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# The Gippsland Anglican

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## Music sounds and scholarships at the Cathedral

(L-R) Lachlan Redd, Christine Morris, Tanika Richards (foreground), Jessica Martin (behind), Dr Kevin Cameron, Caroline Martin and The Very Rev'd Keren Terpstra (foreground) at the Cathedral

### ■ The Very Rev'd Keren Terpstra

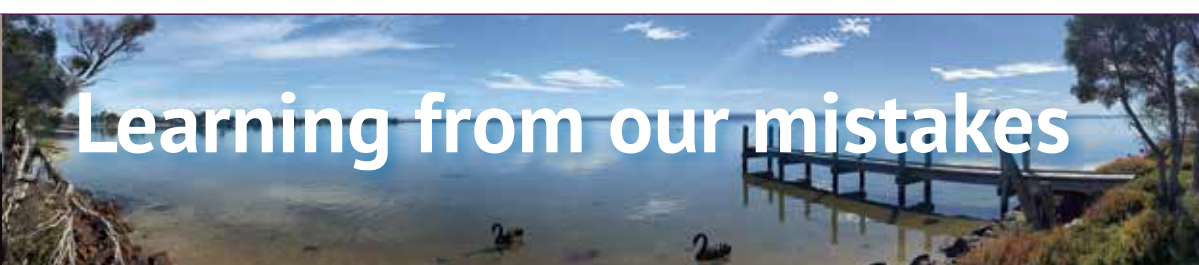
April saw the launch of two new strands in the musical life of St Paul's Cathedral in Sale. An initiative of the Dean and Chapter, two new Dean's scholarships were launched, with two applicants accepted to the program: Caroline and Jessica Martin. Caroline and Jessica are both talented singers, currently students at Gippsland Grammar, and come with a wealth of experience in singing in the school musicals, including most recently *Catch Me If You Can*. Both play multiple instruments and are involved in a number of school and community musical ensembles. We are looking forward to the gifts Caroline and Jessica will share with the Cathedral community and beyond through this scholarship program.

We also welcomed Lachlan Redd, currently the sub-organist at St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne, who, by gracious agreement by the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, will be coming to Sale one weekend a month to offer organ tuition and to play for services on the Sunday morning. Lachlan also comes with vast experience and honours in keyboard performance and is sought after for organ tuition. If you've ever wondered – or you know someone who's wondered – about playing the organ, this is a golden opportunity to receive some lessons!

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# Learning from our mistakes



Excerpts from Bishop Richard's Presidential Address to the Third Session of the 40th Synod of the Diocese of Gippsland, Saturday 25 May 2024

When I was interviewed for this role a little over six years ago, a lay member of the Election Board, Val Jones, asked the first question: "Tell us about a time when you really stuffed up," she said. There was a long pause – only because there were so many examples to choose from – and then we had a good conversation about what we learn from our failures.

The great temptation in any Presidential Address, and for Synods generally, is to be self-congratulating – to take favourable stock of all that we've done in the last 12 months. There's a place for such an inventory, and we'll get to that as our business unfolds. But let me first hold up to our collective self a less flattering mirror.

We've learned a hard lesson during and since the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and if you've not yet read Bishop Jeffrey Driver's book, *Grey Spaces*, I commend it to you. The cost borne by victim-survivors, of course, is far greater than the pain and shame we've been going through as an organisation.

So too for the First Peoples of this land our slow learning as a nation and a Church is costly.

As you may have read in May's *TGA*, on the Tuesday following Synod His Grace the Archbishop will re-dedicate the historic church of St John at Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust. This is a good news story, and – in the bleak context of Victoria's colonial history – Lake Tyers shines some light, thanks to the godliness of Mission founder and long-term manager John Bulmer.

The Anglican Province of Victoria has been coming to grips with this complex legacy in recent months as we've engaged with the Yoorrook Justice Commission, through a substantial written submission just before Easter, and at a live hearing on 1 May, in which Bishop Genieve Blackwell and I represented the Province alongside Uniting Church and Roman Catholic colleagues. You can view that panel hearing – almost four hours of combined testimony – online (<https://bit.ly/3ym3E0V>).

Through the focused lens of the Commission, the five Victorian dioceses were invited to reflect more deeply on how

the Anglican Church has been complicit in, and benefited from, the violence inherent in the so-called 'doctrine of discovery' – a teaching recently repudiated by the Vatican – and its outworking in the self-serving mythology of *terra nullius*.

For Gippsland Anglicans, it is simply a fact that our schools and churches, Rectories, Bishops Court and parish halls are built on land of which Aboriginal people were dispossessed.

Not only were they dispossessed, they were forcibly relocated: systematically separated from family, culture and language by the policies of the state – policies enacted on Church of England mission stations across Victoria, including at Lake Tyers, by our ecclesial forebears.

Not only were they stripped of their identity and spiritual connection to the land, they were killed by those we politely call 'settlers' in more than 15 massacres in Gippsland alone. Others died on missions and reserves far from their ancestors, marking the start of what we would now describe as Aboriginal deaths in custody.

The 1857 census reveals that, in the 23 years since 1834, the Indigenous population of the greater Port Phillip area declined by 85% through disease from contact with gold miners and pastoralists, and through frontier conflict, falling from around 12,000 to under 2,000.

How can we even begin to come to terms with this? As with the earlier Royal Commission, we have to start by listening to the lived experience of victim-survivors, and the stories of their parents and grandparents.

And we have to tell the truth.

We also have to think seriously about reparation. At present we allocate 1.5% of proceeds from land sales to Aboriginal Ministry in this Diocese. In the light of our history – and the ongoing harms and structural disadvantage arising from it – is that anywhere near adequate?

Do we duly acknowledge our First Nations Peoples when we gather on their sovereign and unceded lands to worship the God who commanded us not to steal? Alongside our various honour boards, do

visitors to our Anglican centres see any permanent recognition of the unbroken connection to Country of local Elders?

By the time we convene our 41st Synod, may we have faced into these questions more squarely.

As we continue to learn, painfully slowly, what the gospel imperative of Reconciliation looks like in this space, we are deeply indebted to Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy and The Rev'd Kathy Dalton for their grace, patience and generosity.

In researching archival material for our submission to this Royal Commission it was heartening to find over 100 articles published in *TGA* from the past 10 years reflecting on these issues or reporting on Reconciliation activities.

One such activity to come is on Sunday 23 June, when we have arranged for an online diocesan screening of the documentary *Warrigal Creek*. I hope parishes will take up that opportunity to stay on after morning services for shared viewing and conversation.

Another mistake from which we have been slow to learn – and its costliness is potentially greater than we can imagine, for it lies largely in the future – has to do with how we have colonised planet Earth.

At our first Session in 2022, we resolved "That this Synod makes action on climate change a major focus for the Diocese of Gippsland over the coming three-year cycle of Synod." It is, therefore, also a key theme of this Address.

The report from ACTinG that we'll attend to shows some real progress against the five specific commitments of this motion, which echoed similar resolutions at General Synod a few weeks earlier in that same year.

On Holy Saturday, before the Great Easter Vigil, Leanne and I took the kids to see the BBC Earth exhibition; good material for theological reflection in that void between the cross and empty tomb. At the end of the extraordinary visual presentation of creation's plenitude and diversity, David Attenborough's beguilingly calm narration pulled no punches: humanity has simply overrun the planet, he said.



**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.**





Bishop Genieve Blackwell and Bishop Richard at the recent Yoorrook Justice Commission hearing

"Epiphanies seem to be random, but they are not. They build over time until the last little bit of information is gathered, and the picture comes fully into focus." So writes Br Jim Woodrum, SSJE. That's exactly how Dr Joëlle Gergis sees climate change happening: gradually, then suddenly.

On the Feast of the Epiphany I finished reading her book, *Humanity's Moment: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope*. Gergis is one of a handful of Australian scientists to have been selected as a lead author on the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) *Sixth Assessment Report*. This IPCC Report was released in February 2022, just before our First Session, and described by UN Secretary-General António Guterres as a "code red for humanity."

Gergis' book joined the dots for me – science, ethics, economics and politics – such that the picture building over time in my mind came more fully into focus. Written during a global pandemic, which proves that humankind can unite to change how we live – globally, almost overnight – Gergis' confronting work is (as its subtitle suggests) ultimately hopeful.

Hopeful, that is, in the sense described by American writer and activist Rebecca Solnit:

not like a lottery ticket you can sit on the sofa and clutch, feeling lucky ... hope should shove you out the door ... [T]o hope is to give yourself to the future, and that commitment to the future makes the present inhabitable. (Cited by Gergis, p. 232)

This resonates with a biblical understanding of hope, made manifest and fully focused in the one by whom and

through whom and for whom all things were created (see Col 1:16-17, John 1:3, 1 Cor 8:6, Heb 2:10), whose new creation beckons, calling us forward from God's future (Rev 21:5). People sometimes ask me, "Where's Jesus in all this church-talk of climate action?" He's at the very centre of it, for all that exists is his.

"If our planet were a child," Gergis reflects, "there would be a moral outcry of disgust and rage" (p. 175). And yet, of course, the creator of all that is and ever shall be is revealed to us precisely in the form of a vulnerable child – *el niño* – who came to his own and his own knew him not.

There are some hard facts we must face – for the truth will set us free, free to act from hope.

With 1.2 degrees of global warming since pre-industrial times already exceeded, and associated climate change locked in for generations to come, we are – even now – seeing the tip of an iceberg, albeit a rapidly melting one.

The latest modelling of the IPCC identifies a 'tipping point' somewhere beyond 1.5 degrees of warming (the 'best case scenario' of the 2015 Paris Agreement) whereby ice-sheet disintegration, changes to deep ocean currents, and moisture-laden warmer atmosphere all interact to create a 'cascading effect', magnifying incremental rises in sea levels and the frequency and severity of extreme weather events including floods, storm surges, heatwaves and bushfires.

Children born today are likely to live through more of these events by a factor of seven-fold compared with Baby Boomers.

Pacific islands, including in the Torres Strait, are suffering from the salination of agricultural lands and contamination of drinking water from ocean flooding. Add to this the impact on vital tourism industries and the displacement of Indigenous Peoples – now a significant factor in the global refugee crisis according to the UN.

Alongside the grim scientific evidence and the growing impact of climate change, Gergis highlights opportunities for Australia as the sunniest continent on Earth, with the highest renewable energy potential per capita, to become the 'battery of the world', using technology that already exists and is always evolving, fostering new industries in the process, especially in regions like Gippsland that have relied more on resource extraction.

When I speak or write about these things, sometimes the question comes: "Why is the church focusing on 'political' issues?" My answer varies: because, no less than war in Ukraine or Gaza, this is an emerging humanitarian crisis driven by entrenched geopolitical interests; because these are matters of social justice for developing nations now, and for all future generations; because, like the scourge of gender-based violence in our communities we have cause to repent of what we walk past; because we have a biblical imperative to care for God's good creation – all of which draw on the same theological principle: that we cannot separate the spiritual from the material any more than Jesus did, or the prophets before him.

We are challenged and strengthened in our response to that 2022 motion by the Communion Forest initiative, by the interest of both the Anglican Communion Environmental Network (ACEN) and Iona in the work of The Abbey, and by the efforts of our ACTinG group to encourage and equip us.

These three things come together in a Season of Creation launch planned for 1 September this year – a Sunday – that we urge every parish and ministry centre to engage with as per details to follow.

Worship is to some extent a political act. It is a public commitment to that polity Jesus called the kingdom of God; to a vision of God's future coming to meet us here and now. So let us be shoved out the doors of our churches in hope, "acting for the good of Earth and all creatures", in the words of our Diocesan Vision.

+RM

The complete text of Bishop Richard's Presidential Address can be viewed and downloaded from the diocesan website: [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au)

We are delighted that The Ven Ruth Hanlon is to be the Rector of Bass/Phillip Island.

Ruth (pictured here with husband Michael, a retired priest) is the Rector of St Luke's Anglican Church, Parish of Sandy Bay and Taroona in Tasmania, where her ordained ministry has been set.

She and Michael have always had a heart for Gippsland, and value their personal links with the region, as Ruth explains:

For the past eight years we have been living and serving in Tasmania, but my husband Michael and I both have historical connections with Gippsland.

I spent the first seven years of my life in Churchill where my father was the first Co-operating Church Minister. His last parish was at Bunyip and I completed my HSC at Drouin High School. Michael's grandparents lived in Wonthaggi and we regularly holiday there as a family.

Prior to being ordained in 2016 I worked as a social worker. Initially this was with children and families, including as a family therapist in the UK, where we lived for eight years. I then worked in community-based palliative care for 11 years in Melbourne.

I completed a Master of Divinity at Ridley College in 2015 and we moved to Hobart in 2016 where I was Assistant Minister at St David's Cathedral. In 2019 I was appointed Rector of St Luke's Taroona. During this time, I also took on diocesan roles including Archdeacon for the southern mission region of Tasmania, and Diocesan Ministry Development Officer for Women.

I am passionate in my faith and desire

for others to know the gift of God's amazing grace. I love to revel in God's creation, including cold water sunrise swims! I also love to walk, read, sing, enjoy good coffee while building relationships, and I love to spend time with family – we have four young adult children.

I look forward to serving the people of Bass/Phillip Island, and together exploring the opportunities to grow God's kingdom, proclaiming Christ and sharing hope in the community.

Gippsland Anglicans look forward to the deepening of these local ties – Ruth even once holidayed at Bishops Court as a child! – and to all the gifts that Ruth, and Michael, bring to our lives and our share in God's mission to the world.

Our diocese is especially grateful to Locum Priest The Rev'd Liam Matthews, and Madeleine, for their ongoing presence and ministry at Cowes, San Remo and Bass, and to Lay Readers and lay leaders of the parish

for their faithful service while the Clergy Appointments Advisory Board has been engaged in the work of discernment.

Please pray for Ruth and her family, and for the parishes of Bass/Phillip Island and Sandy Bay and Taroona, as they prepare for new ministry chapters.

From Bishop Richard's *Ad Clerum*



## New Lay Reader for Drouin

■ Pauline Davies

A new Lay Reader has joined the team at Christ Church Drouin. John Yuill was presented with his licence by Rev'd John Webster. Most of John's family were present to witness the important occasion and he was also supported by Ron Mace, Drouin's longest serving Lay Reader. John was congratulated by the parishioners who were present, and good wishes go with him as he commences this new chapter in his journey of faith.





■ **The Rev'd Dennis Webster reflects on his move to Gippsland to begin as Rector of Paynesville.**

Moving from the Macedon Ranges Shire to East Gippsland certainly had many challenges. Also, it was an epic journey to change from permanent full-time employment in a parish with three centres halfway between Melbourne and Bendigo to permanent part-time employment with one centre and a different demographic.

One of the challenges faced in the Macedon Ranges was the impact on the aviation industry as COVID took hold. A dormitory area for the Melbourne Airport, forced layoffs and the lack of travel options hit hard. Coupled with rises in interest rates, many families experienced hardship.

During my time in the Gisborne parish, anticipating that there would be a time when mortgage rates would rise, I worked to establish a food security program with volunteers from some of the other local churches. Setting up a solid financial corpus with an incorporated body shell, the program was well received in the community. Within months of COVID-19, assisting people isolated by the virus and the resulting travel bans was possible.

In addition to involvement with the local community, being part of programs that looked at growth and professional development was also essential. I was pleased to be a coach for two colleagues, and I am now exploring the opportunity to become a supervisor within the Diocese of Gippsland. With a strong teaching background, I firmly believe in encouraging people to be their best. Unrealistic expectations implied by others who think their way is the only one is not helpful. I enjoy exploring the options that engage and encourage growth.

For me, the past three months have been a time of listening, observing and responding to the aspirations of my new parish. Being an integral part of The Abbey team and projected growth is part of my vision for the parish. The demographics of Paynesville are considerably older. Listening to the East Gippsland Shire, they are aware of this but are indeed developing the area as a township where retirement, access and equity can all be combined and provide a safe place for the next stage of life. I am also transitioning after obtaining a senior's card shortly after arrival.

There are courses available in various parts of the academic world that recognise the journey of our senior treasures (channelling St Lawrence!), which I would like to undertake and help make part of this area's mission. Our senior profile is indicative of an ageing Australia. While there are marvellous programs to incorporate the next generation of younger Anglicans, it is



Rev'd Dennis Webster at St Paul's Gisborne

also crucial that people in their later stages are equally allowed to grow in the richness and love of the Lord.

Not all people welcome new approaches and styles of worship. There has been a little pushback by the various recognised journeys of Anglicanism in Australia. For some, I'm too high; for others, too biblical, weird-humoured, not high enough, too catholic or too academic. Finding that balance will always be difficult. For those who say I'm "too ...", it is always a great place to start the conversation about their faith journey and to listen. Will it change me? I'm open to that possibility if it enriches my relationship with another pilgrim.

As part of my presence, I have increased my output and direction in a weekly online blog and study ([www.breaking-open-the-word.org](http://www.breaking-open-the-word.org)). It is based on the sermon or an article I write each week. I have always engaged with new technology, so I am not afraid to venture into the world of AI ([www.church.tech](http://www.church.tech)) to assist me in preparing each week's study.

The move from the Macedon Ranges to East Gippsland is more than a 'see' change; it's an actual 'sea change'. I grew up in country Tasmania in a place called Penguin. I note in the news.com.au papers recently a story from my town growing up – a 'battle royale' regarding the retention of Penguin-shaped garbage bins. That made me laugh! Like Paynesville Football and Netball Club, Penguin Football Club has royal blue and light blue colours. I also follow the Navy Blues (a tragic trait shared with my associate priest Jeff Berger and our Bishop) and the Rabbitohs, an eclectic mix of colours!

The lifestyle in Paynesville is idyllic, but like all places there is a strong need to make the word of God fully known. Hospitality is at the centre of this. Jesus met St Peter by the Lake one morning and, over the charcoal fire, he was restored and empowered to take up the leadership of the Church. There is no better image for me to see the Church as a place where renewal, restoration and care of creation – people, flora and fauna – share in the same mission of our Resurrected Saviour.



Paul Robinson

## ■ Sue Wilson

A weekend in late April was our time to celebrate 150 years of the township of Poowong and the 150th year of All Saints' Anglican Church, in the heart of the town on the crossroads. All Saints' Poowong and St George's Wonthaggi organised a program of events and services covering both days.

We began with the appropriately entitled 'In the Beginning', a reading of Genesis chapters 1–3. Taking a few verses at a time, we heard from the King James Version with its lilting flow, and then followed with the New International Bible. I was surprised by how small the difference was – the beauty was not lost for the sake of clarity. Ron Osborne and June Hall, members of the team from St George's Wonthaggi, read so beautifully that I was happily meditating. But you know how it is, life goes on – the church lawnmower roared into life, briefly overpowering all else, football commenced at the next-door oval and the cheers of the crowd announced the first goal of the day. By the Seventh Day when God rested, we enjoyed the passing of the motorbike club.

Speaking on the topic of 'Talking about Genesis' were Fiona McKenzie, a lawyer and small businesswoman from Wonthaggi, and Sari Brown, an engineer from Inverloch. They threw new light on the story of Creation – Fiona applying her

legal training to the deeper meanings, and Sari questioning the 'how' of Creation's completion. Genesis reads, "In the beginning God created" and there was a comparison with the words of John's Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word." Fiona and Sari agreed that here was evidence of the Trinity, Jesus the Word and the Holy Spirit.

When God created all that is, he seems to step back on several occasions to note that it was good. With God, as with humankind, there is creation and appreciation. Sari's favourite was the grass and trees. These are useful to us as well as being beautiful. Fiona reminded us that Adam's first job was to till the garden. Humankind was made in

God's likeness, unlike the animals Adam named.

Sadly, the serpent appears, Eve shares and Adam accepts. As Sari so succinctly put it, "They can't hang out with God anymore." Fiona reminds us that the first sacrifice was made by God who sheds the blood of an animal to provide Adam and Eve with clothing to hide their shame and give them warmth. The picture points to the sacrifice of Jesus still to come.

What a wonderful Saturday morning. Thank you to the All Saints team for providing the warm space and hot cuppa, and special thanks to the team from St George's Wonthaggi for their preparation, and for their interesting and considered presentation.

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# Holy Spirit comes to centenary celebrations, Church of the Ascension Inverloch



Barbara Robertson

A new chalice, ciborium and paten purchased and dedicated for use over the next 100 years at the Church of the Ascension Inverloch

## ■ Geoff Boer

When and where is a centenary not 100 years? The story of Inverloch's Church of the Ascension provides an interesting answer, in the context of its recent centenary celebrations.

The Church of the Ascension in Inverloch was officially opened on 24 May 1924, although the actual Ascension Day in that year (Easter was very late) was 29 May.



Barbara Robertson

The oldest parishioner Bob Delahoy cutting the centenary cake

So why did we celebrate the church's centenary on 9 May? Well, the decision to name the church as The Church of the Ascension was made on 9 May 1924. Perhaps celebrating 100 Ascension Days would be a simpler measure!

The theme adopted for our recent celebration was 'Looking Back Yet Looking Forward.' An acknowledgement that history can inspire and inform us but more importantly we are called to move forward in sharing God's Word and Love now and in the future.

The celebration started with a visit from Bishop Richard on 5 May to a combined service with the Wonthaggi congregation, followed by lunch. The bishop commenced his sermon with a rendition of *Happy Birthday*.

A week full of activities followed with a visit from a Sharing of Ministries Abroad (SOMA) team, helping us rekindle our enthusiasm and relationship with the Holy Spirit. Presentations and teaching were given at the regular Bible Study groups, a Healing Service, Ascension Day service and celebratory dinner open to all in the community. The week concluded with an 'Anglicans Ablaze' mini-conference on the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

It truly was a wonderful week of celebration where God was seen to be at work in the parish, encouraging and growing people of all ages and backgrounds.

## Sweet success at Leongatha parish book fair



One of Leongatha's parishioners serving tea with a smile



Some of the many books available for sale

## ■ Joanne Stuchbury

The enthusiasm and hard work of Leongatha parishioners resulted in a successful book fair in the parish hall recently, which was enjoyed by many in the area. The accompanying morning or afternoon tea with homemade scones was welcomed

with a cool spell in the weather.

For many weeks, the parishioners were encouraged to review their personal libraries, clean out the cupboards and bring their books to sell as an aid for the funds for the building development project for St Peter's Leongatha.



# From St Paul's to the Kokoda Trek



(L-R) St Paul's Principal Cameron Herbert, Zara McNair, William Blackwood and Member for Narracan Wayne Farnham

## ■ Paula Walland

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School George Collins Kokoda Trek Award recipients, Zara McNair and William Blackwood, will be leaving the familiarity of school and their homes to complete the Kokoda Trek at the start of July.

After getting the phone call to say that they were both being given the opportunity, it "took some time to sink in" that they were going to be completing this "quite difficult" trek.

Zara said that her family was surprised and impressed that she was able to make it to the end of the application process, and is thankful that her parents helped her throughout the application.

William agreed that his parents are excited for him – although, as the adventure grows, so does their nervousness.

While completing the required training and preparations, Zara and William are equally excited about the trek and about "experiencing the community" that they will be walking through, and alongside.

St Paul's Head of Year 11, Bernard Laverty, said it is incredible that there are opportunities such as the Kokoda Trek for

young people that allow them to "continue to build upon the legacy and respect" that Australia has for Kokoda.

Created by the former Member for Narracan, Gary Blackwood, and local businessman Bernie Rowell, the George Collins Kokoda Trek Award enables students from the Baw Baw Shire to walk the trek. Upon their return, the participants share their experiences to teach others about the importance and history of Kokoda.

## Have your say in TGA!

Send your letters\* of up to 350 words to [editor@gippslandanglicans.org.au](mailto:editor@gippslandanglicans.org.au).



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

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## A cross-cultural Easter vigil in Morwell

The Rev'd Kathy Dalton fanning the smoke of her coolamon fire

### ■ Ven Sue Jacka

At this year's Easter Vigil at St Mary's Morwell, we started as usual outside the church, but this year with two fires! The first is the regular one from which we would light the 2024 Paschal candle. It reminds us of the fire on the beach when Jesus appeared to the disciples. The second one was lit by The Rev'd Kathy Dalton (who officiated at the service) in her coolamon. The fuel in the coolamon included the traditional gum leaves for the smoking ceremony and the names of many different Aboriginal nations that Kathy had encouraged members of our two Sunday congregations to write down on envelopes in January for Aboriginal Sunday.

As the two fires burned away, Kathy and I led a participatory conversation among the worshippers about the place of fire and smoke in both traditions. Smoking ceremonies are for cleansing and welcome. They are used at the start of particular events to cleanse the people and land and to welcome outsiders onto Country, extending peace and hospitality. The smoke of the incense in the ancient Hebrew temple tradition is a symbol of God's presence with humanity. Fire was used traditionally by First Nations Peoples to regenerate the land, bringing new life. Moses encountered the bush that was on fire, but not consumed, and he knew he was on holy ground. God spoke to him out of this experience and

he became the leader of his people, bringing them to new life as they escaped their slavery. At Pentecost, we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit in tongues of fire above each of the disciple's heads.

After our discussion, and as the embers of both fires burned low, 10-year-old baptismal candidate Noyoaka Dalton led the procession into the darkened church with the new Paschal candle bringing light, proclaiming 'The Light of Christ'. We are from two traditions, but there is one God and Lord of us all, so we are able to worship together, affirming how God has revealed truth and life across the millennia.

## Music sounds and scholarships at the Cathedral

Continued from page 1

Both of these initiatives are part of the unfolding music program of St Paul's Cathedral, Sale, which we hope eventually will be supported and underpinned by the St Paul's Cathedral Sale Music Foundation Trust.

As a way of launching both the new Dean's scholarships and the organ program, as well as the Music Foundation, we hosted two successful events.

The Saturday Soiree in early May featured all the musicians who currently play or sing or contribute musical talents to the Cathedral in a variety performance on organ, piano, voice, harp, and recorder.

A small but fascinated audience attended Meet the Organ, where Lachlan Redd performed a short organ concert to much acclaim. One attendee said at the end, with some

disappointment, "I could have listened all afternoon, and wanted more!" Those who came were invited to go inside and look at the bellows and ranks of pipes, and have a go at the console.

We hope that these two events will be the first of many similar events designed to encourage energy around and generosity towards the Music Foundation Trust – so watch this space!



## ‘Back to Raymond Island’ Cherishing memories and dreaming of the future

### ■ Dr Cath Connelly

‘This is such a good day.’

‘I could stay here all night looking through these photo albums.’

‘I haven’t seen you since the 1950s!’  
‘Do you remember when ...’

‘The iconic A-frame.’ That’s what people tend to call the magnificent monolith that stands at the centre of The Abbey. It was certainly stepping into its authority as the focal point for our ‘Back to Raymond Island’ event in late April. The building was alive with chatter as 50 people gathered around the 11-metre timeline, spread across seven tables, documenting the history of A’Beckett Park / The Abbey since its inception in 1920. Photo albums were reflected upon, friendships were renewed and, most of all, memories were shared.

Captured during this memorable day were 104 years of camps, conferences and collegiality, retreats, reflection days and restorative vacations. Clem Taplin shared her life-changing experience of being a teenager at a church camp here and being invited down to the lakeside for Eucharist.

The altar was an overturned canoe; the cross was two oars lashed together. The bread was a simple slice from the kitchen. The impact of experiencing that God could be found in the ordinary elements of life remains a crucial turning point in Clem’s faith journey; a pathway that has led her to ordination and a life of ministry.

Russell and Merrill Smith from Wangaratta met here at The Abbey; Drouin couple Ian and Christine Maxfield also met here. I wonder just how many other couples began their courting with a quick kiss on the foreshore as they watched the sun set?

It was interesting to reflect on world events that walked in parallel to the mission of this place. In 1937, the Girls’ and Boys’ camps were both cancelled due to the polio epidemic (with events similarly cancelled due to COVID-19 in 2020). In 1970, at the height of unrest about the Vietnam War, A’Beckett Park held the War Conscious & National Service youth camp. As the world became more conscious of climate change, a massive program of tree-planting commenced at The Abbey.

With too many people to fit into St Barnabas’ Chapel, Illawarra became the

location for our Eucharist. Bishop Richard presided, Rev’d Jeff Berger assisted, Ven Edie Ashley preached, Dean Keren Terpstra provided harp and organ music, Ven Dennis Webster prayed the Intercessions.

A joyous celebration indeed!

What of the future? In asking those gathered about the dreams and visions they would bring to The Abbey if they were in the role of director, the room lit up with enthusiastic ideas. ‘To never be sold’ was met with great acclaim. Other dreams included:

- to be a place of refreshment for clergy and others, for renewal of those in leadership.
- Abbey-based environmental curriculum offered to local schools
- prayer focus underpinning all activities and direction, that this place is infused in prayer, marked by a shift from a ‘Park’ to an ‘Abbey’
- a resource for the homeless
- enhanced links with the local community.



We dreamed of a vision where everyone is welcome; of a community of people committed to prayer; of the Angelus ringing out across the Island each day; of establishing a productive vegetable garden to showcase sustainability; of walking ever closer with our Gunaikurnai sisters and brothers. We spoke about curry nights, poetry evenings, concerts, car rallies, festivals, carols by candlelight celebrations. We imagined a landscape with sculptures and labyrinths; of a tiny house where we offer a scholars' residency program.

We spoke of The Abbey being "a place of generous hospitality, spacious conversation and spiritual encounter", to borrow the slogan from Vaughan Park retreat centre in New Zealand.

It was acknowledged that, for these dreams to unfold, our facilities need upgrading to meet the needs of a 21st-century community. Our vision must include practical infrastructure such as a major revamp of that iconic A-frame to include bathroom facilities and acoustic soundproofing, to repair the floor and

make the windows compliant with government standards. The A-frame was built in 1965; after 59 years of good and faithful service, it is time for a major revamp.

This place has given 104 years of service to the Anglican community and beyond. Through the years we have been blessed by the original generous donation to the Gippsland Diocese of this special piece of God's earth. We celebrate the past and discover together what God has in mind for the future.



Previous Abbey Director Ven Edie Ashley sharing some of the history of The Abbey



Lunchtime provided the opportunity for the sharing of many memories



The Eucharist being celebrated in Illawarra

## Save the date



For further information, please contact Anna at the Abbey: (03) 5156 6580, [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au)

### JUNE

- 12 The Creation Windows through Literature, Art, and Music. June focus: Sabbath. Facilitators: June Treadwell, Sue Fordham and Michael Fox.
- 13 *Hush* Quiet Day: Spirituality from the Mountains. Facilitator: Dr Cath Connelly.
- 15 Open Day for Islanders. Come and explore The Abbey.
- 24–28 Retreat: In the Footsteps of Meister Eckhart (Monday – Friday). Facilitator: Rev'd John Stewart.

### JULY

- 11 *Hush* Quiet Day: Healing. Facilitator: Rev'd Heather Cahill.
- 26–28 Weekend Retreat: Singing the Blues: Psalms as Life Pilgrimage. Facilitator: Dr Merryl Blair.

### AUGUST

- 8 *Hush* Quiet Day: Spirituality from the Grasslands. Facilitator: Dr Cath Connelly.
- 16–18 Weekend Retreat: Sacred Circle Dance. Facilitator: Robyn Sussems.
- 24 Spiritual Direction Taster Day. Facilitators: Rev'd John Stewart and Dr Cath Connelly.
- 31 Annual Abbey Feast. Hosted by The Abbey in conjunction with St Peter's Paynesville.

# Championing community voices in the Latrobe Valley



Victorian Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas recently thanked the Latrobe Health Advocate Jane Anderson and her team for their dedication to improving health outcomes in the region – having been established in 2018, following the 2014 Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry to provide a trusted and independent voice for locals.

Ms Anderson's important work has involved more than 400 community conversations with 924 locals, participating in more than 1500 events and regularly communicating with around 1000 stakeholders about community concerns.

From working with the local community, experts, researchers and policymakers Ms Anderson has helped improve access to general practitioner and palliative care services, develop more accessible transport, improve community engagement in projects for the transitioning energy economy, improve mental health and address social isolation.

A localised focus to health will remain, with the Department of Health supporting the Latrobe Advocate to transfer key

functions to the Gippsland Region Public Health Unit (GRPHU) – allowing this important work to continue and better integrate with the wider public health network.

Formed in 2020 to support the localised management of COVID-19, local public health units now have a much broader remit – working with the Department of Health to keep their communities healthy as part of a decentralised model that reflects changes in the delivery of health care across Victoria.

Public health units use local knowledge, community-based relationships and direct engagement to effectively tailor and deliver public health initiatives and respond to incidents and issues.

The GRPHU also delivers programs for chronic disease prevention and health promotion activities via partnerships with local organisations in community health, women's health, local government and primary health networks.

The GRPHU will now work alongside the Gippsland Primary Health Network,

Latrobe Valley Authority and Latrobe Health Assembly to deliver community engagement and communication for the Latrobe Valley.

"Jane Anderson has been a fearless advocate for the Latrobe Valley," said the Minister. "I want to thank her for her dedication to championing the health and wellbeing needs of locals."

Latrobe Health Advocate Jane Anderson said, "I am grateful to have had the opportunity to contribute to the changes that have been occurring in the Latrobe Valley. The community voice is far more influential than in the past, service providers are working closer together, and services are being designed in response to people's experiences. There is still more to be done and I will work with the public health unit and others to ensure community engagement and systems change remains a priority."

Office of Premier of Victoria

## Anglicare Victoria's appeal to Take Hunger Off the Table

■ Ven Sue Jacka

So many individuals and families are struggling financially due to the current cost-of-living crisis. Anglicare Victoria reports an almost 300% increase in demand for emergency relief since 2019. More than half of their current clients are first-time users, never previously needing to seek charity to simply have enough to buy food or manage their bills.

These startling facts were presented to about 100 Anglicare Victoria supporters at Melbourne's Bishops Court on 9 April when the Anglicare Victoria Winter Appeal, Take Hunger Off the Table, was launched. Beth Delzoppo (Neerim South) and I represented our Gippsland Diocese. Launch speakers included Archbishop Philip Freier and Anglicare Victoria CEO Paul McDonald.

I was impressed by the efforts that Anglicare is going to as they seek to provide the necessary relief for these new clients. A mobile food pantry has been set up in Melbourne to avoid problems when clients are ill or do not have sufficient petrol to drive to a distribution point.

Given the embarrassment many of these new clients feel asking for help,

online and phone services are being established. Clients will be able to access food or fuel vouchers and be referred to additional support such as financial counselling to negotiate payment plans for large power bills or rates. Free internet access can also be arranged for those struggling to pay for it.

The high level of demand puts enormous pressure on the Anglicare Victoria budget, so Gippsland parishes are being asked to hold an event to raise money and Take Hunger Off the Table. Possibilities include food drives, a barbecue or bake sale, a community trivia night, hosting an auction and pot luck dinners.



Archbishop Philip Freier and Anglicare Victoria CEO Paul McDonald at the launch of the Anglicare Victoria Winter Appeal

Anglicare uses the motto 'Protect, Provide, Empower' as it seeks to support the most vulnerable people in our society. Could you ask your parish council if a fundraising event could be a possibility? Let's work together to not just provide food, but also empower people who are struggling to put food on their tables.



## A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP HOWELL WITT

"As I drive around Australia taking Missions I find a deepening awareness from people outside the Church that we do have something worthwhile to say; and a greater excitement from Church people to say loudly and clearly what we have to say. I think that what you are doing in Gippsland is part of this. And I very much look forward to being in it." + HOWELL, N.W. AUSTRALIA.



A very 1970s promo for the rally appeared on the back cover of TGA in May 1974 along with Bishop Howell Witt's message of encouragement

## Outreach '74 An Anglican rally

■ Jan Down

Can you imagine thousands of people pouring into Sale for an Anglican rally today?

Fifty years ago, on 7 June 1974, a steam train pulled into Sale Station carrying 970 adults and numerous children from the Latrobe Valley and West Gippsland. They were taken by bus to St Anne's school grounds, while more buses brought people from across the diocese. Some even came in private motor cars.

Estimates of attendance varied between "a rather conservative 2,500 to an exaggerated 5,000" (TGA July 1974). Either way, this was at least hundreds more than the goal of 2000 people.

The rally was the launch of Outreach '74, a diocesan program leading up to Thanksgiving Sunday, held in parishes on 7 July. Rather than being an evangelistic rally for people outside the Church, the purpose of the program seems to have been to ignite Gippsland Anglicans for outreach, while also deepening their own faith and commitment. There was a corresponding hope that this would lead to greater financial giving at a time when parish costs were increasing significantly (as noted in the President's Synod Address, TGA May 1974).

A picnic lunch in the grounds of the school was followed by a service led by the Bishop of Gippsland at the time, David Garnsey. Church choirs from Traralgon, Morwell and Moe led the singing.

A major drawcard was the speaker, the Rt Rev'd Howell Witt, then Bishop of North West Australia, a colourful character in the Australian Church and well-known to the general population for his television appearances. TGA May noted "he has a wide experience in projecting the Church's message through the modern media."

According to the TGA report, Bishop Witt outlined three areas of Christian witness: to be proclaimers, or heralds, of God's truth, justice and love; to minister to, and serve the community; and to declare the truth that God does love the world. He concluded by saying,

"This country is crying out for people to do God's Will and show forth God's victory."

We have come a long way from the days when thousands of Gippsland Anglicans would gather in one place to hear a famous preacher. Podcasts, live-streamed services and many other options seem to make such an event redundant. Yet these forms of communication can be fragmenting – geared to the individual sitting at home in front of a computer screen. And, despite greater ease of travel, we don't often meet together in large numbers.

What kind of event (whether in person or online) would capture the imagination of Gippsland Anglicans today? Is there a need for something different, that unites people in a deep yearning to share the good news of Jesus Christ?



Courtesy Traralgon and District Historical Society

TGA July 1974: The 'Spirit of Outreach' steam train arrives to carry the crowds to Sale



# HOPE25

“Imagine every Anglican Church, in every town and city, in every suburb and community, all working in the same season to proclaim hope in our uncertain world.”

## ■ Sally Woollett

This opening ‘thought invitation’ is extended by the organisers of Hope25, an evangelism initiative launched with the help of participating Anglican churches on Pentecost Sunday (19 May), when together they screened the Hope25 launch video ([www.hope25.com.au/what-is-hope25](http://www.hope25.com.au/what-is-hope25)) at services around Australia.

Easter Day in 2025 (20 April) will mark the start of Hope25, an “intentional season of sharing hope in Jesus” throughout parishes in the Anglican Church of Australia. This season of sharing, which will run to 8 June 2025 (Pentecost Sunday), will be the culmination of prayer and planning throughout the months leading up to this special time.

The General Synod Mission and Ministry Commission is leading the initiative at the request of the Standing Committee of General Synod, for which evangelism is a current strategic priority. After prayerful exploration of possibilities earlier this year, a group of workshop delegates presented a Hope25 vision to the National Bishops’ Meeting in March.

Hope25’s tagline, ‘Hope – In an Uncertain World’, is explained simply in the launch video: “Our world needs hope ... and Jesus is our hope in our uncertain world.”

Hope25 organisers are asking parishes around Australia to make a commitment to at least one form of outreach. Church communities can access Hope25 support and resources to action their ideas, which will vary with local context. A Hope25 workshop in Melbourne in February explored ways to “wisely dial up the sharing of hope in Jesus through things we are already doing” such as hosting special events using existing ministry groups.

Other suggestions are to deliver an outreach video course (see the Hope25 website), host a dinner, or run a guest service or open day. “It’s really up to each Anglican congregation to prayerfully discern something new and creative to share the hope we have in Jesus,” says Hope25.

Bishop Richard says, “I know that Gippsland Anglicans will get behind this in a contextually appropriate way, and we will learn more about ways in which we can do that locally in the weeks and months ahead.”

An excellent recent example of outreach in Gippsland is the Anglicans Ablaze conference hosted by the Rev’d Graeme and Susan Liersch in Wonthaggi in May (p. 7). Susan, who along with Warragul youth leader Jack Beamish represented the Diocese of Gippsland at the February workshop, said:

Anglicans Ablaze conferences are a great segue into the Hope25 project, giving people the opportunity to shift from mere head knowledge of the Holy Spirit to experiencing His amazing and empowering work by engaging with Him personally – and to have the courage to share Jesus with those outside of the parish family, just as the first disciples did, a central objective of Hope25. I hope that Hope25 enables parishes to pause in their business and allow the Holy Spirit to empower and amaze.

Further to its opening invitation, Hope25 encourages Anglicans to “embark on a journey of faith, reaching out to touch hearts, inspire minds, and illuminate lives with the boundless hope found in Jesus Christ. Join us as we sow seeds of hope, cultivating a brighter, more compassionate world for all.”

With National Church Life Survey data indicating an openness to Christian invitation in Australia, the climate for evangelism seems positive.

For more information on Hope25 (including a parish launch pack) or to sign up to the mailing list, visit [www.hope25.com.au](http://www.hope25.com.au), or contact the project officer: [info@hope25.com.au](mailto:info@hope25.com.au).



Hope25 workshop delegates



■ Katherine Moss, James Urquhart  
and Gary Hughes

Two scientists from the University of Kent's School of Physics and Astronomy – Dr Penny Wozniakiewicz and Dr Matthias van Ginneken – have been climbing the roofs of England's oldest cathedrals to hunt down micrometeorites.

Micrometeorites are dust-sized particles that continuously rain down on the Earth from space and are integral to understanding the contents and origins of our solar system. The particles, which are smaller than a few millimetres in diameter, largely come from comets and asteroids. They smash into the Earth's atmosphere at tens of thousands of kilometres per hour, and, while many burn up in the process, some melt and resolidify to form tiny, distinctive spheres that are scattered across the Earth's surface.

Micrometeorites are important to fully understand the inventory of matter in the solar system and its history.

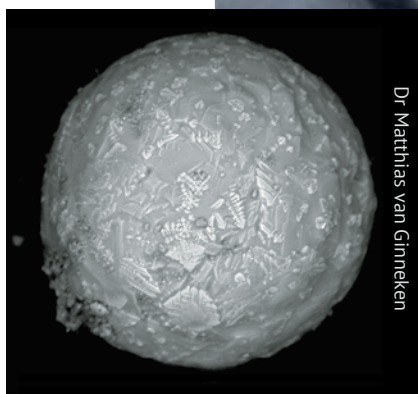
"While these particles are tiny, their importance is huge," Dr van Ginneken explained. "They are useful to get a feel for the number of particles that are arriving at the surface. That can be related back to the number arriving at the top of the atmosphere, so we can learn about the contribution of this material."

Until recently, these precious particles were found in remote environments away from common human activities that create vast amounts of dust, such as the deep ocean floor and Antarctica. However, an article published in the journal *Geology* on urban micrometeorites showed that they can also be found in environments of intense human activities, such as roofs of buildings in densely populated areas (<https://bit.ly/3WovZxN>).

UK cathedrals have become a great hunting ground for urban micrometeorites because of their size and inaccessibility. "You want the site as undisturbed as possible," said Dr Wozniakiewicz. "The dust is coming in everywhere, but the rooftops offer an opportunity to collect the dust and not have people trampling all over it."

Another advantage of cathedral roofs is that good records are kept of

## Searching for cosmic dust at England's oldest cathedrals



Scanning electron microscope image of the first micrometeorite collected from Canterbury Cathedral

Dr Matthias van Ginneken

construction work, so the ages of different sections of roof – and how long they have

been gathering dust – is well documented.

In September last year, the pair visited the UK's oldest cathedrals – Canterbury and Rochester respectively – to search for samples of cosmic dust.

"Going on the rooftops of cathedrals was awe-inspiring, combining the highest human achievements with the vastness of the universe, in the form of particles no bigger than a grain of sand," said Dr van Ginneken. "Hopefully we'll find examples of freshly arrived micrometeorites – and perhaps some of these may be completely different to the types found so far in other

Dr Penelope Wozniakiewicz identifying and retrieving micrometeorites on the roof of Canterbury Cathedral

Antarctic collections where, for example, the snow and ice have changed them over time."

"This sample of micrometeorites will form the basis of a citizen science based outreach project that is being designed to complement our planetary science research," said Dr Wozniakiewicz. "This will engage the public's interest in space science, by providing the opportunity to go beyond merely hearing about cutting edge research to taking part and contributing to it."

They hope to visit more cathedrals around the UK in their search for cosmic dust.

University of Kent

University of Kent



# 2024 National NAIDOC Week Poster winner

The National NAIDOC committee are thrilled to announce artist Deb Belyea (pronounced Bel-yaaaay) as the winner of the 2024 NAIDOC Week Poster Competition. Deb's design captivated the National NAIDOC Committee and perfectly captured the meaning of the 2024 National NAIDOC Week theme *Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud and Proud*.

Deb is a proud member of the Samuawgadhalgal, (pronounced Sum-oo-ow-guth-ull-gull) Cassowary Clan, whose bloodlines stretch to the people of the top Western Torres Strait islands of Saibai (pronounced Si-bi), Dauan (pronounced Doo-un), and the Bamaga-Saibai (pronounced Bam-uga Si-bi) community of Cape York.

Currently living on the lands of the Juru people in Bowen, North Queensland, Deb is an educator, curriculum writer and practising artist.

"We saw tremendous talent in this year's NAIDOC poster competition. We knew the theme would inspire mob and Deb's work was exceptional," explained National NAIDOC Committee Co-Chair Steven Satour.

The winning entry is titled 'Urapun Muy' (pronounced Orr-up-oon Mooy), and means 'One Fire' in the Kalaw Kawaw Ya (pronounced Kull-ow Koww-ow Yah) dialect.

"When I saw that the NAIDOC theme for this year was *Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud and Proud*, I wanted to create an art piece that reflected our First Nations cultures," said Deb.



The 2024 National NAIDOC Poster incorporating the Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag (licensed by the Torres Strait Island Council)

"'Urapun Muy' depicts the rich, multifaceted tapestry that makes up who we are as Blak, Loud and Proud mob."

The artwork shows ancestors hands placing an ember into a burning fire. This ember, and the fire, represents the sharing of cultural knowledge from one generation to the next.

"Culture is the fire that burns within all of us. It is essential to us when we talk about our people, identity, and spirituality.

"Throughout our lives, culture is taught to us by our Elders in our rich heritage languages, which have sprouted from our homelands. It shows us our roads to one another and how we belong to our Place or Country. As First Nations mob, it is our lifelong responsibility of learning, teaching and practising culture."

"Deb's artwork is extremely powerful,

it features unique cultural elements that tell the story of the Cassowary Clan passing on knowledge. The NAIDOC Committee is very proud to have a Torres Strait Islander artist as the 2024 winner," shared National NAIDOC Committee Co-Chair Dr Aunty Lynette Riley.

The National NAIDOC Poster competition is an iconic feature of National NAIDOC Week and has a rich and significant history beginning in 1967 when the National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) first began producing posters.

National NAIDOC Week Posters will be distributed across all Kmart, K hub and Target stores nationwide from early June.

National NAIDOC Secretariat (© Commonwealth of Australia 2020)



# Ridley Certificate now free for everyone

Ridley College has announced that all current and future subjects available for study through the Ridley Certificate are available at no cost for five years from 1 May 2024.

The Ridley Certificate is an online video course in Bible, theology and ministry for individuals and groups, designed to help people deepen their faith and expand their Bible knowledge.

There are six video lessons per subject. Each lesson has up to 40 minutes of video content, plus questions for further discussion or reflection, multiple choice questions, handouts and bonus resources to explore. Those who complete four core subjects and their choice of six electives

can earn the Ridley Certificate of Bible and Ministry.

Acting Principal The Rev'd Andy Judd said, "Since the launch of the Ridley Certificate in 2013, we have seen more than 15,000 enrolments from all over the world. In addition, over 150 churches have subscribed to the Ridley Certificate and used its resources to train their members. Our vision is to take this to the next level, and to see God's word impact even more people across the world.

"Thanks to the generous support of many donors, we are now able to do this – making all current and future Ridley Certificate subjects available for

free for the next five years."

"We are excited to be able to open up the Ridley Certificate to anyone looking to go deeper in their faith, grow in their understanding of God and the Bible, and get better equipped for ministry in whatever context they are in."

The Ridley Certificate is not an AQF award and is not affiliated with the Australian College of Theology. Access to subjects for study through the Ridley Certificate can be found at <https://certificate.ridley.edu.au>

Ridley College



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

We are committed to ensuring all people in contact with the Church can participate in a safe and responsible environment.

If you have been harmed by a church worker, or you know someone who has, please contact the Director of Professional Standards for a confidential discussion.

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## Please donate to support Aboriginal Ministry in Gippsland

"We...make [ministry] significant in our cultural way."  
The Revd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy



"We are learning and we are on this journey of reconciliation and healing together."

The Revd Kathy Dalton

### Your donation to Aboriginal ministry is vital.

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

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



## ■ Aziza Green

Technology touches our lives daily, if not hourly. In an ocean of hype and ominous news about innovation and its impacts, a community-centred group of technology professionals has found ways to share the gospel and empower the Church.

FaithTech is a global organisation birthed out of Waterloo, Ontario, in 2016. Over the past eight years, it has spread internationally and has finally come to Oceania under the leadership of regional manager Adrian Tam.

In 2020, as the pandemic gripped the world, FaithTech experienced unprecedented community growth as tech-minded Christians worldwide joined the community. FaithTech now sees tech professionals and tech enthusiasts forming small communities that regularly meet for fellowship, to pray, share ideas, and volunteer their time to build solutions for the Church.

As an example of how FaithTech has built technology solutions that help churches and ministry-focused organisations, volunteers built websites that attracted people searching online for ways to harm themselves. These websites would appear in harmful Google searches, and when the seekers clicked through, they found content that gave hope and shared the love of Jesus.

In another example, four volunteers at a FaithTech hackathon developed an app for Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) to measure the impact of their aid and medical work in developing nations and share these stories with their donors. The app allowed MAF pilots to record data such as the number of vaccines given, communities reached by evangelists, patients tended to by MAF doctors, flight data, hours flown, the number of landings, and the locations visited. This information is translated and shared with donors and supporters who partner with them to continue the work.

Share Bibles App project was built by FaithTech volunteers to help Youth with a Mission (YWAM) track which homes had received a Bible and which hadn't during its distribution efforts. As of June 2023, the app had tracked the distribution of 197,484 Bibles in 40 countries. The Share Bibles App also helped quantify incredible insights, such as only 5.15 per cent of households offered a Bible refused it.

"Technology is an operating system for all of society with the greatest influence on the world; we want it to



be redemptively transformed," says Tam. He adds, "we pray expectantly for revival in the tech industry and that technology would help usher in the next great revival."

Today, FaithTech is in 37 cities and 14 nations and has deployed dozens of technology products. Regional managers oversee North America, MENA (Middle East and North Africa), Asia and Oceania. Sharing his experience of stepping into a regional manager role, Tam says

The impact of technology on the world, as well as on the Church, discipleship and missions, is significant and increasing, but I also began to wonder about the inverse – the impact of the Church, and Christians, on the technology industry.



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This desire to help shape the tech industry led Tam to connect with key individuals and organisations worldwide seeking to do just that. "I came across FaithTech, and was gripped by their mission and vision," he says. FaithTech meetups happen in person and online. "These operate on a simple model of eat/learn/build," says Tam. This model fosters friendship, deep thinking about the intersection of faith and technology, and working collaboratively to build real-world solutions that positively contribute to the Church and the world.

"We talk about and think about faith, AI, tech addiction, a theology of technology and more," he shares. FaithTech practises what it calls redemptive technology design – building technology with a biblical mindset and method. "We believe that there is a uniquely Jesus-way of building technology that changes the world while also transforming those who build it," says Tam. This approach and development process is in the FaithTech Playbook (<https://bit.ly/4bl8f10>).

Prayer has a central role in this work. "It's easy to be led by research, data and

***I believe that Christians in tech will harness the gifts given to them to see God's kingdom come in powerful and tangible ways. I also see the church in our region being equipped with new tools to engage with technology in redemptive, wise and courageous ways.***

our expertise. Those things are important, but we want to invite the Spirit into everything we do," Tam says.

Each FaithTech city community has a designated 'prayer lead'. "This person's specific focus and priority is to ensure that there is a culture and rhythm of prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit infused into the community at every level," Tam says. "Without prayer and

dependence on God, we are just another well-meaning organisation seeking to do good. We want to be used by God as a vehicle through which he can bring true and lasting transformation to this influential industry."

Tam looks forward to Christians in tech connecting and sharing their stories and passions. "I believe that we will see incredible projects, platforms and initiatives being birthed that will provide concrete solutions to real-world problems," he says. "I believe that Christians in tech will harness the gifts given to them to see God's kingdom come in powerful and tangible ways. I also see the church in our region being equipped with new tools to engage with technology in redemptive, wise and courageous ways," he says.

Adrian Tam has a background in church ministry. He also works part time with City to City Australia as the Assistant Director of Church Planting. He was a panellist at the recent conference of Christian scientist network ISCAST in Melbourne.

Courtesy Eternity News

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## ■ Rev'd Daniel Lowe

Do you have the headspace and the heart space for one more article about gendered violence? Maybe you are wondering what parents and teachers can do.

The words of Peter Allen's classic song *I Still Call Australia Home* capture a universal longing for safety, connection and belonging that resonates deeply with the responsibilities of families and educators to protect our young people from being victims or perpetrators of gendered violence. But what can teachers and parents do?

At the time of writing, women's safety campaigners had reported that 26 Australian women tragically lost their lives this year to what is described as gender-based violence – an increase of 12 from the same time last year. Large rallies held around the nation in recent weeks attest to the level of community concern that exists around the issue, and that concern is well justified. These statistics represent lives lost, families shattered and communities in mourning.

As is so often the case, fingers are being pointed in all sorts of directions – at the failings of the criminal justice system, inadequate police procedures, the impact of media (particularly social media and certain types of influencers), the influence of pornography, the general failings of culture and sometimes at men in general. Some of these accusations are well founded while others tend towards hyperbole. Federal Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus called for men to “step up” as thousands of Australians took to the streets to demand an end to gendered violence. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told attendees at a rally in Canberra on 1 May that his government “must do better,” adding that violence is “a problem of our entire society” and it requires men to change their behaviour. “We need to change the culture. We need to change attitudes. We need to change the legal system. We need to change the approach by all governments, because it's not enough to support victims. We need to focus on the perpetrators and focus on prevention,” he said at the rally.

So, what role do schools and families play in all this? Certain behaviours are simply not tolerated. To quote from the Bullying and Harassment Prevention



## A universal longing for safety and belonging

Tim Mossholder

Policy from the school I work at, the school “rejects all forms of bullying and harassment. It is not acceptable for any members of the school community (students, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and visitors) to experience bullying or harassment, no matter their background, race, ethnicity, gender, physical and intellectual attributes, within the learning and social environments of the school.”

Schools are also educators in these areas. Schools are dealing with children and adolescents who are still growing and developing. These young people will make mistakes that need to be dealt with compassionately and with regard for all involved.

The policy goes on to say that “In rejecting bullying and harassment, the school is committed to the development and reinforcement of a culture of positive behaviour, respect and tolerance.”

The school's pastoral program specifically addresses these and other equally important topics as part of the education and formation of students. But here is where schools face a significant challenge. Schools can and do deliver excellent education around many social issues, but they cannot compete with the hours of exposure young people have to online ‘education’ (or ‘formation’). Families face the same dilemma. We are not playing on a level playing field.

Jordan Baker writes, “Researchers have found that it's not schools nor workplaces nor the public forum that are most influential in reinforcing or changing these views, but parents and peers – including the peers young people find online” (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 April). On the same theme, Our Watch CEO Patty Kinnersly notes, “The agitating effect of the online environment is much broader than advertised, and the way it's shaping ideas about how young men engage with women is absolutely problematic” (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 April).

An extreme example of this is Andrew Tate, “who has attracted millions of online followers drawn to his hyper-masculine and over-the-top lifestyle,” says Q+A and Radio National Breakfast host Patricia Karvelas (ABC News, 29 April). “For some young men and boys, Tate's view of the world is one to emulate. A new study of women teachers has recently found Tate's ideology is spreading in Australian classrooms in the form of sexism and sexual harassment. The messages some boys are getting in our disrupted world are dangerous, and we still haven't worked out how to combat it.” Not all young men are enticed by the Andrew Tates of the world, and in fact many of the students I speak with are openly scathing of him. But that doesn't stop them being bombarded, willingly or not, by myriad unhelpful messages every time they venture online.



One of the trickiest parts of this complex issue is the way we engage our young men in the conversation. I appreciated the perspective of reporter Jess Hill who wrote in *The Guardian* on 26 April, "We all have a role to play in ending gendered violence, but those roles and responsibilities are not equal. For example, 14-year-old boys do not have the same responsibility for ending gendered violence as, say, the owners of TikTok or Pornhub." It is encouraging to hear the Australian Government announcing new policies such as the criminalisation of deep-fake pornography, the testing of online age assurance (or age verification) technology and an ongoing review of Australia's classification scheme for film and TV. These are steps in the right direction for those who bear a responsibility at that level. At the same time, schools and families can work together to encourage conversation and critical thinking about these issues in young people; help to equip them to be part of the solution. Most importantly, we need to paint a picture for our young people of what healthy masculinity can look like. This is, I am aware, a contested space but as long as we only focus on the evils of hypermasculinity or toxic masculinity without also presenting a positive model of masculinity, we will continue to do our young men and women a disservice and, at worst, risk driving more young men towards unhelpful role-models that feed on resentment and insecurity. My 14-year-old son does not need to be told that men are the problem. He needs to see what it looks like when men are part of the solution.

I hesitate to offer a specifically Christian

***It is encouraging to hear the Australian Government announcing new policies such as the criminalisation of deep-fake pornography, the testing of online age assurance (or age verification) technology and an ongoing review of Australia's classification scheme for film and TV. These are steps in the right direction for those who bear a responsibility at that level.***

response to this issue, in part because I am acutely aware that the Christian church has its own history of gendered violence that it must address, and in part because a token Bible passage about respect for women might seem trite. I do, however, firmly believe that the Christian story can be a source of hope and has much to offer in this space. I am wary of Christian messaging about masculinity that seems to lean more on the cultural norms of a particular idealised period in history than on a careful reading of scripture, but the Bible does have some very clear things to say about how we should value each other as people. The Rev'd Tracy Lauersen, former Rector of Warragul Anglican Church and now the Anglican Church of Australia's National Program Manager for

Families and Culture, points us towards the person of Jesus as a role model for men. "The world needs more men like Jesus. Against a Roman culture that gave few rights to women and even legalised femicide, Jesus counted women as his friends and disciples, decried the double standard applied to men and women in society and condemned the men who mistreated their wives. Jesus valued women's work, talents, thoughts, prayers, testimony, witness and support. He honoured them. The world needs more men like Jesus. When we likewise value women in our society and churches, treating them equally, violence will become part of our history rather than of our future" (<https://bit.ly/44FrIbt>).

Calls for action on increased funding for services that assist vulnerable women; changes to legislation to better protect women at risk; improved policing practices and legal processes in response to victims of domestic violence – these are all important. Stronger measures to limit and counter the impact of pornography, toxic online influencers, alcohol and gambling are all critical for long-term change. But what is most important for schools and families are the everyday conversations and interactions that we have with our young people that condemn violence, demeaning language and controlling behaviours and instead model for them a way of relating to each other that values and honours all people equally, regardless of gender.

Rev'd Daniel Lowe is Senior Chaplain at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School.

## Gendered violence close to home

■ Sally Woollett

Kate Graham, CEO of Gippsland Women's Health, spoke to ABC Gippsland Radio Morning Show in May about family violence rates in Gippsland (<https://bit.ly/3QHqPTx>).

Speaking to Mim Hook, she said that "in our own backyard, we [in Gippsland] have some of the highest levels of family and gendered violence in the state."

Out of 79 local government areas in Victoria, East Gippsland, Wellington and Latrobe are in the top four for instances of family violence reported. It's a "crisis hiding in plain sight," Graham said. In terms of financial burden, she said \$300 million dollars was spent last year in Gippsland alone to cover responses to family violence.

The numbers show men hold the vast majority of leadership positions in Gippsland, and it is mostly women who hold the position of primary carer in households, which means men have more opportunities for power than women.

Graham sees a need for men to speak out when they witness abusive behaviours and to demonstrate behaviours that are positive. She also wants government to commit funding to primary prevention activities.

Some local councils in Gippsland are working to address these issues, offering bystander training to staff, as well as developing and enacting workplace policies to encourage women into the workforce.

A key issue, Graham said, is to "engage people who use violence and to support them in order to change their behaviours."

If you or someone you know needs help:

1800 Respect  
1800 737 732

The Orange Door  
Inner Gippsland (Morwell and Warragul)  
1800 319 354

The Orange Door  
Outer Gippsland (Bairnsdale and Sale)  
1800 512 358

# Killing for Country – A Family Story

By David Marr

Black Inc Books, 2023

## ■ Rev'd Canon David Head

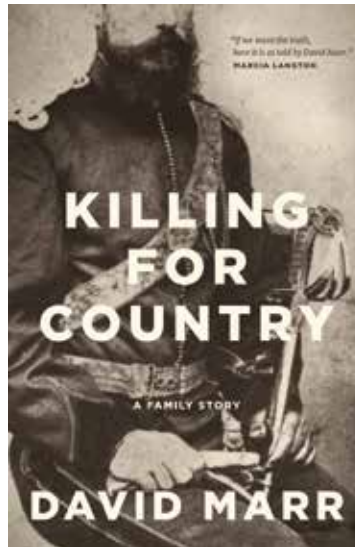
*Killing for Country* details the massacres and land dispossession from European settlement through the 1800s to the early 1900s, and maps many areas of NSW, Queensland, the NT and WA where the massacres were particularly violent and extensive. This tragic story was especially true under the aegis of the Native Police Forces and their violent white commanders.

I found this book a very disturbing, confronting and well-written narrative of an important part of our nation's history.

David Marr is one of the great historians and authors in Australia today. This book is extremely well researched and is full of references from early newspapers and government documents, and from local diaries and journals, and some other often obscure sources including First Nations accounts where available.

Marr found out by chance that he was distantly related to the Uhr brothers, two men who were heavily and violently involved in many of the massacres by the squatters in NSW, Queensland and the NT, and the preferred white commanders in the Native Police Forces right across Australia, including WA.

As Marr researched his early family links, this initial memoir of his family background became a much bigger and more extensive



exercise in uncovering the awful history of genocide, dispossession, brutality and kidnapping of First Nations Peoples across Australia. The title of the book says it all. The Uhr brothers, many early settlers and squatters just took, often violently, the lands they wanted.

All types of people were complicit in enabling this rush for country and the consequent colonial profiteering, and the dispossession of First Nations Peoples. Sadly, this includes the inaction of some church dignitaries like the first Anglican Bishop of Australia, William Grant Broughton, who comes in for particular criticism, as does the infamously brutal Rev'd Samuel Marsden, an early Anglican chaplain.

There were of course some wonderful and outspoken people that decried the massacres and violence, particularly some of the editors of the early newspapers, and some missionary and religious people like feisty and outspoken Presbyterian minister the Rev'd James Dunmore Lang. But these people were often laughed at and shouted down, and even physically victimised for their moral and ethical positions.

At the end of his book Marr writes, "We can be proud of our families for things done generations ago. But we can also be ashamed ... So many were slaughtered. Kidnapping never ceased. Every acre was taken. None of the huge wealth earned ... ever flowed back to its original owners. Laws counted for nothing. No treaties were made. And when the fighting was over, we set about forgetting about how Australia was won."

Reading this important and compelling book, you will learn more about the sad history concerning so many of the early founders of European Australian society, so often deeply involved in the suffering and senseless massacres of the original occupants and owners of this land.

For mental health support, contact:

13YARN (13 9276),

Lifeline (13 11 14, [lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat](http://lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat))

or beyondblue (1300 22 4636,

[beyondblue.org.au/getsupport](http://beyondblue.org.au/getsupport)).



## ■ Jan Misiurka

This year, Gippsland Mothers' Union members decided to provide a forum where people could unite in voice, sowing seeds that will grow more voices and spread the message everywhere about ending gendered and domestic violence in their many forms.

By supporting marriage and family life, especially through times of adversity, Mothers' Union members worldwide tackle the most urgent needs challenging relationships and communities.

**For this year's June Join-In, we invite victim-survivors of abuse and violence and those affected in any way to join us at St Aidan's, in Torres Street Newborough, on Wednesday 12 June.** We will provide refreshments for travellers from 10.30 am, with the day commencing at 11.00 am. Lunch is BYO, although soup and other light nourishment will be provided throughout the day.

Children are welcome and some children's activities will be available.

During the day there will be a time of reflection, healing and hope, a time of sharing and listening and hands-on activities. It is something that we hope to carry through to the 16 Days of Activism later this year, as we join our voices in support and solidarity to highlight why this violence, mostly towards women and children worldwide, must cease.

A donation of \$5 would be appreciated and will go towards the Mothers' Union and St Barnabas Family Retreat. Each September, families in need of a break spend a few days at The Abbey, Raymond Island.

For further information, contact Jan Misiurka: 0475 067 145.



## WORDSEARCH: Western Region parishes and centres

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03 5134 4937

##### Traralgon

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03 5174 2258

## Safe Church awareness and refresher workshops

Bookings for all workshops are essential.  
Visit [gippslandanglicans.org.au](http://gippslandanglicans.org.au) for details.

<b>26 July</b>	St Paul's Anglican Cathedral, Sale
<b>13 September</b>	St Paul's Anglican Church, Korumburra
<b>15 November</b>	Christ Church Anglican Church, Drouin

## Mothers' Union: June Join-In

**Wednesday 12 June, St Aidan's Newborough, from 11 am**  
Meet with us to unite in voice, sowing more seeds that will grow more voices and spread the message everywhere about ending violence against women and girls.

## Bunyip midwinter celebration

At the turning of the year ... a midwinter celebration.

**11 am, Sunday 23 June, St Thomas' Bunyip.**

A gathering round the fire with the Eucharist to be followed by a Leunig-inspired celebration of the Teapot. We shall reflect on the sacramental work of the humble teapot as it builds community. There'll be lunch and all are welcome.

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# Prayer for Domestic and Family Violence survivors

Loving God, creator and sustainer of all.

You bring light into darkness, and darkness cannot overcome the light of your love. During this month of raising awareness of domestic violence we ask that the light of your love will reveal that which is so often hidden – the suffering of many of your daughters who are subjected to abuse, control, emotional and psychological injury, physical and sexual violence at the hands of someone they have loved or trusted. Pour out your love into the hearts of those who continue to suffer: remind them that you are the God who sees, and you know every detail of their experiences; remind them that you are their strength and refuge, they are not to blame; remind them that you are their Shepherd, and you long to tenderly care for them and restore their dignity and joy.

For those who have further suffered when your word has been used against them to dominate and destroy, or when those who should have offered care and hope within the church community have only added to guilt and shame – we ask that you would hold them until they can trust you again.

For those who continue on their journey of recovery, remind them daily of their strength to survive, and when they grow weary, be their strength and their fortress, a resting place in times of struggle.

Lord you are the one who works righteousness and justice for the oppressed, you stretch out your hand against our foes, with your right hand you save: we ask for deep repentance from those who have chosen abuse and violence in their relationships.

We ask that we as your church would deeply repent of words and actions that have not condemned abuse, but simply turned a blind eye. We ask for a deeper understanding and willingness to challenge our beliefs and attitudes that allow abuse to flourish.

We ask that we might live up to our call to be light in the world, standing with you for justice. We ask that our churches would be places where women and men live and serve together in true dignity, equality and respect; where each one's giftings are acknowledged and given space to flourish as your Spirit leads.

Lord we long for that day when there will be no more tears or crying or pain, when your glory will cover the earth, and our hope peace will be completed in you. Come Lord Jesus, come.  
Amen.

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Written by Lynda Dunstan (Family and Domestic Violence Advisor for Anglicare Sydney)  
for Domestic Violence Prevention Month, May 2024

Courtesy Common Grace

Omni Amin

**The Gippsland  
Anglican**

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Layout by Devine Design  
Printed by Intellimail

ISSN: 2653-6102 (Print)  
eISSN: 2653-6110 (Online)

*The Gippsland Anglican* is the official  
magazine of and is published by  
The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland,  
58 Marley St, Sale, Victoria, 3850.  
[gippslandanglicans.org.au](http://gippslandanglicans.org.au)

Member of Australasian  
Religious Press Association



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