsland Brass Band and Bairnsdale Training Band.

For further information contact Brian Norris: 0418 633 446, briannorris1@bigpond.com.



Human connections in Latrobe

The Morwell Neighbourhood House People's Kitchen, in partnership with the Latrobe Health Assembly

■ Jane Anderson

In this edition, I'd like to share some highlights from our latest *Human Connections Storybook*, which showcases why connections matter.

The Human Connections Storybook highlights how social connection has helped people in Latrobe Valley improve their wellbeing, through the lens of local agencies working in this space.

Part of the Human Connections campaign, the Storybook was released with the aim of promoting the benefits of social connection and participation within the community. Partnering with Latrobe Health Assembly, Latrobe City Council, Latrobe Valley Authority, and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the Storybook showcases the work the agencies are doing to address local barriers to positive health and wellbeing, some of which align with the recommendations in the Human Connections report.

Social connection has strong links to both physical and mental health and wellbeing. Having a network of support or being connected to your community can result in reduced rates of depression, lower blood pressure and give you a greater sense of belonging.

United by the shared aim of improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes within Latrobe Valley by improving social connection, the partners are keen to share the work they are doing and to recognise

the strength of the community itself, with its ability to come together when needed.

I would like to praise project partners. They have worked together and independently on various initiatives with the shared aim of improving community connections, social participation and mental wellbeing outcomes.

Along with other communities internationally and locally, Latrobe is a community that is transitioning to a new future. It is important for us that everyone has an opportunity to benefit from and influence our future vision.

Adjusting to changes in our lives may bring opportunity and excitement, as well as anxiety about the unknown. I acknowledge the impact these changes and those of COVID-19 have on the health and wellbeing of the Latrobe community.

I would like to thank the Latrobe community's commitment to supporting each other when it came to health and wellbeing.

Through social connections, people have been able to cope effectively with large-scale, threatening events in the past and have been able to improve their wellbeing. Connecting with others enables people to participate in our community, both socially and economically.

Some people have lost significant sources of social support due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and lockdowns since

COVID have led them to isolation. Some people have been able to identify new ways of connecting locally and more broadly through technology and innovation and enhancing their sense of belonging and community. It is important that the community of Latrobe is striving to build stronger social connections than ever before, and that it be provided with the support to do so.

I will continue to advocate on behalf of Latrobe communities and encourage you to share your experiences with me.

If you, or a group you belong to, would like to share your experiences with me please get in touch with my team on 1800 319 255 and they can organise a time for us to catch up.

The full *Human Connections Storybook* can be found at lhadvocate.vic.gov.au. Printed copies are also available from the office, or they can arrange for one to be posted to you. If you have any questions about the report or the information provided, please contact us.

You can also keep up to date with my work through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. I look forward to hearing from you in the coming months.



Implementing the Victorian Child Safety Standards

This year, TGA is highlighting the 11 Child Safe Standards to help us think, talk about and improve the way we do things in our ministries.

This month we take a look at Standard 2: *Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.*

What is this standard about?

This standard is the foundation for all the other standards. It is about turning policy into practice.

The diocesan *Child Safety & Wellbeing* policy encompasses requirements of the Commission for Children and Young People and should be adapted to your parish's circumstances – or adopted as is.

The 11 Child Safe Standards refer to a code of conduct. Our Diocese has adopted 'Faithfulness in Service' as our code of conduct – and it already meets all the standard requirements. In addition you may consider a situation-specific 'code' for events/programs associated with children's ministries.

What to do now

Make an assessment of where you are at now. Consider how you line up with the *Child Safety & Wellbeing* policy and the table shown.

- Do you use ministry application processes so that Parish Council can approve ministries?
- Do applications to run different ministries include risk assessments?
- Does Parish Council conduct regular risk assessments?
- Does Parish Council ensure privacy and proper record keeping?

What does a child safe culture look like in practice?

YES	NO
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leaders prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leaders prioritise the reputation of their parish.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clergy, paid staff and church workers are required to implement the <i>Child Safety & Wellbeing</i> policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The <i>Child Safety & Wellbeing</i> policy exists but most people do not know about it or what they should be doing.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children have a voice in the organisation and adults listen to them.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children are seen and not heard. Adults are believed over children.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> People in the parish raise child safety concerns, even if they are not sure if the issue is a problem.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> People are afraid to raise child safety concerns. They do not think they will be believed or taken seriously, or they worry that they will get into trouble or be treated negatively for speaking up.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If child harm or alleged abuse is identified, the parish is quick to contact the Director of Professional Standards (DPS) or police (if a child is in imminent danger).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The parish avoids contacting the Child Protection Service or police and tries to minimise the nature of the identified child harm or alleged abuse.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clergy, staff and church workers know it is important to speak up about child safety and do this even if it raises concerns about the behaviour of their colleagues.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clergy, staff and church workers prioritise protecting their colleagues.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are appropriate consequences for anyone who breaches the Diocesan Code of Conduct ('Faithfulness in Service') or the <i>Child Safety & Wellbeing</i> policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leaders make decisions about breaches based on their views of the child and adult(s) involved.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The parish culture makes it difficult for child abuse and harm to occur because everyone is focused on child safety.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The parish's culture creates problems and results in gaps in child safety protections, meaning child abuse and harm can occur more easily.

Adapted from *A Parish Guide to Implementation of the Victorian 11 Child Safe Standards*, available on the Safe Ministry page at gippslandanglicans.org.au

Our commitment to a safe church

The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland is committed to ensuring our centres of worship and outreach are safe places for all, and it does not tolerate abuse or misconduct by church workers.

If you have any concerns, for yourself or someone you know, please contact our Professional Standards Office for a confidential discussion.

Telephone: (03) 9416 1008 or 1800 135 246
 Email: contact@kooyoora.org.au
julie@kooyoora.org.au
 PO Box 329, Canterbury, Vic 3126





Pancakes around the parishes

Decorating pancakes can be just as much fun as eating them

Volunteer Marizel Charles helped keep the batter flowing at Drouin's family pancake night.

Family pancake night in Drouin

■ Alisha Moyle

Our vision for Shrove Tuesday in ministry planning for 2023 was a celebratory event to open our doors to the prayerful invitation of bringing Church, community and family in unity together while holding a blessed space at the liturgical heart of Shrove Tuesday, into the journey of Lent.

Recognising the tradition of having a 'party', the invitation spread and 'pancake squad' was established within the parish.

The church family kindly donated toppings to contribute to the evening – from traditional through to sour straps, popping pearls, milo and healthier options of fruit, oats and honey. Our wonderful, supportive volunteers formed a team to help shepherd the night with decorating, pancake making, milkshake serving, welcoming and entertaining (with Libby Willems on guitar). Rev'd Bruce Charles assisted wonderfully as MC for the evening, explaining why we have Shrove Tuesday, into our faith journey towards Lent.

Our preparation led to a gentle, spirit-filled atmosphere and a fun night for kids, supporting families who were in need of a night out, as well as full bellies and caring for community.

Part of the fun, through the planning and preparation, was a 'retro theme' for the evening – a release for all ages to engage and enjoy.

Guest Rev'd Rich Lanham spoke on behalf of Anglicare about some current initiatives. Gippsland Jersey Milk co-founders Sallie Jones and co-founder Steve Ronalds kindly donated an abundance of buttermilk for pancakes, cultured butter and boxes of milk for the milkshakes.

The response to the event was incredibly positive, with future planning for further events and an overflow into family gathering during the week to continue to support family and community connections.

We give thanks to God for 'showing up', leading us, celebrating, supporting us and all that unfolded for the evening of blessing, fun, inspiration, teamwork, unity and growth – inviting all to connect on our journey as a parish.

Feasting and bubble-blowing in Yarram

■ Elaine Wright

The people of the Parish of Yarram gathered together on Shrove Tuesday to eat, drink, blow bubbles and be merry before the Lenten fast.

It was a lovely relaxing night of fellowship in the parish hall. Seventeen people attended and a blessed surprise was the arrival of Lynette and Eric (visitors from The Netherlands) who saw the advertisement around town and popped in to join us. What a delight they both were! It was a night of celebration and fun. We even blew bubbles at one another! And of course many pancakes were made.

After our sweet and savoury dinner, The Rev'd Tony Wicking briefly explained the origin of Shrove Tuesday and the burning of the palm crosses. After much determination and three different spots (because of the wind) Tony was able to burn last year's palm crosses to make ash for the Ash Wednesday service the next morning. Needless to say, there was plenty of advice on how to get the fire going!



Jeff Amos blowing bubbles and Glenda Amos looking on

Whipping up a whopping 500 pancakes in Traralgon

■ Paula Walland

Students at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School's Traralgon campus celebrated Shrove Tuesday with a chapel service, pancake races and a delicious pancake-eating session.

For the students, it was an exciting event filled with laughter and cheer as they flipped their pancakes during their race and supported one another in the spirit of the day.

Orbost



"This Shrove Tuesday was the first Pancake Day celebration for three years, with more than 50 happy guests. Bevil Lunson and the St James Ladies cooked many different flavours of pancakes which were enjoyed by everyone" (Barbara Lunson)

Stratford



"We do our pancake day a little differently in Avon. Our wonderful cooking team (Bev Harrap, Judy Kelly, Wendy Philbey, Linda Tattersson and Denise Vranek) prepare about 150 snack-size boxes of pancakes, which are then delivered to all the local businesses. We dropped some off to the ABC and did a little interview about Shrove Tuesday" (Rev'd David Perryman)

Bass-Phillip Island



Choosing from fruit, ice cream and syrup pancake toppings



Burning last year's palm crosses in preparation for Ash Wednesday

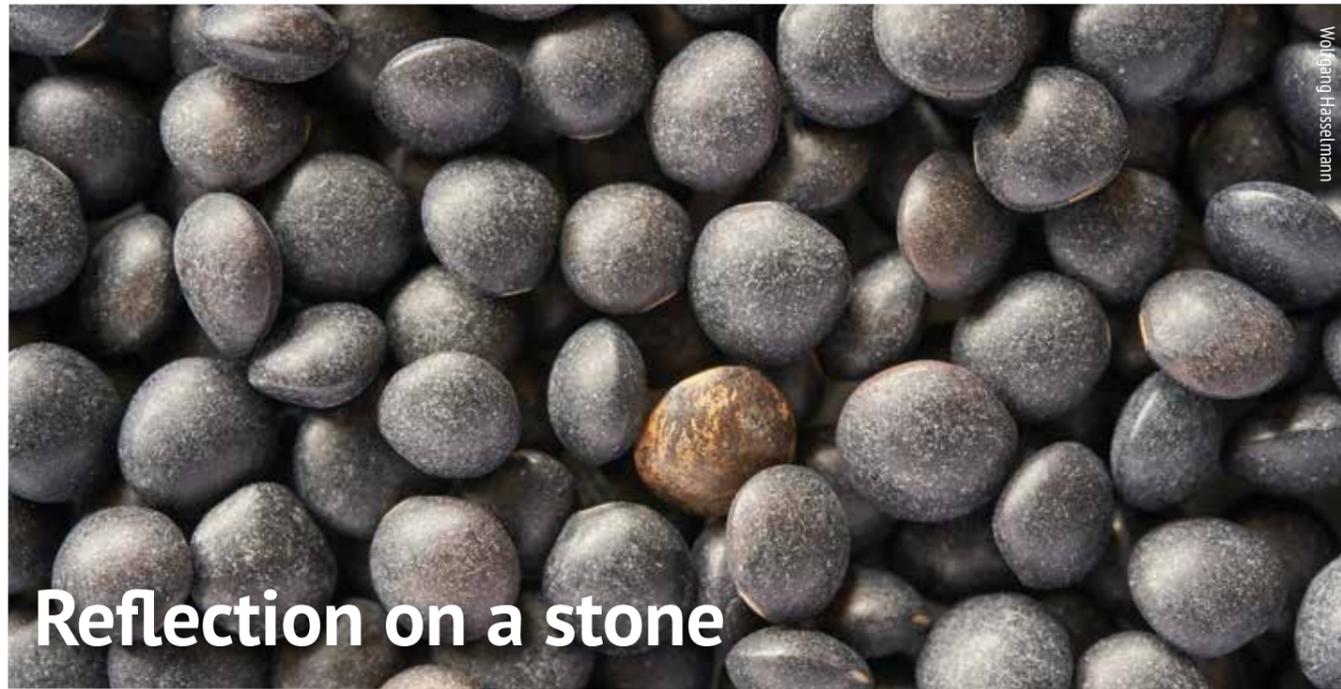


Holding it steady is Year 6 St Paul's student Eshan

Wonthaggi-Inverloch



When it comes to pancakes, Freya prefers to keep it simple



Wolfgang Hasselmann

Reflection on a stone

■ Cynthia Grove

During the service on the first Sunday of Lent, Dean of Sale Keren Terpstra invited each of the congregation to take a stone from a bowl, to keep that stone throughout Lent and use it to remind us to pray for ourselves and others each day in Lent. Although the stones offered are fairly small they can also represent the weight of sin, which we are asking God to free us from.

There was much to ponder on in the readings and in Keren's sermon. Adam pointed the finger of blame over eating the fruit of the forbidden tree at Eve. The two who were meant to be one became separate identities rather than the unity God intended. Our Lord Jesus would later reassert the importance of unity within community, thus restoring the broken whole, or, one could argue, restoring integrity, which is itself a question of wholeness and unity. But it is up to us to work together so that the world around us may see our unity, our integrity. And each of us is truly broken when we fail to live in community with those around us and in union with our Lord.

Returning to the stones, the one I chose is very smooth – almost an oval except it has one part of it removed, a part of the right size and place for my thumb to rest while holding it. Hold on to the unity, to my integrity. As I move it in the light I can see a tracery of lines speaking to me of the paths of my life, the people with whom I have interacted, choices made, experiences discovered and worked through. There are a few scratches and dents but isn't every life filled with such small dents and scratches? Those dents and scratches are what help us to grow in the Lord, and live

for our given community. Seen in the light coming through the cathedral's stained glass windows even a small patch of red could be seen, a sign of our Lord's blood. The stone is smooth, gently rounded at the edges but more flat than rounded. I might lose my balance

and trip if walking over this stone but it will not hurt me: there are no rough, hard, sharp edges; another analogy of the Christian life.

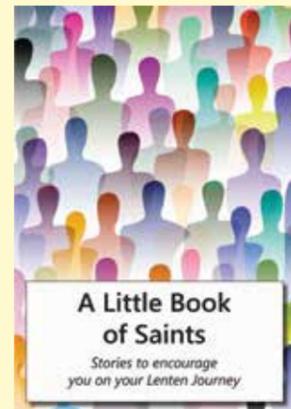
Cynthia Grove is a member of St Paul's Cathedral parish in Sale and a member of Bishop-in-Council

Lent and *A Little Book of Saints*

■ Rev'd Robyn Shackell

Each year, during June, the Diocese of Ballarat holds a Bible Reading Challenge. This initiative came about to encourage people across the Diocese to read their Bibles every day. The Ministry Development Committee of the Diocese chooses readings for the month. In the past we have used the gospel of the day, the psalm of the day, and last year the whole book of Acts. We invite four people from across the Diocese, both lay and clergy to write short notes for one week of readings each.

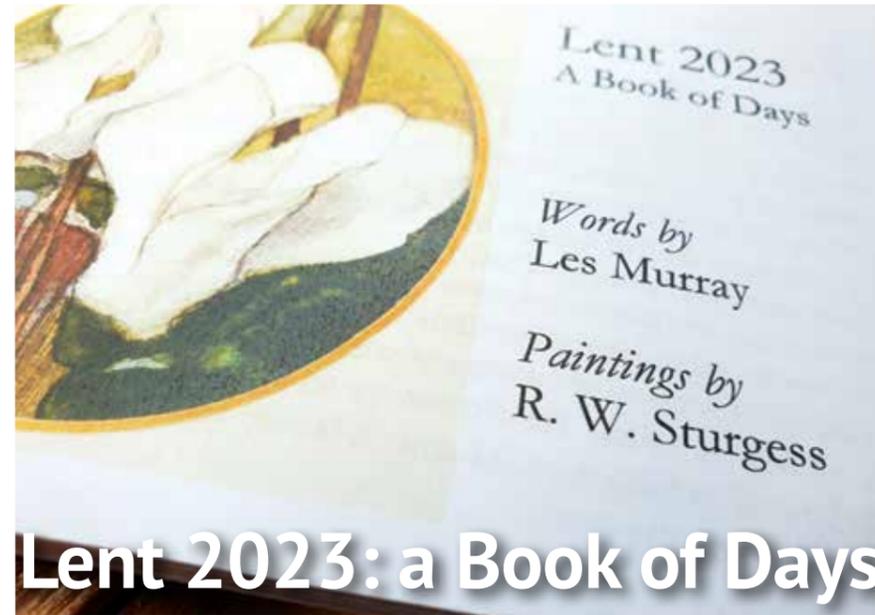
Last year, when we were trying to choose which readings to select, someone suggested writing about saints. We decided this didn't fit with the idea of getting people to read their Bibles, but we liked the idea, so we decided to use it as a resource for Lent.



We asked everyone in the diocese to write a short paragraph about someone who had been influential in their Christian journey. These could be traditional saints of the church like Mother Teresa, or Maximilian Kolbe, or they could be ordinary people who influenced them. Around 30 stories were received and were collected into what we have called *A*

Little Book of Saints. This book has proven to be a popular resource for use on our Lenten journey, but it could be used any time for inspiration and encouragement.

The Rev'd Robyn Shackell is Chair of the Ministry Development Committee of the Diocese of Ballarat. To view a copy of *A Little Book of Saints*, visit ballaratanglican.org.au/littlebookofsaints



Lent 2023: a Book of Days

■ Rev'd Ken Parker

Some people around Gippsland are familiar with the Lent and Advent booklets lovingly prepared by Susan Bassett, which emanate from the Parish of Castlemaine.

This year's Lent Book of Days draws on the poetry of Les Murray and the paintings of Williamstown artist R.W. Sturgess. Although I wrote the introduction, Susan did the hard work.

This beautifully produced booklet goes back to a collaboration begun in my days as Rector of Castlemaine, when Susan and I worked together. When I say 'worked together' I use poetic licence: Susan did the work and I did the 'together' by making suggestions and giving encouragement. Each booklet was a gem. I recall one that celebrated the labyrinth in the grounds of Christ Church Castlemaine, and another that used Leonard French's stunning series of paintings *The Seven Days of Creation*.

This loving ministry of Susan's lapsed for some years but she has revived it in recent times, with the support of the current priest at Agitation Hill Castlemaine, Father Ian Howarth. Last year's Lent booklet used Ann Greenwood's Stations of the Cross and John Shaw Neilson's poetry. The Advent booklet used Father Ian Howarth's own poetry, which was accompanied by beautiful paintings done by his wife, Alison.

In the most recent Lenten booklet we are offered the poetry of Les Murray, the greatest Australian poet of our time and one of the best preachers of the Christian gospel I know. A bold statement it may be, but the Christian faith provides the basis of his poetic message. Sometimes his poems are a challenge, but, like any good sermon, worth the work. Murray died at 81 in 2019. His first book was published in 1965 and his last, with the wonderful name *Continuous Creation*, was

published posthumously in 2022.

In the Lent booklet, perhaps my favourite poem is 'The Broad Bean Sermon' (5, 6 and 8 March), which describes the growing and picking of broad beans, likening them to a "church parade" and suggesting that a garden of such beans is a powerful symbol of the generosity of God and the diversity of the created order.

Or maybe my favourite is 'The Quality of Sprawl' (9, 10 and 11 March). Again, the poem celebrates the generosity and diversity inherent in God's creation:

*Sprawl leans on things, It is loose-limbed
in its mind.
Reprimanded and dismissed
It listens with a grin and one boot
on the rail of possibility.
It may have to leave the Earth.*

And then there is 'Poetry and Religion' (22–26 March), which brings us to the heart of Murray's work:

*Religions are poems. They concert our
daylight and dreaming mind, our emotions,*

*instinct, breath and native gesture
Into the only whole thinking: poetry*

and:

*Full religion is the large poem in loving
repetition;
Like any poem, it must be inexhaustible
and complete
With turns where we ask, Now why did
the poet do that?
Then there is the remarkable poem set
for the Great Three Days of Good Friday
to Easter:
'The Say-But-the-Word Centurion
Attempts a Summary'.*

It was probably me who suggested to Susan that she use Sturgess' paintings to accompany Murray's verse, but the inspiration comes from Murray's verse.

In his poem 'Equanimity', Murray says that "Christ speaks to people most often at this level". Both Murray and Sturgess have an equanimity about them, out of which they speak. Murray lived most of his years in the farming community of Bunyah in northern NSW while Sturgess lived his 42 years in Williamstown, content that there was always enough there to feed his soul and inspire his painting. Both the poet and the artist invite us into that place of equanimity, into stillness and into a clarity of seeing. Not a bad journey for Lent. Murray would then draw us further, I believe, and challenge us that each one of us is called to be a poet, a maker, in the image of God.

Lent, like poetry, calls us back to the essentials. Poets like Murray are good teachers about life and preaching and praying. I am grateful for what Murray teaches me and for the place of stillness Sturgess offers me. I am also grateful to Susan Bassett – a true poet, a maker in the image – so gifted in words and so skilled in the making of beautiful work – like this Book of Days.

The Rev'd Ken Parker is Priest-in-Charge at St Thomas' Bunyip. A few copies of the booklet are still available: (03) 5644 3388.

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The Rev'd John Webster to be Rector of the Parish of Drouin

On the recommendation of the Clergy Appointments Advisory Board for Drouin, Bishop Richard is delighted to announce the appointment of John Webster as Rector.

John and Phillippa's journey to us in Gippsland has prepared them well for this new season of ministry, as John explains:

Our journey to Gippsland

I am a South African British Australian – however, my culture is Anglican. My and my wife Phillippa's faith was nurtured in the Anglican church under apartheid, where I learned to be comfortable with a broad range of faith expressions. My career in IT, primarily as a business analyst, took our young family to the UK, where I trained for the ministry. I was initially ordained into non-stipendiary ministry, which meant that for a few years I maintained my secular career while also ministering in a benefice – a Church of England term for a group of parishes.

In 2006 the bishop of Wangaratta invited me to take up my first full-time incumbency in Tallangatta. So we moved with our two teenage sons from damp Berkshire to a then very dry border region of Victoria. I have since served in Rutherglen, Surf Coast and Croydon, as our boys have studied to become wonderful musicians living independently in Melbourne.

Phillippa is a qualified piano teacher, and brings her own faith and experience of good liturgy in support of my ministry. We both delight in our active involvement in our granddaughter's life, and we are together looking forward to our life in Drouin and Gippsland.

I have brought the analytical mindset from my secular career into my own faith practice, and regularly reflect on how the church might continue the mission and ministry of Jesus in our own time and place. Through my experience over the years of breaking open and sharing the Word of God – both in scripture and sacrament – I have come to appreciate the need for us to intentionally reconnect with our pre-Constantine roots, as found in the gospel accounts and early church. I hope one day to be described as having the culture of Christ.

Rev'd John Webster



Rev'd John Webster

These glad tidings have been a long time coming for the Parish of Drouin and for the Diocese, and I want to thank and pay tribute to lay leaders, Lay Readers, and parish representatives on the advisory board for their faithful and fruitful ministries throughout this period. The parish has been superbly well served, guided and pastored by several Locum Priests – most recently Bruce Charles, and early on by Liam Matthews – both of whose ministries have been greatly appreciated by the parish and by Archdeacon Sue and myself.

Other clergy of the Diocese, including Jim Connelly, Lloyd George, David Head, John Morgan,

Christine Angus and Brenda Burney, have also assisted in times of need, and we are very grateful for such a sustained and generous team effort – itself testament to our sense of shared ministry and mission as Gippsland Anglicans.

John's induction will be held on Wednesday 26 April (observing the Feast of St Mark), at 7.30 pm, and we look forward to welcoming him and Phillippa among us. In the meantime, thank you for your prayers for them and for the people of Drouin and Jindivick in this time of great anticipation.

Courtesy Bishop Richard's *Ad Clerum*



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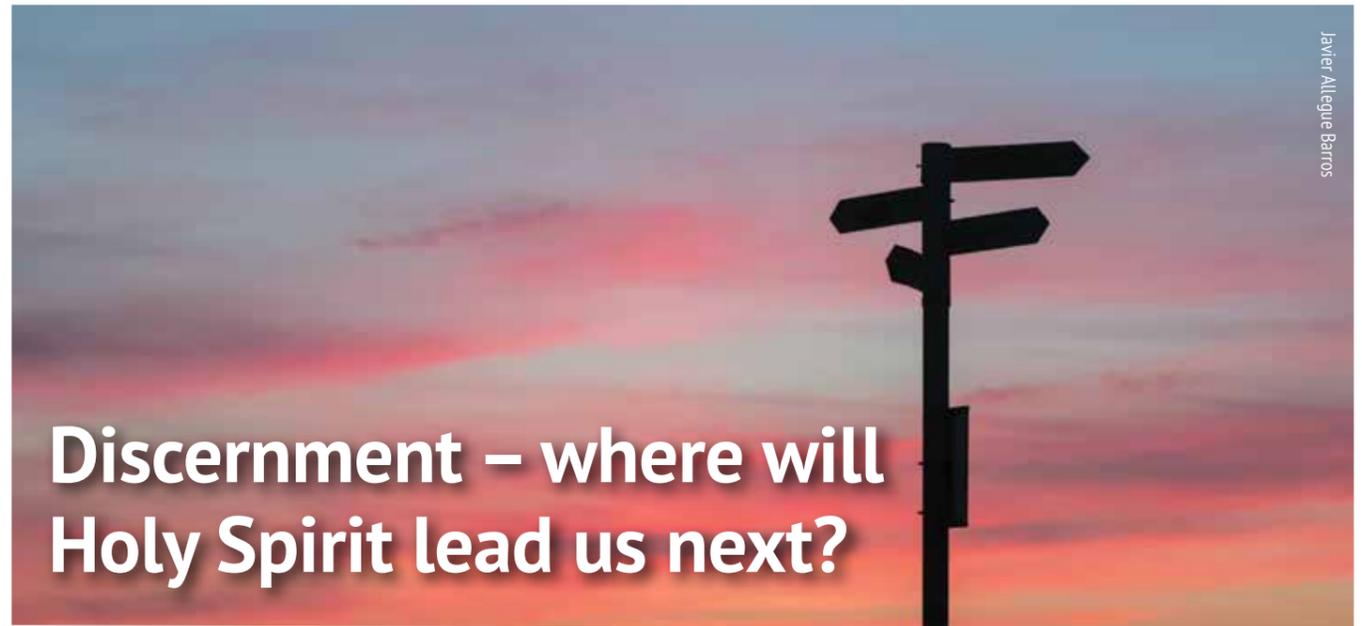
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Javier Allegue Barros

Discernment – where will Holy Spirit lead us next?

Archdeacon Graham Knott

Sitting in the stunned silence as a presentation concluded during our Diocese's first discernment session for 2023, I knew that we had all experienced and shared in something deeply moving, deeply humbling and deeply profound. Four of us were gathered in person, sitting under the air conditioning on a very hot afternoon, while three others joined us online from various parts of the country. It's fair to say that all those who heard this particular presentation will have had their view of Christian calling, discipleship and vocation changed and deepened as a result.

The discernment program is provided for just this purpose. All of us involved want to discover where Holy Spirit is leading us next in our exciting journey and vocational adventure. For some participants this may mean investigating a possible call to ordination as either a deacon or a priest in God's church. For others this will mean embracing more fully the ministry of being a baptised person privileged to carry the treasures of Christ and the Kingdom wherever they are led. For the vocations team who guide this annual journey, the discernment program provides us with a sense of humbling awe and gratitude as we share the journey with some of God's most remarkable people in Gippsland.

I've been involved with this or similar processes for many years now, and walking with those on this vocational journey is the thing above all else that keeps my ministry alive and anticipating the future with eagerness.

The vocations team is not a large group (Bishop Richard, The Rev'd Brian Norris, The Rev'd Lyn Williams and me), and our task is simply to encourage participants by creating a safe and confidential space where we can share each other's hopes and dreams,

anxieties and fears. Those of us privileged to follow Christ always have a sense that we are not worthy or capable of fulfilling the call on our lives.

Discernment groups meet for four face-to-face sessions during each year, but this is a very small part of the journey. Much more takes place during one-on-one meetings, phone conversations and emails. These individual relationships are incredibly important because the call of Christ to every individual is unique and tailored for that person. Any person who becomes part of the discernment process can rest assured that they are not entering a sausage machine designed to turn out a particular sort of person at the end. Our desire is that every person involved attain their unique potential in Jesus Christ.

We welcome expressions of interest in the discernment program at any time and from people of any age – you are never too young or too

old to pursue God's call. If you would like to be part of God's dream for future Gippsland Anglicans, this is the place to start. We look forward to hearing from you!

The Ven Graham Knott is Ministry Development Officer. For further information about the program, contact Graham: 0490 045 581.

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In Her Voice: theological reflections from Australian women

A book offering 28 rich theological reflections from Australian women, titled *In Her Voice: Raising Women's Voices in Preaching the Gospel*, was released in the week of International Women's Day.

In Her Voice emerged from the *Australian Women Preach* podcast – an initiative that aims to raise women's voices in preaching the Gospel.

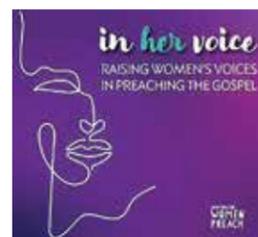
The podcast, about to enter its third year, grew out of a desire to share the gifts and insights of diverse women within the church in Australia. It was launched on International Women's Day in 2021 as a joint initiative of WATAC (Women and the Australian Church) and The Grail in Australia.

WATAC's Dr Tracy McEwan, who is also a member of the Australian Women Preach team, said that the book is a testament to

the vitality and importance of 'hearing' women's voices.

"The podcast has demonstrated the impact of listening to women preach on the Gospel and has provided a platform for voices that otherwise might have gone unheard," said Tracy. "Week after week, the podcast has highlighted the high calibre of Australian women preachers who bring diverse life experiences to their understanding of the Gospel. Each of the reflections in this book is a treasure waiting to be unearthed."

The women featured in the book come from across Australia: from different generations, different cultural backgrounds,



and even different Christian denominations. What they do share is a knowledge and love of the gospel, and a Spirit-given desire to preach.

Patricia Gemmell – who initially proposed the idea for the podcast – is a podcast team member, preacher and contributor to the book. "It was the silencing of women's voices in the Australian Catholic Church that motivated this group of women to try and make a difference," she said recently.

"Listen to some of our podcasts, or read the book, and you will be struck by the wisdom and insights of these women who strive to faithfully interpret the Gospel in the light of the signs of our times. We have always tried to model the church we seek to be – inclusive, diverse, and welcoming – and we are truly proud of what we have achieved in making a space for these voices."

Courtesy Australian Women Preach

sometimes we do not even know that our own money is funding the madness. The big banks and financial institutions are too often deeply dependent on fossil fuel investments, profiting while the world burns.

"Divesting from fossil fuels breaks this cycle. When consumers refuse to participate in destructive fossil fuel profiteering, it sends an unmistakable signal," he said.

Thea Ormerod, president of ARRCC, said, "It is not well known that the big banks and funds tend to invest heavily in coal, oil and gas mining and infrastructure, but certain banks, such as Bendigo Bank and Bank Australia, avoid this and instead engage in 'positive impact investing'."

Faith-based organisations have been among the first to embrace fossil fuel divestment, both in Australia and globally. Worldwide, of all organisations to have committed to divestment, those that are faith-based are the largest in number.

In the Anglican Communion, the Anglican Churches of Aotearoa/New Zealand and of Southern Africa and 15 Anglican dioceses in the UK are in the process of divesting from fossil fuels.

Ms Ormerod said, "It makes sense. Faith-based organisations come out of long revered traditions of seeking to live more ethically. Action to ensure that one's money is used as a power for good and not for harm should, and often does, flow seamlessly from other religious values – values such as responsibility to care for the earth, respect for life, compassion and justice."

Courtesy Australian Religious Response to Climate Change



People of faith say 'no' to fossil fuels in global Week of Action

During a worldwide Divestment Week of Action initiated by the global Catholic *Laudato Si'* Movement, Australian people of faith and their organisations were encouraged to consider divesting from fossil fuels as part of their broader responsibility to care for the earth.

A multi-faith prayer service was held at St Patrick's Catholic Cathedral, Parramatta on 9 March, as part of the Week of Action, organised by the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC).

Leaders from several faiths participated in the event, including The Most Rev'd Vincent Long, Ven Bhante Sujato, Rev'd Meredith Williams, Ahmet Ozturk, Rev'd Dr Shenouda Mansour and Rabbi George Mordecai.

Held during the Christian season of Lent, the event highlighted that people of faith and faith-based organisations should "repent"

of unwittingly allowing their savings to finance coal, oil and gas mining.

Bishop Vincent Long of Parramatta said in his homily, "The time has come for us to act decisively to reduce our carbon footprint, to invest in renewable energy, to divest from fossil fuels, to consume less and waste less ..."

"So 'now is the time for new courage in abandoning fossil fuels, to accelerate the development of zero- or positive-impact sources of energy,' Pope Francis said recently. The Vatican Bank itself does not invest in fossil fuels and it is hoped that this example is followed, not just by Catholics but others as well," Bishop Long said.

Theravada Buddhist monk Ven Bhante Sujato said, "Escalating climate chaos unfolds before us every day, in every nation, in cold and heat, in flood and fire. We fear for ourselves and for our children, yet



"Seeking to walk together"

Anglican Consultative Council welcomes proposal to help address differences

Anglican Consultative Council members at the 18th plenary meeting in Ghana

A proposal for a piece of work to "explore theological questions regarding structure and decision-making [in the Anglican Communion] to help address our differences" has been welcomed by members of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC). At their week-long meeting in Accra, Ghana, in February, members of the ACC gathered for their 18th plenary meeting (ACC-18), affirming "the importance of seeking to walk together to the highest degree possible, and learning from our ecumenical conversations how to accommodate differentiation patiently and respectfully."

The words were in a resolution proposed by IASCUFO – the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order. ACC members asked for proposals from IASCUFO "that may impact the ACC constitution" to be brought for full discussion to the next meeting of the ACC, which is expected to be hosted by the Church of Ireland in three years' time. In the meantime, IASCUFO is asked to proceed with the work and report its progress to the Instruments of Communion.

The Chair of IASCUFO, the Right Rev'd Graham Tomlin from the Church of England, said that the resolution "comes in the particular context of the Anglican Communion right now". He added, "We do face challenges, as we all know, as a Communion with the fractures that we experience, the impairment of our

Communion and highlighted by the recent discussion in the General Synod in the Church of England, but other wider issues as well.

He said that the proposal would "explore structures we have as an Anglican Communion" and for "resolving some of our disputes, enabling us to live together despite our disagreements."

The Primate of Tanzania, Archbishop Maimbo Mndolwa, said that the term "differentiation" needed to be defined,

and that the member churches (provinces) of the Anglican Communion should have a say over any new structures.

The Church of England's Rev'd Andrew Atherstone welcomed the proposal, and the way it was phrased, saying, "what it commits us to is some hard thinking. It commits us to that focus of exploration – exploration and thinking are really good things for us to be doing together."

Courtesy anglican.ink

ABC Radio National's Religion Programs

Frequencies: Bairnsdale – 106.3 FM (3ABC RN)
Melbourne – 621 AM (3RN)

Religion and Ethics Report

Andrew West

Wednesday 5:30 pm – repeated: Thursday 5:30 am and Friday 11:00 am

Soul Search

Dr Meredith Lake

Sunday 6:00 pm – repeated: Wednesday 11:00 pm and Thursday 12 noon

God Forbid

James Carleton

Sunday 6:00 am – repeated Sunday 10:00 pm and Monday 9:00 pm

For more details: www.abc.net.au

Vale Amy Davis

25 October 1932 – 7 February 2023

■ Geoff Boer and Rev'd Anne Perryman

It has been said that, as one gets older, the potential pool of people coming to your funeral decreases. Even so, 300 people still gathered to celebrate, honour and remember Amy Davis.

Amy will be remembered by TGA readers beyond just her home parish of Wonthaggi and Inverloch, having been involved in many activities in the Gippsland Diocese over the years.

In a moving and entertaining eulogy, Amy's children spoke of a loving mother, recognising the role God had in her life that saw 90 years of massive change in the world she knew, mixed with the constant of God and her developing faith.

The following was spoken by The Rev'd Anne Perryman.

Whenever I was crazily busy she would gently remind me that God gave us all time and a purpose ... and if I didn't have enough time, I was doing things God didn't have in mind for me to do! This quiet wisdom still comes to mind when I'm too busy. I am sure that there are heads nodding as you read and remember the wisdom that Amy has shared with us.

Love is kind: when we have and show God's love, it will be seen in simple acts of kindness. So many wonderful

stories were told at her funeral, of newspaper cuttings shared, beautiful poems lovingly typed and sent. Plant cuttings, sponges, treats for every occasion to family friends and those who needed a bit of encouragement.

I daresay, once again, that many people reading this have also been blessed by Amy's kindness in some way.

We then hear what love isn't: jealous, resentful or boastful, proud or arrogant.

Amy's needs and wants were fairly simple. With a large and busy family, Amy loved nothing better than spending time, caring, playing with all and sundry. She gave freely of her time and love, and put the needs of others before herself as best she could.

Love is not self-focused, dishonouring nor self-seeking – it focuses on the needs of others. Amy lived her life as a faithful disciple of Jesus.

Amy was an others-centred person instead of a self-centred person. She

spent much time and effort keeping abreast of the interests and activities of the myriad people in her life, even aiming to master the intricacies of Minecraft to better converse with her great grandson, Seb. All her relationships were important.

Try reading Corinthians 13 later and replace the word 'love' with the name 'Jesus' and the description makes perfect sense. Try putting 'Amy' in there: 'Amy is patient and kind ...' It reads well once again.

Amy did her best to live a life of love. During life Amy loved God, her family and many others. She has lived a full and wonderful life and now has her eternal reward, and for that we are all grateful.

All communities need people like Amy who quietly but effectively make a positive difference to so many people. I hope as a lasting legacy to Amy that many of us will all be inspired to follow her amazing and selfless example.

Rest in peace.



From the editor



In Pauline Davies' piece about this year's World Day of Prayer service in Drouin (p. 6), her description of the natural beauty of Taiwan made me want to learn more about the country's natural heritage.

None of Taiwan's natural places yet has UNESCO status, but several are under consideration as part of UNESCO's Global Geopark Network, which currently comprises 177 parks in 46 countries (en.unesco.org/global-geoparks).

Although no geoparks exist formally in Australia, Gippsland has plenty of sites of geological significance (see box). The Australian Geoparks Network hopes that geoparks will be created in Australia to promote socioeconomic development (including Aboriginal enterprise), conserve landscapes and stimulate cultural revival.

A geopark is one of many highlights along the UK's 1000 km South West Coast Path between Somerset and Dorset. Regional Development Victoria has included

Treasuring Gippsland's geoheritage

it as an aspirational case study in *Towards 2030: Gippsland Destination Management Plan*. The path "threads its way through several National Nature Reserves and Heritage Coasts, five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, two World Heritage Sites, a UNESCO designated Biosphere reserve and a Geopark, as well as one National Park."

This World Heritage Day (18 April), you might like to jump online and see the places featured in some of *Towards 2030's* other case studies: Norway's underwater restaurant, Port Macquarie's koala hospital or Narooma's Montague Island. These and other special areas can inspire us to look to a future that's mindful of the past.

Gippsland's geoheritage: a sample

- Bass River Delta, floodplain and terraces, South Gippsland
- Baw Baw Plateau
- Cloggs Cave archaeological site, East Buchan
- Eagles Nest and Flat Rocks, cretaceous fossil site, Cape Paterson
- Genoa River Gorge and Devonian tetrapod prints
- Gippsland Lakes, coastal lake and barrier system
- Koonwarra fish beds, cretaceous fossil site
- Labertouche granite cave, Drouin
- Lake Tali Karng, Licola
- Latrobe Valley brown coal deposits
- Mitchell River silt jetties, Bairnsdale
- Telegraph Point, sandy foreland, Mallacoota
- Waratah Bay and Cape Liptrap, Walkerville
- Wilsons Promontory National Park

Source: weekendgeology.com

Letter to the editor

The ABC article 'Power and purity' (ABC News, 30 January 2023), about the *Four Corners* episode 'Purity: an education in Opus Dei' (30 January 2023) rightly pointed out the inappropriate content and approaches to fostering sexual ethics in a school.

However, parents, schools and faith traditions that properly encourage children without shame and pressure to postpone sexual relations until a committed relationship, reduce the number of sexual partners and discuss problematic issues around pornography should not be painted with the same brush as the school in the *Four Corners* report. Without love and intimacy, sex can become empty, self-serving, ungratifying, or even abusive.

What the article fails to mention is that there is good evidence that programs that encourage young people to adopt these sexual ethics and practices promote healthy choices and relationships; advice that parents would give their own children.

The article missed the opportunity

Missed opportunity to discuss value of sexual ethics

to discuss the benefits of best practice teaching of sexual ethics to young people. It is in this important period in young people's sexual and psychosocial development that they receive different information about sex from parents, schools, peers and popular culture.

This information can shape their attitudes and behaviours for good or for ill and affect the risks they take and how they treat others. Understanding their own sexuality and making informed decisions about their behaviours is essential for healthy sexual development into adulthood, including the medical information that supports sexual health.

Risky behaviours include sexual activity with multiple sexual partners, without the use of contraceptives, and while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Early and risky sexual behaviours can establish unhealthy sexual patterns. The social consequences of adolescent risky sexual behaviours can be long-lasting and costly to adolescents, their families, and society at large. Research suggests that school-based sex education

is an important and effective component in reducing the sexual risk-taking behaviour of adolescents.

Research shows that watching pornography is a real concern for children and should be for parents and society as well. Viewing pornography can affect young people's sexual attitudes, expectations and practices. In Australia, 90 per cent of boys and 60 per cent of girls under the age of 18 have seen online porn. What is concerning about viewing pornography is the wrong message of control, pleasure and physical aggression it can give to young people about sexuality.

Postponing sexual intercourse, reducing the number of sexual partners and discussing issues around pornography are conversations that need to occur at home and at school using best practice and in a respectful and caring way.

Dr John Bellavance, Oceania Coordinator, International Association of Academicians for Peace; Vice-President, Universal Peace Federation Australia.

First published at amust.com.au

The Cross: how and why it became the symbol of Christianity



Rev'd Tracy Lauersen painting an ash cross on the forehead of a member of the congregation at Warragul Anglican Church

■ Rev'd Tracy Lauersen

In Rome there are some ancient catacombs called Saint Callixtus, off to the right side of the Appian Way, which are the burial place for over half a million Christians who died in the first centuries AD. The catacombs occupy an area of about 90 acres, all underground, over four levels, with many galleries and vaults. Eventually these catacombs became the official 'cemetery' of Rome's early Christians. Nine popes are buried there, along with many of the earliest martyrs. (Callixtus was a deacon in the third century whose job was to caretake the catacombs.)

The Christians likely chose this method of burial as it was illegal in the Roman Empire to bury the dead inside the city limits, and the earliest Christians were often too poor to afford a plot of land, making underground burial an affordable and legal burial. The rock was soft and volcanic. It was easy to work with and it hardened when exposed to air.

Many Christians were killed for their faith in those first few centuries after Christ. They were mistrusted, persecuted and isolated by their society, often being blamed for the worst crimes. Famously, the Emperor Nero, a diabolical politician, once set fire to Rome and sought to hide his crime by blaming the Christians. Nero made a practice of killing as many

Christians as he could, in as many barbaric ways as he could imagine. (Just ask AI/Google for the gruesome details.)

Those early Christians loved to use symbols – they were a safer way of 'talking' about and owning their faith. The Saint Callixtus catacombs are full of symbols carved into burial headstones, pictures drawn onto the facades of rock 'tombs', and even after the Visigoth invasion of Rome in the eighth century the catacombs survived to display a clear symbolism of the gospel, as the early Christians understood it. The Christian symbols of those first few centuries include many decidedly hopeful symbols of faith, even though there was much suffering.

These include:

- the "Jesus fish" or Ichthys (ΙΧΘΥΣ) symbol that proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God and Saviour
- an anchor – a symbol of the Christians' hope in Jesus (Hebrews 6:19)
- a phoenix – the legendary bird that would raise to life from its own ashes. The phoenix was a popular early church symbol
- the resurrection and sometimes the virgin birth of Jesus (see Luke 1:26-38)

- the 'orante': a praying figure with open arms that symbolised the soul, which lives in divine peace
- a dove – a symbol of the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22)
- the Chi-Rho (ΧΡ) – a monogram of Christ's name
- a shepherd – a symbol of Jesus as the Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
- the Alpha and the Omega – the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet that signify that Christ is the beginning and the end of all things
- drawings of biblical characters and stories: the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment; Moses striking the rock; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the furnace; Paul teaching; the fish and loaves from the accounts of Jesus' feeding of the five thousand.

Eventually all these symbols were overtaken by the Christian use of the Cross as their symbol. At first, it seems odd that Christians chose the Cross, an undeniable symbol of shameful death in the Roman Empire, over and above those other more hopeful symbols.

What did the Cross mean to Christians? It meant Jesus – their Lord and Saviour – and it inverted the meaning of the death of Jesus from something the world saw as failure into a victory – the victory of the Cross, through which God saved the world. Early Christians referred to the Cross as 'the wood of life' – life through the forgiveness made possible by his death and new life inaugurated by his resurrection. In the practice of baptism, they rose also to a new life, in him. The Romans ridiculed this Jesus of the Cross that the Christians worshipped, inscribing in stone a drawing of a donkey with its arms outstretched – to deride Christ and them.

In the fourth century, Roman leader Constantine (who worshipped the Sun) was facing a battle at the Milvian Bridge when he and his soldiers saw the Christian Cross in lights in the sky, and heard the words *in hoc signo, vince* (in this sign, conquer). He put the Cross symbol on his soldiers' shields and defeated Maxentius to become Roman Emperor. Constantine became a Christian, and as the new emperor he legalised Christianity, and built and adorned many churches with intricate mosaics and gold crosses. The rest, as they say, is history! But pause for a moment and consider what the Cross symbolises for you

The Rev'd Tracy Lauersen is Rector at St Paul's Warragul. Courtesy Warragul parish news.

Parish life: a plus for youth development

■ Libby Willems

"Kids these days ..." We've all heard that said at some time or another. Although every generation tends to test the nerves of the previous one somehow or another, it is certainly in everyone's interest to support healthy children and youth development. Most would say it is our moral obligation.

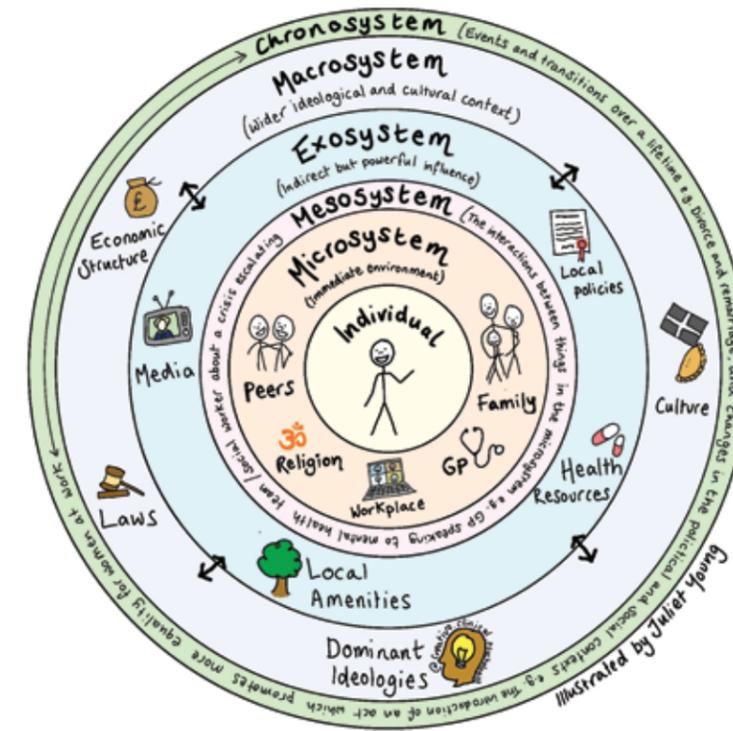
Here, I will introduce some factors known to contribute to healthy child and youth development that relate to parish life. I suggest that our parish life can offer young people a place to land softly if other parts of their world are somehow hostile.

Who bears responsibility for a healthy, well-developed child? A growing body of evidence supports Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which describes layers of environments that have the potential to impact a person's development. Religious organisations sit in the innermost level, nearest to a person's daily experience of the world. Bronfenbrenner calls this layer the 'microsystem'.

Also in the microsystem are immediate family, school or workplace, peers and health services. You would expect there to be high levels of trust in these relationships. When these relationships are functioning well, child and youth development are more protected. More specifically, research shows that factors that protect youth development in the microsystem are access to mentors and support for development of skills and interests, opportunities for engagement within school and community, positive norms, clear expectations for behaviour, and physical and psychological safety.

With this in mind, we can look for ways to enrich the experience of children and youth in our parish life. We can ask ourselves: How are we supporting the development of skills and interests for young people? Who are their mentors in this? What are the ways that young people can engage in our parish life and is it easy for them to connect to opportunities? Are our spaces physically and psychologically safe? These are all excellent questions to explore so that we might find ways to boost access to protective factors for children and youth.

Individual differences exist at the very centre of Bronfenbrenner's model. Within the child, there are internal protective factors. Young people who have positive physical development, develop academically and intellectually, have high self-esteem, can emotionally self-regulate, have good coping skills and problem-solving skills, and



Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977)

engage and connect in two or more community contexts (school, with peers, in athletics, employment, religion, culture), are less likely to experience poor mental, emotional or behavioural disorders. Once again, we see that religion plays a part in supporting the individual's development when it is a nurturing setting for children and youth.

Risk factors for the individual include a wide range of heritable and environmental factors, and the more that parishes understand about the known risks to healthy human development, the better they are positioned to support the young people in their community and their family. A good and reliable starting point for more information is communitiesthatcare.org.au.

In short, protective factors are working to buffer the effect of known risk factors at the microsystem level for young people. The more protective factors we can offer to young people in our communities, the better they will navigate their challenges. Parishes play a part in this.

Safe Ministry resources are available at gippslandanglicans.org.au/resources/safe-ministry.

Libby Willems is the Diocesan Development Officer for Gippsland Anglicans.

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Foundations of Anglican Evangelicalism in Victoria

Four Elements for Continuity 1847–1937

By Wei-Han Kuan

Eugene, Wipe & Stock, 2019

■ Richard Prideaux

The Rev'd Dr Wei-Han Kuan is the State Director of the Church Missionary Society in Victoria, having served previously as a priest in the parishes of All Souls' Ferntree Gully and St Alfred's Blackburn North. This fascinating study of the early beginnings of Evangelicalism in Victoria was Wei-Han's doctoral thesis at the Australian College of Theology. Doctoral theses do not always make exciting reading due to the strict requirements and detail required by supervision. This book is an exception because, at least for someone as old as me, many of the characters and leaders referred to are known to me personally or are revered as Christian figures of significant character and indeed fame.

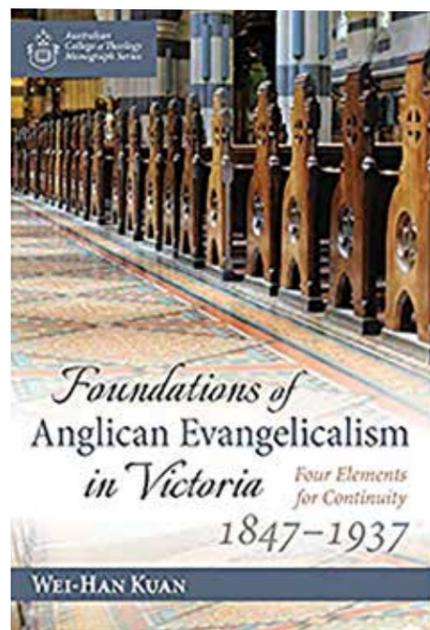
European settlement in Australia coincided with deep divisions within the Church of England. These were caused by the development in the 1830s of the Tractarian Oxford movement, which placed significant emphasis on matters of church liturgy and ritual, high-end choral music and a reaching out to Roman Catholicism, especially in relation to the manual acts associated with the Eucharist. Opposing the Tractarians were the traditional prayer book low churchmen and a rising tide of energised evangelicals, intent on mission to the far corners of the world with the good news of God's atoning love. The early days of Christian faith in Victoria also inevitably tied in with the rapid growth of Melbourne due to gold fever, and the money and people from all nations who poured into the mainland's most southern state.

A key issue of this story is the contested character of Victoria's first bishop, the evangelical Charles Perry, appointed in 1847 from England by William Grant Broughton, the first and only Bishop of Australia. Kuan notes that Bishop James Grant, in his chapter in the Diocese of Melbourne's official sesquicentenary history, described Perry as having a "reputation as a narrow minded bigot in matters of churchmanship"

(p. 115). Similarly, historians Manning Clark and Alan Shaw characterise Perry as a militant low churchman and a sectarian. Kuan challenges this view of Perry in a detailed study, noting that Perry's exceptional drive and energy created a powerful church and Evangelicalist movement in rapidly growing Victoria, especially in Gippsland and Bendigo, but he also accommodated and was willing to appoint a number of non-evangelical clergy.

Kuan moves on to describe the impact of bishops Moorehouse (strong parish development), Field Flowers Goe (cathedral builder) and Henry Lowther Clarke. At the same time, in spite of some very strong evangelical parishes, Evangelicalists tended to focus less on parish life and more on mission and conversions at home and abroad, open-air preaching, church societies, conventions, university missions and eventually the founding of Ridley College. Kuan notes that the large number of evangelical leaders who gave their lives and talents to overseas mission weakened the strength of evangelical parishes in this early period of Victorian Christian growth.

Individual leaders in this story are too numerous to mention here, but note must be made of the generosity of the Griffiths



family of tea business fame who originally bankrolled almost every evangelical cause. In addition the exceptional impact of the ministry of Canon C.H. Nash in so many lives and parishes and his fallout with Lowther Clarke is a key factor in this story. Will Dr Kuan venture to write part 2 of this story from 1937 to 2023? We must wait and see.

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Australian Anglicans Worship – Performing APBA

By Charles Sherlock

Broughton Publishing, 2020

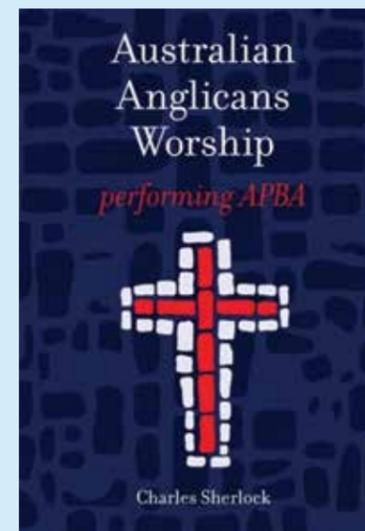
■ Rev'd Jo White

Weighing in at 850 grams, Charles Sherlock's *Australian Anglicans Worship – Performing APBA* is only a little less weighty than the activity to which the title refers.

This is a big book and an important book. Big because of its sheer size and scope. Important because it leaves no stone unturned in its thorough working of *A Prayer Book for Australia* (APBA). Readers will find it helpful to have the full edition of APBA (weighing in at a kilogram) beside them as they work through the relevant chapters. Here we find important and helpful commentary on theology, liturgy and liturgical performance of rites.

Sherlock's book is essential reading for the newly ordained, as a refresher for experienced priests, for licensed lay ministers and interested laity. There is a good blend of theory and practice, something experienced priests may find helpful as a reminder of the basis of what we do. All too easily we can find ourselves getting into bad habits without thinking about the reason behind our performance and rely instead on convenience and local custom. A careful reading of this book can make better liturgists of us all.

The champions of APBA are all acknowledged, including the greats of the Australian Anglican Church, many of whom – including Charles himself



– worked on APBA as members of the Liturgy Commission of General Synod.

This book includes chapters that are clear and sequential, with helpful headings within chapters. In some cases, there are useful study questions at the end of a section. Each chapter begins with a useful summary. The text is peppered with abbreviations, but one only needs to flip back to page (iv) to check to what they refer. A number of extensive reading lists are included. The footnotes are definitely worth a read.

This is a big read – dense and detailed, right down to explanations about the use of colons, semi-colons and commas, and reasons for APBA's more direct style when compared with the earlier *An Australian Prayer Book* and *The Book of Common Prayer*.

All aspects of APBA are given thorough treatment, not least the services of Baptism, Prayer Praise and Proclamation. The largest part (E), with some seven sections, has important information related to the Holy Communion/Eucharist/Lord's Supper. The author leaves no stone unturned. He is both wise and gracious, speaking directly to the reader: "You do not have to agree with the perspective put forward ... No doubt at some point I will give offense, for which I ask your understanding" (p. 214).

There were times when he made me giggle, including his reference to the evils of "poor quality instant coffee and limp biscuits" (p. 194).

If you have ever had a question about why we do this or that, then this book will provide an answer. For example, in chapter 4 we find out why there is a liturgical calendar, why fonts are eight-sided, and the why and how of Sabbath and Sunday. Sherlock is both informative and at times a little scathing in his treatment of Christmas. His reference to Xma\$ and its patron saint \$anta Claus did make me smile. Charles offers the wisdom of an experienced Christian elder as he leads us through the whys and wherefores of APBA.

You could be forgiven for presuming this is a stuffy, dated book but Sherlock continually makes reference to current means of communication and worship including YouTube and Fresh Expressions, noting that APBA is likely the last publication of its type and soon to be overtaken by epray and other digital means.

Here is a book for those who are studying APBA or perhaps preparing to become priests or deacons. It is a book worthy of shelf space for any who perform APBA because it is a commentary presented in a detailed, authoritative and considered manner.



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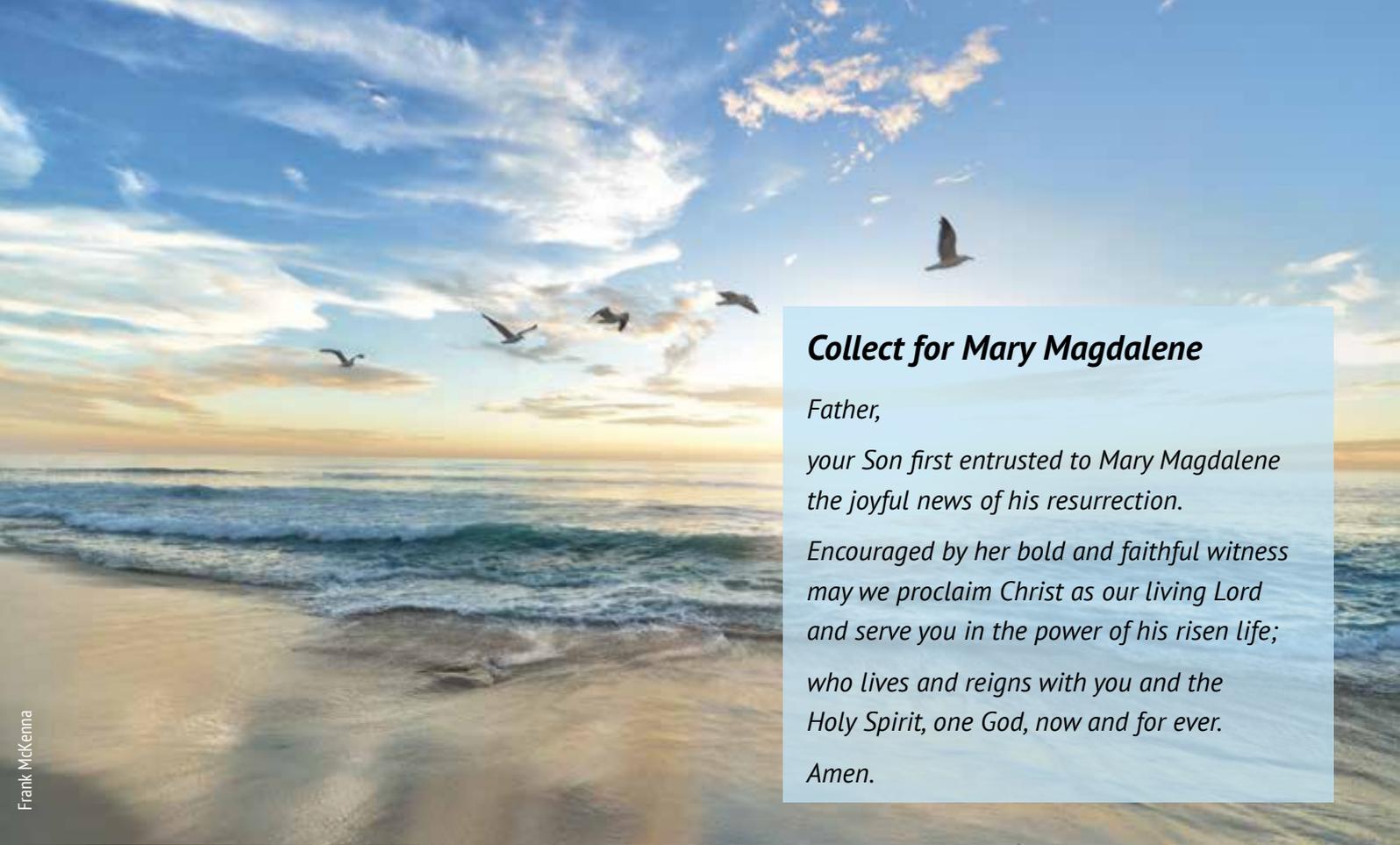
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* Please include your name and suburb for publication. Letters may be edited in the interests of clarity or space.



Frank McKenna

Collect for Mary Magdalene

*Father,
your Son first entrusted to Mary Magdalene
the joyful news of his resurrection.
Encouraged by her bold and faithful witness
may we proclaim Christ as our living Lord
and serve you in the power of his risen life;
who lives and reigns with you and the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.*

Coming up

Webinar: Church Life Profile results

20 April, 11 am or 7 pm session
This free webinar is a practical workshop that will help you to:

- evaluate your National Church Life Survey Results
- identify strengths and areas to address
- respond to your results with a team or group at church
- use your results to form future directions.

Presented by NCLS Research and sponsored by Baptist Financial Services.
To register, visit eventbrite.com.au and search 'NCLS results'.

Jesus the Good Shepherd and Psalm 23

30 April, 11 am.
St Mark's Thorpdale, then lunch at the Traveller's Rest.
Lunch bookings: Dean, 0493 088 370.

East Gippsland Symphonia

30 April, 10 am.
St Matthew's Bruthen.
Further details p. 7.

Diocesan Synod

19–21 May.
St Paul's Anglican Grammar School, Warragul.

Safe Church Awareness and Refresher workshops

St George's Wonthaggi
14 April, 5–8 pm.
1–3 Hagelthorn St.
Register by 12 April at trybooking.com/CGDLK.

Holy Trinity Yarram
15 May, 1–4 pm.
95 Commercial Rd.
Register by 12 May at trybooking.com/CGDLL.

Enquiries: 03 5144 2044 or registryoffice@gippsanglican.org.au.
Dates for further Safe Church events will be published in future issues.

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