

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

DIOCESE OF GIPPSLAND



40th SYNOD

SECOND SESSION

19-21 May 2023

WARRAGUL

The Synod Book

SECTION 3

Diocesan Organisations – Reports

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SECTION THREE
ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF GIPPSLAND
SECOND SESSION OF FORTIETH SYNOD
2023

WARRAGUL, VIC

DIOCESAN ORGANISATION

REPORTS TO SYNOD

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ACTinG (Acting on Climate Together in Gippsland)

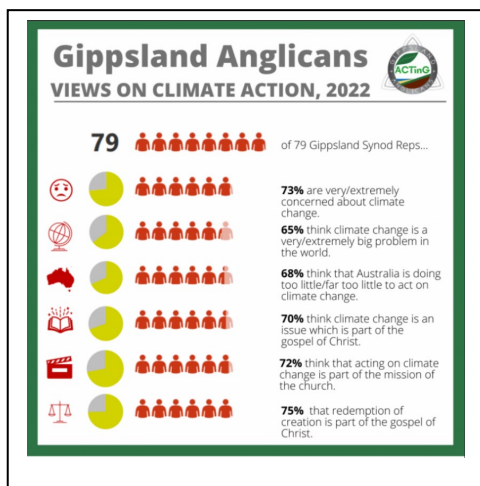


Gippsland Anglicans are working to care for God’s creation.

The ACTinG working group promotes action and awareness of environmental action on climate change amongst its members.

The ACTinG working group commenced meeting in March 2022 and has worked to promote resources and events to raise awareness of the risk of climate change and to encourage Gippsland Anglicans to act to mitigate these risks as a Christian response to caring for God’s creation.

ACTinG initially presented the Climate Change video and brought a motion to the 2022 Synod Session. This video has now been viewed over 170 times for the Diocesan Youtube Channel: www.youtube.com/@AnglicanDioceseofGippsland/featured From this over 80 climate champions signed on to receive communications and material from the ACTinG group. The support of the 2022 Synod members was very encouraging, with the majority of Synod members indicating the following views on climate action:



General Synod member, Registrar and ACTinG member, Richard Connelly addressed the 18th General Synod invoking all Anglicans to take action on Climate Change.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 a number of webinars and events have been promoted to resource Gippsland Anglicans on their understanding of these complex issues and to be encouraged in any actions taken. These successful webinars have been

enjoyed by many people in Gippsland and in other areas. They have so far covered the topics of:

1. *Moving Forward with Climate Action in the Diocese of Gippsland*

2. *Rainforests in East Gippsland, and*
3. *Sustainable Food Production and Climate Change.*

These webinars have been well supported and the support of Gippsland Anglicans to consider and take up these actions has been encouraging.

ACTinG has sought to connect with other Gippsland agencies and organisations already active in these areas, understanding that many Gippsland Anglicans will be connecting in service to these organisations. This has included the

- *Baw Baw Sustainability Network*
- *Gippsland Climate Change Network*
- *Sustainability Victoria*
- *Common Grace*
- *The Communion Forest*
- *Towards Zero – Uniting Church of Australia.*

Further work of the ACTinG group for 2023 and beyond will aim to:

- *Develop and promote the use of AEG Inc tax deductibility for environmental initiatives in parishes across Gippsland*
- *Liaise with State and Federal Governments around the ability for 'group-buying / eligibility' of emission reduction and environmental grants (such as the installation of solar photo-voltaic systems and heater upgrade programs.*
- *Continue to host webinars and information sessions to promote the awareness of, and to encourage action on the risk of climate change.*

The ACTinG working group will also aim to broaden the participation in and membership of the ACTinG- group more broadly across the Diocese.

The Diocesan website www.gippslandanglicans.org.au remains the key location to find resources on a range of topics regarding Climate Change.

ANGLICARE VICTORIA REPORT TO THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF GIPPSLAND 2023 FROM VICKI LEVEY, REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Introduction

The past 12 months has been busy for Anglicare Victoria, and it was my first full year working as the Regional Director. We saw the transition of Parish Partnership to the Community Services team under Michelle Taranto and Rich Lanham stepping into Parish Partnership Co-ordinator role and Cathrine Muston moving into Get Out for Good. I am loving the regional Director role and I am so fortunate to have a fantastic leadership team and staffing group!

My report will highlight some of our achievements over the last 12 months but does in no way represent the work that our staff are doing with clients daily. As we emerge from the pandemic we are starting to see and experience the impacts on vulnerable children, youth, and families. I have been incredibly impressed and proud of how the AV staff have adapted their work to ensure they are able to work with the most vulnerable clients in our community.

Christmas Hampers

The Gippsland Region provided Christmas Hampers in December 2022 for 488 families and over 1028 toys for children. A big effort by all Administration and Program Staff. For a second year the Latrobe Valley Express partnered with Anglicare providing much needed gifts for the local community which provided for 60 families and 124 children across 15 towns in Gippsland. Due to COVID restrictions easing Anglicare was able to reintroduce Christmas Hampers again to the Community, these hampers are largely filled from community donations. A big thank you to the Parishes and the Community for their generous donations.

New Programs

Anglicare Victoria in Gippsland have been successful in obtaining several new programs. In partnership with Gippsland Lakes Complete Health we are delivering the Early Help Family Services program. The purpose of the Early Help program is to provide inclusive early help to families in Outer Gippsland. It is designed to connect with families in community and universal settings; schools, early learning, community facilities and other places where families work and play. Early Help Family workers are there to provide help to families to support the wellbeing and development of their children, to reduce the need for intensive family and statutory services. The Navigator program commenced in January 2023 and focuses on 14–17-year-old young people disengaged with school. The Families Building Connections (AVITH) program in partnership with QSS for Inner and Outer Gippsland is an integrated response for adolescents who use family violence in the home and their families. Anglicare Gippsland was also successful in a Foster Care 12-month pilot program through DFFH to transport young people to placements afterhours. We are also delivering another pilot

program Focus on Fathers which is an intervention program working with fathers who perpetrate violence against their families.

Power Saving Bonus and Energy Assistance Program

A team of 15 staff has been set up for the Power Saving Bonus and Energy Assistance program, along with a Financial Wellness worker. The Power Saving Bonus is a one-off \$250 payment for Victorian Households to help ease the cost of living. Anglicare Victoria is working with the Government to ensure all eligible Victorians can claim the \$250 Power Saving Bonus. This Energy Assistance program provides billing literacy and operates as a call centre. This is a great opportunity for the community to get relief on their energy bills. The program at this stage is expected to run for around 18 months. Appointment bookings can be accessed via 1800 531741

Public Land Management Guidebook

Gippsland Community Legal Service (GCLS) in conjunction with Monash University's Climate Justice Clinic developed the Public Land Management Guidebook, which was finalised in February, with the launch of the Guidebook on 1 March 2023. The Guidebook emerged out of GCLS' experiences in the provision of disaster recovery legal services following the Black Summer Bushfires and seeks to provide a practical resource for the community legal sector that enables other services to manage the extremely complex labyrinth of public land management in Victoria.

https://www.monash.edu/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/3209997/Guidebook-to-Public-Land-Management-In-Victoria.pdf

Reconciliation Action Plan

There has been a lot of work around finalising the Innovate RAP 2023-2025. Anglicare's vision for reconciliation is to develop their programs, services, and organisation so that they are safe, appropriate, effective, and grounded in a deep respect for culture. Once the Innovate RAP is finalised a launch will occur both centrally and in the regions.

New Office Outer Gippsland

The Bairnsdale office is moving to a more central location in McLeod St, closer to the CBD and Railway station. Currently refurbishment and fitting out is occurring. Looking to open in June and further communication will be provided for the launch closer to the date.

Parish Partnerships Community Development Officer – Rich Lanham

As I write this report, I am 10 months into my role as Community Development Officer, Parish Partnerships. COVID pandemic conditions had a significant effect of parish life particularly parish attendance and consequently available people to develop and run programs. The resilience and adaptability of clergy and parish members is commendable. The recovery from the pandemic restrictions has been a great challenge, however I believe parishes are now seeing the return of

members as well as new faces. As a result, and due to the building enthusiasm and parish capacity, we are seeing the revitalisation of broader parish outreach and community engagement.

To date I have been to 23 of the 30 parishes, met with 18 clergy in their parishes and 20 Opp shops. I have also attended Sunday services in 5 parishes to present Anglicare and the CDO role. These visits, some multiple times, have been wonderful opportunities to hear and share stories of opportunity, hope and future.

There were two grant recipients for the October round, these centred around providing meals and food for school and University students. So far for the next round we have four pending applications. These range from infrastructure for growing ministries to new activities that centre around providing community meals or community spaces. I have tried hard to both encourage the uptake of grants for parish projects while at the same time not wanting to push too hard as we transition back into a more regular parish life.

As a way of becoming more integrated and connected to diocesan and parish future development, I have had the privilege of being asked to participate in three of the diocesan and parish committees. Diocesan staff, The Abbey chapter, Boyd House restoration and the Indigenous Ministry reference group. Participation in these forums provides me with both insight and opportunity to partner more effectively with the diocese. Additionally, I have had the privileged of co-chairing the Reconciliation action plan committee for Anglicare Gippsland.

On Friday 31st of March we began a young adults activity program. This concept emerged from community concern and desire to provide connection points and social activities for young adults who experience social isolation. Ten young people attended and expressed their enjoyment of the evening. These activities will be monthly. In Rosedale Lyndon has been working closely with the local primary school and the neighbourhood house. As a result, we are working on two projects, a program for young parents and a community youth group. I hope to see these activities begin later in term two. I have met with the leadership of Gippsland grammar on several occasions to discuss how I can add value to the life of the school. We are currently in discussions about developing a leadership program and supporting service-learning initiatives.

It is very encouraging to me to see determination and commitment to the lives and wellbeing of people continually from the parishes. As parish numbers continue to grow more is possible. I believe the opportunities will continue to increase and the benefits of the parish partnership's role will increase also. I look forward to the journey we are on, and I am grateful to be part of the life of your ministries.

MOTHERS UNION REPORT TO SYNOD 2023

A personal highlight for me during the last twelve months was being able to attend the Anglican Mothers Union, Australia Conference at Holy Cross Centre, Templestowe in early November. 2022 was the last year of office for our President, Reverend Anne Kennedy. This means that in 2024 our conference will probably be in Queensland where our newly appointed president Robin Ray, an ex-gippslander resides.

Conference is always a place of renewing friendships, meeting new people, finding others with similar joys and problems and being encouraged by those who are filled with enthusiasm. I was encouraged as I discovered that Gippsland is not the only Diocese with aging members and dropping memberships. It felt good to be among those who understood and experienced similar frustrations.

At the same time it is encouraging to learn of activities being pursued by groups with larger numbers. The work of Mothers Union is still relevant. We pray, we facilitate, assist, encourage and sometimes stand in difficult places.

As in most conferences we spent a lot of time in meetings, listening to reports from around this vast country. There were discussions, ideas, games, food, all the usual activities. One of our activities, a game where we were encouraged to use whatever we had to operate an activity run by Mothers Union. We were given a selection of cards illustrated with pictures. Such things as baskets, free use of a minibus, packets of biscuits, a piano. The strange objects and odd combinations caused some hilarity as we came up with innovative activities.

However it caused us to think differently. So often we can become stuck with only focusing on what we don't have. This simple fun activity began to enable us to see everything as a possibility or opportunity.

We were also very fortunate to have Bishop Matt Brain from Bendigo with us. Using his book God is Enough to launch our study each day. Thought provoking, uncompromising, he challenged us and left us (perhaps I should in fairness say me) with hope and a further deepening sense that God is indeed enough.

One very important ministry that Gippsland Mothers Union facilitates is the Family Camp at The Abbey. You may remember that after the bush fires at the beginning of 2020 the Diocese was given a grant by AMUA and another camp was organised. This though is our Annual Camp paid for by donations from members of Mothers Union and Jan Misiurka and I were able to pay a visit last year. We arrived late afternoon and joined two families and Reverend Thelma Langshaw for the evening meal. Tales of fishing, walks and a general feeling of relaxation. A couple playing table tennis. The meal was served, was delicious, hot and tasty.

The Rev Edie Ashley asked me for my impressions – was it what I had expected? I discovered as I answered that I was actually quite envious of the couple of families who were here. A holiday in a beautiful place, freedom to come and go, safety for the children, food provided (as mum not having to think about where the food was coming from or what the food was). No program – no requirement to be anywhere or to see anybody at a certain time. Wonderful!
Perhaps what we all need.....

Mothers Union is privileged to facilitate this holiday. I would suggest that there is nothing like it anywhere else. Every other organisation would insist on sessions, planned activities, programs. Respite means none of those things, those are the very things we want to escape from. I do hope that this relationship with the Abbey and Mothers Union can continue, that we can see ongoing respite for families across the diocese, even if it is only for a few.

We were able to hold all our annual meetings over the year. June Join In, where Reverend Anne Kennedy was our speaker.

Mary Sumner day in August where we were small in number and yet we had great enjoyment as we took part in a Beetle Drive during the afternoon, raising money for our Family Camp.

More recently we celebrated Lady Day where again numbers were small. It was a enjoyable day with a service in the Cathedral where the Bishop presided ably assisted by Rev. Sue Newcombe, who preached for us. As a perpetual member of the Diaconate she was also presented with an Australian Prayer Book gifted by Mothers Union. Sue was also received into membership of Mothers Union. She is fortunate that although the Parish of Trafalgar does not have a branch of Mothers Union her parish priest, Reverend Dean Spalding also became a member last year. I have some great expectations of these, two of our newest members.

I commend to you the ongoing work of Mothers Union and my report.

Maryann Ashton



Clifton Waters

RETIREMENT VILLAGE

Bairnsdale | East Gippsland | Victoria | Australia



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF GIPPSLAND

REPORT FOR SYNOD – May 2023

The Vision

To provide affordable retirement living in the Gippsland region to the Active Aged, including pensioners, veterans, and war widows.

To promote the benevolent relief of the Aged in need, including those suffering from poverty, financial hardship or marginalisation or whose needs are otherwise significant enough to arouse community compassion.

Background

Opened on 3 December 1955, Clifton Waters Village (CWV) is one of the oldest providers of independent living accommodation for retirees in Victoria. It was made possible by the generosity of Miss A.A. Martin upon the sale of her property “Mizpah” and gifted to the Parish of Bairnsdale for the establishment of Clifton Waters Village with the mission to provide ‘A Village of Cottage Homes for The Active Aged’

The Anglican Trusts Corporation of the Diocese of Gippsland now manages two Diocesan Retirement Villages, Clifton Waters Village, Wy Yung and Botterill Court, Morwell.

Mission Outcomes

Affordability

According to the November 2022 SGS Economics & Planning Report into rental affordability showed that single pensioners seeking rental accommodation at current rates face extreme – severe unaffordability in that 30-60% of pension income is required to meet rental costs. Pensioner couples face rental rates that are between acceptable to unaffordable in regional areas (20-38% pension income).

Recent analysis of the rent vs pension affordability within CWV and Botterill Court shows that over 60% of our properties fall into the affordable range. Our retirement villages continue to provide affordable accommodation to our residents in a current economic situation of decreasing affordability.

These figures only consider pension payments and will be more affordable if residents have any supplementary income from superannuation, investments, or annuities, and those that were able to make an ingoing contribution to offset their regular outgoing.

Resident Statistics

OCCUPANCY STATISTICS - 14 April 2023

- *All habitable units at CWV and Botterrill Court are currently occupied. There are 4 units at CWV currently undergoing refurbishment work following vacated properties. There remains 1 unit which will not be fit for refurbishment.*

CWV completed a new build project in 2022, with residents moving in just prior to Christmas. Further possibility to extend these projects may arise with three vacant blocks and one unit to be replaced.

There continues to be wait lists of applicants at both villages.

Use of the Guest Suites continues to be well patronised, with family members using the suites to visits relatives residing at CWV.

Staffing

At the end of 2022, Village Manager Sue Paterson and her husband Stephen resumed their travels around Australia, a lifestyle that was disrupted by Covid19.

Rochelle Rodwell, Community and Wellbeing Officer, resigned to establish a small business upon completion of massage therapy qualifications.

These farewells were sad for all of us, as their contribution to the Village life and operations was greatly appreciated. We wish them well for their future endeavours and travels.

Operational Change

Upon the departure of Sue Paterson, the Diocese proceeded to develop a partnership with a not-for-profit provider of aged care and retirement village services, Ashleigh House, to provide Village management services to CWV.

The review that led to the development of this partnership identified several factors:

- CWV remained as one of the last villages in Australia to have a resident Manager
- The significant operational demands on Registry staff prevented other Diocesan work from being progressed, notwithstanding the positive impact of returning management of the villages to the Registry.
- The operation requirements for retirement villages will continue to become more complex following anticipated recommendations for the Aged Care Royal Commission.

Prior to Christmas, Ashleigh House, was engaged to provide village management services on behalf of the Diocese. This includes providing the staffing as well as meeting all the operational aspects for the Village. Through reporting processes developed between Ashleigh House and the Diocese, regular updates regarding the operations and requests for capital works are being provided.

This arrangement has now been in place for three months and the reporting processes are still being developed. Implementation of the Service Agreement continues, notwithstanding some emerging challenges including the transfer of data between the organisations and some staffing issues.

It is anticipated that the engagement of Ashleigh House will provide additional benefits to residents beyond that which the Diocese can provide, which includes the ability to provide Aged Care Services and nurse-on-call capacity.

Finances

The financial operation of the Villages continues to provide surplus funds, which are able to be re-invested into capital improvements and refurbishment of units.

Over the past 12 months, (and as occupancy continues to be maintained at high levels), income has increased by 11.4%, whilst expenditure has been able to be contained to only a 2.2% increase.

The financial statements as at the end of September 2022 report the following:

	2021/22	2021/20
Income	\$902,369	\$810,105
Expenditure	\$685,783	\$139,279

Despite these positive results, the operation of the Villages continues to represent a significant financial risk to the Diocese, with the current liability owed to residents remaining at the historically stable level of \$4.4M, whilst only \$907,000 is currently held on trust to meet this liability.

There continue to be emerging risks identified, including power supply, drainage / sewerage services and roadworks which will require significant investment, beyond meeting the operational costs of the Villages.

Recent Activities

Continuing from last year's work we are progressively improving the look and feel of the Village for the benefit of all the residents.

- *Carpet has been replaced in the Billiard and rear rooms of the CWV community hall.*
- *The decking and shade sail areas next to the Community Hall have been completed.*
- *Several units have had major renovations to bring them back up to comfortable living standard upon becoming vacant. These Units quickly become occupied once completed.*

Photos

CWV Village Map and Aerial View



Eastern paddock



Entry to the Village



Refurbishment: Billard Room flooring and the back of the Community Hall...

Before and after



Not to mention the Doctors Room and Waiting Room areas too



New Deck and shade cloth... A very busy place for Friday's Happy Hour.



4 Martins – the newest house on the block

Demolition time...



Arrive on the back of a truck time... Some assembly required...



Some major works and more needed...



NEWTON COLLEGE POPONDETTA

Report from Diocesan Mission and Reference Group to the Synod of the Diocese of Gippsland

Members of Synod,

The Diocese of Gippsland has had long links with the mission of our church in Papua New Guinea. It has been my privilege to continue that link and tradition. I have been involved with Newton College at Popondetta for about six years and have been grateful that the Diocese of Gippsland has facilitated the formation of a support group to oversee expenditure, assist in promotion and be a source of advice.

The members of the group are:

The Bishop
Mr Kevin Broughton
The Revd Lloyd George
The Revd Kate Campbell
Mr Peter Wallis

All items for expenditure are referred to this group and this provides me the comfort of some real accountability. The most significant item is usually student support. No student at present receives financial support from his own diocese. While the college keeps fees at an extraordinarily low level (about AUD 1300 per year including housing), many students struggle to survive. I do not use those words as we might in Australia; students and families can find themselves without food, let alone an adequate intake of protein. They often go without necessary medications. Simple items such as a little soap or a kilo of rice are regarded as great treasures. Thank you to all the parishes and individuals who have provided support.

STUDENT NUMBERS

This year there are 21 students. We had seven ordinand students come to us for first year. They joined 14 students who are in their final year and who hope to graduate with a Diploma of Ministry in November. We now have a full complement of lecturers. Fr Luscomb Bera has returned to the college having completed a BTh. at the Catholic Institute in Port Moresby. Fr Newton Ekoda has also joined the faculty, coming from the Christian Leaders Training College at Mount Hagen.

REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION

A lot of our time this year has been taken up preparing for the college application for registration and accreditation in line with legislation passed by the PNG Government. The requirements have been based on the Australian system, so meeting them requires a significant lift. They involve everything from the physical buildings, IT accessibility, library, though to academic administration and curriculum. Unfortunately, the Covid 19 Pandemic meant that almost two years was lost in this process, and also during my Covid imposed absence, some of the systems necessary to the process were not able to be sustained.

Wonderful help has been provided by Mr Mal Irvine, from Toowoomba, who spent a month in Popondetta over February-March. Malcolm is a recently retired accountant and he put in enormous hours and demonstrated saintly patience as he sorted out the accounts, put them onto a new

software package, and established systems to ensure that authorisations and transactions can be easily tracked. Getting the finances of the college to a place where we can confidently offer them for audit has been a key part of the registration and accreditation process.

At the same time, we have engaged in conversations with the Provincial Government about the possible co-location of nursing and teaching schools on the Newton site. In April there was a meeting with the Kokoda Track Foundation to explore possibilities of funding. The push to improve education standards in PNG does translate into increased costs and it is increasingly difficult for separate small institutions to remain viable. The capacity to share common academic infrastructure – library, IT and administration – is critical to future viability. These are important discussions for both the Church and the Northern Province, which is poorly served by higher education providers.

BUILDINGS AND RENOVATIONS

Over the past five years we have been slowly renovating buildings, many of them in an absolute derelict state. We had a boost this year, with the purchase of a portable saw mill, in association with Oro Nickel. The college was originally built with timbers milled on the site and we have been selectively felling some trees to mill for building. Being able to provide much of our own structural timber and weatherboards will be a real cost saving. Currently we have a team of four carpenters on the job.

Some of the staff buildings have been renovated and currently we are working on the administration block and one of the houses. Some of the student houses have degraded to a point where they pose a genuine health risk. We have budgeted to renovate several houses over the next 12 months, but this is an area where we look to our partners for special support.

YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT IS TREASURED

As I write this report I have received the news that several members of the college community are down with malaria and one very seriously ill in hospital. In March I contracted malaria, even though I have been careful to take anti-malarials. It is a tough environment in which to work, so the support and encouragement of the Diocese of Gippsland is treasured. One student, Alfred, summed it up well. He said that in all the challenges the Newton Community faces the staff and students now know that they have brothers and sisters in "Aussie" who think about them, pray for them and support them. In Melanesian culture little can mean more than this. In any culture, little can mean much more than this. Thank you.

+Jeffrey Driver

Principal, Newton College Popondetta.

Diocesan Missioner

REPORT TO SYNOD OF THE 2022 SCHOOL YEAR

2022 was a highly successful year for St Paul's Anglican Grammar School. The recent strong enrolment growth at St Paul's continued, with a current student population of 1,720 students enrolled from Early Learning to Year 12 at our campuses in Traralgon and Warragul. The School is a major employer in Gippsland, with over 270 permanent and contracted staff.

2022 VCE Results

The 2022 Dux of St Paul's Anglican Grammar School was Xavier Haberl of Traralgon who received an ATAR of 99.5. Xavier also achieved two perfect scores of 50 for Health and Human Development and History: Revolutions.

Close behind were Mitchell Bellingham of Traralgon on 98.45, Alexandar Mirkovic of Warragul on 98.35 and Mia Edhouse of Warragul on 97.3. Other very high achievers included Dakota Sabine of Longwarry on 95.65, Noah Clark of Warragul on 95.6, Sanya Palta of Warragul on 95.3, Mia McCrohan of Neerim South on 95.3 and Charlotte Fraser of Warragul on 95.25.

The way our Class of 2022 transitioned back to a full year of onsite learning was most pleasing, approaching their final year with maturity and good humour. They applied themselves to their studies in a dedicated and enthusiastic manner and balanced this with involvement in a wide array of co-curricular pursuits.

In all, 26% of students achieved an ATAR over 90 and 69% of students achieved an ATAR over 70. The percentage of students who achieved an ATAR of over 80 was 48%, placing them in the top 20% of the state. 96% of students achieved an ATAR over 50. The fact that St Paul's does not stream students out of Year 12, or offer a VCAL stream, means that these results are truly indicative of the quality environment of learning and teaching that St Paul's offers.

The 2022 graduates have a variety of plans. While the majority have opted for immediate tertiary study in areas such as health and engineering, others have taken different paths, including apprenticeships, Australian Defence Force traineeships and various other forms of employment.

Governance

There has been a good deal of stability on the School Board, with few changes in Directorship in recent years. Darren Jennings (Board Chair), Richard Connelly (Deputy Chair) and Leanne Williams (Treasurer) have all been Directors for at least the past five years. Their contribution to, and support of, the school's recent achievements and exciting future expansion plans are sincerely appreciated.

Spiritual Life of the School

The spiritual life of the School reflects our Anglican heritage and is embedded and expressed in our everyday life. The values and principles which drive our decision-making and the practices which make up much of our everyday practice in the context of teaching all find their foundation in a Christian model.

Wisdom | Integrity | Compassion | Respect

Across all sub schools there are opportunities for staff and students to take part in weekly prayer and devotions including prayer at staff briefings and weekly devotionals, alongside regular assemblies and chapel services.

Our Chaplaincy team consists of four Chaplains, who have worked alongside other pastoral leaders across the school to provide care and support for individuals. Mrs Deana Board has continued her chaplaincy work at the Warragul Junior School. Mr Glen Treble looks after the entire Traralgon campus, and we are always appreciative of his exceptional musical abilities. The Reverends Lynton Allan and Daniel Lowe share the chaplaincy responsibilities at Warragul Secondary campus, with Reverend Daniel also spending time across all campuses throughout the year. Lynton's artwork continues to brighten up our common rooms, reflecting on life and faith through his art and storytelling.

School Leadership

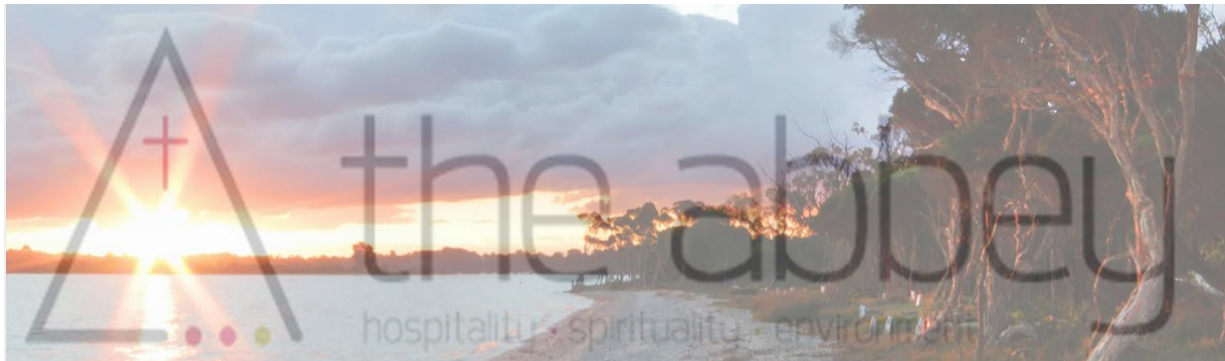
Stability has been the hallmark of St Paul's Anglican Grammar School leadership team in recent years. There was only one change last year in the composition of the School Executive team, with Leonie Clark replacing Brad McCabe as the Head of School at Traralgon Secondary School from 1 January 2022. The School Executive team is as follows.

- *Cameron Herbert (Principal)*
- *Donna Sweeney (Deputy Principal)*
- *Laura Butterworth (Head of Secondary School, Warragul Campus)*
- *Leonie Clark (Head of Secondary School, Traralgon Campus)*
- *Tracey King (Head of Junior School, Traralgon Campus)*
- *Rowan van Raay (Head of Junior School, Warragul Campus)*
- *Leah Young (Business Manager)*
- *Annie Wilson (Human Resources Manager)*
- *Daniel Lowe (Senior Chaplain)*
- *David Cope (Director of Information Services)*
- *Ashley Kershaw (Head of Development)*

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School is extremely fortunate to have such high-quality professional leaders, enabling the school to flourish during a period of significant growth since 2018, growing in student numbers from approximately 1,200 to over 1,700 during this period. With continued expansion of the Traralgon campus through to Year 12 and a new campus in Drouin opening in 2025, this growth in student population is projected to continue strongly over the coming years.

Cameron Herbert

PRINCIPAL



Report to Synod May 2023

We acknowledge the Gunaikurnai people as the original custodians of the land on which The Abbey now stands and pay our respects to Elders – past, present and emerging.

Vision

The Abbey is a Christian centre for spirituality and the environment and a place for hospitality, pilgrimage, reflection, healing, learning and recreation.

Mission

To encourage people to live into the fulness of human life by providing space with signposts and pathways towards the voice of the Spirit and the wonder of creation.

Like the green shoots emerging throughout the Australian landscape after bushfires, so to the mission of The Abbey is emerging slowly from the impacts of the 2019/20 East Gippsland bushfires, and the Covid19 pandemic of 2022/23.

Notwithstanding the stop-start nature of the Covid restrictions throughout 2022, The Abbey program sought to host a range of activities including use of The Abbey as respite for families, Dispersed Community weekends and a re-engagement with the Gippsland Grammar students.

Some school holiday periods saw The Abbey fully booked for accommodation, with many last minute cancellations occurring due to Covid snap lockdowns. This uncertainty continued throughout the year. The Raymond Island Ferry was also out-of-commission for the month of October 2022 for repairs meaning many cancellations of bookings. We are pleased to report that as 2023 progresses, accommodation bookings are beginning to return to pre-Covid levels.

The Abbey Feast

Edie and the team of volunteers worked with the Parish of Tambo in preparations for The Abbey Feast, held in September 2022. A focus on sustainable living was adopted, with the menu developed highlighting the use of locally produced food and wine. Alan Broughton from the Organic Agriculture Association (Bairnsdale) provided insight into low emissions and organic production of food. Over 72 people attended and \$3,678 was raised at the event.

One attendee commented as they left, *“it was a wonderful day. Great ambiance, good fellowship and fine food. Three cheers to Brian and the Tambo parish for lovely food!!!”*

Our thanks go to Robert Fordham for his stewardship of this key event and fundraiser for The Abbey each year.

Local Community Engagement

One key tourist attraction to Raymond Island is The Koala Walk, supported by many interest groups in Paynesville and the Island. We were pleased to see the walk extended throughout the grounds of The Abbey in 2022, including a promenade past the Chapel and down to the foreshore. This is hoped to significantly increase the exposure of The Abbey to the general public and signage has been placed with QR code capacity to provide Internet publicity. Thanks to The Koala Group (KIFI) in their support.

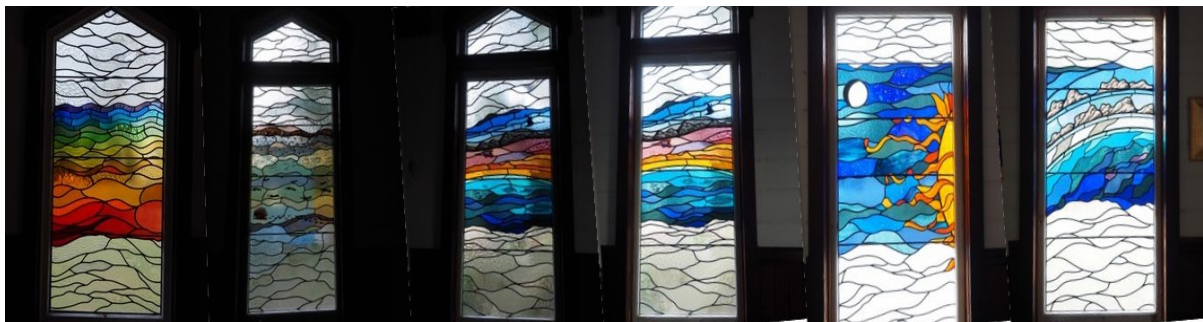
The Abbey welcomes the partnership with Anglicare and Anglican Mother's Union. Each organisations supports the Abbey in providing respite and refuge for families in need.

Gippsland Grammar

One key partner of support for The Abbey is Gippsland Grammar. Students from the Bairnsdale campus regularly attend and both campuses holding other activities for both students and staff. The students regularly participate in environmental works in planting, weed removal and science and natural history curricular. The Abbey Chapter is keen to explore a further development of this partnership.

Chapel Restoration and Stained Glass Window

A significant program of fundraising and work was conducted by The Abbey Chapter in addressing much needed painting to the outside of the Chapel, to prevent significant deterioration. Stained glass artist and designer, Bruce Hutton was engaged to design a series of Creation themed windows for the Chapel. Several designs were considered before the final commissioning was made for the making and installation of the windows. They look beautiful!



The installation of the windows and the repainting of the Chapel and Illawarra was completed just in time for the blessing of the windows and the celebration of Edie's ministry on 26 March 2023.

Grants

The following grants were received for projects at The Abbey throughout the year:

- Anglicare Parish Partnerships for family respite brokerage
- Fossick & Find Op shop – donation to Chapel restoration
- Vera Moore Foundation – generous support for the Chapel restoration
- Anglican Earthcare Gippsland

End of Year Financial Report

For over a decade The Abbey has operated with a small financial surplus each year. Thanks to JobKeeper and State Government continuity grants a surplus was maintained in 2020/21 despite the disruption arising from the pandemic but the timing of this highly valued support is reflected in a surplus for that year of \$22,755 and a deficit for 2021/22 of \$18766 and we would encourage you to see this as a single 2 year period.

We are confident that as The Abbey program and accommodation bookings resume their normal pattern that we can expect a return to surplus in the current 2022/23 year

Edie's farewell

Edie Ashley has provided faithful stewardship of The Abbey since 2012, both as Rector of Paynesville and later as Abbey Priest. Edie has embraced the vision of The Abbey and has encouraged others to find their own space in this beautiful location. She has pursued her passion for nurturing the environment and created glory of The Abbey and its use as a centre for spirituality. Edie will be fondly remembered for her passionate work in engaging with Gippsland Grammar students and the wider community groups, and for the important environmental work in mitigating against climate change through foreshore rehabilitation, native plantings and creation of wildlife zones. Over 70 people attended Edie's farwell in March 2023 and celebrated her achievements for The Abbey and blessing her as she continues in retirement. Thank you, Edie.

Cath Connelly appointed as The Abbey Director

We are pleased to share the news with Synod of the appointment of Dr Cath Connelly as Abbey Director. The ad clerum of March 2023 from Bishop Richard is attached for your information. Cath brings much enthusiasm and energy, and the Abbey Chapter welcomes Cath to the role.

Anglican Earthcare Gippsland

Anglican Earthcare Gippsland Inc was established as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Organisation to work in partnership with The Abbey, a Centre for Spirituality and the Environment, and to 'partner and network with other groups and individuals seeking to care for and live in harmony with the natural environment'.

Anglican Earthcare Gippsland Inc is listed on the Government Register of Environmental Organisations. Donations over made through AEG Inc Public Gift Fund, can be claimed as a tax deduction

For more information on Anglican Earthcare Gippsland Inc please contact Richard Connelly, Secretary AEG Inc, email: registrar@gippslandanglicans.org.au

For The Gippsland Diocesan Family and the Gippsland Grammar Family

The Abbey is pleased to be able to offer a **10% discount** to 'family members' when accommodation bookings are made directly with The Abbey Administration Officer, Anna Esdaile, admin@theabbey.org.au or by phone 03 5156 6580. Office Hours: 8.30am-3.00pm Monday to Friday.

The Abbey Chapter

The Abbey Chapter has met on a regular basis to review the work of The Abbey and to consider future needs and direction. The Abbey Chapter noted the resignation of Ann Miller, a key supporter of The Abbey, and a member of The Abbey Chapter since its inception.

Membership of The Abbey Chapter currently consists of:

Bishop Richard Treloar
Dean Keren Trepstra
Ian Maxfield
June Treadwell
Robert Fordham
Arch. Sue Jacka
Rich Lanham
Cath Connelly, Abbey Director, and
The Registrar.

Presented by The Abbey Chapter



The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland

The Rt Revd Dr Richard Treloar
Bishop of Gippsland

Ad Clerum

5 March 2022

Second Sunday in Lent

Dr Cath Connelly appointed as Abbey Director

Dear colleagues,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

The Abbey Chapter has appointed Dr Cath Connelly to succeed The Revd Edie Ashley, as leader of this diocesan mission initiative under the new title of 'Abbey Director', commencing 17 April.

Cath is well known to many Gippsland Anglicans as a retreat and pilgrimage conductor, musician, and member of Anglican Earthcare Gippsland (AEG). She introduces herself a little further here:



I am passionate about enabling people to find an ever-deepening relationship with themselves and this most extraordinary planet on which we live, all held in the oneness of the Divine.

I am privileged to be the co-director (since 2016) of the Living Well Centre for Christian Spirituality, a four-year formation program in spiritual direction. I work as a spiritual director, a retreat leader and workshop facilitator. My own spirituality arises from my Anglican tradition and Irish heritage sitting in relationship with the expansive theologies of Creation-based perspectives. We are originally blessed, and all that we are as a species, as a planet, is the outpouring of this realisation.

Each year I co-lead pilgrimages to Ireland. As a professional Celtic harpist, I also travel the globe performing and leading workshops in Celtic music and spirituality. I am most at home, however, in my garden, nurturing the vegetable patch and tending to this bit of earth of which I am currently the steward. Twice weekly I am also found volunteering at my local Emergency Relief Centre.

I bring all of this to my new role at The Abbey. I am excited to be in a position that honours its history, whilst renewing the vision of how we can unite its three-fold ministry of spirituality, hospitality and the environment. There is a sense that all the rich areas of life I have so far been involved with have brought me to this place of saying 'yes' to shaping The Abbey through these coming years. I have had the privilege of offering several retreats at The Abbey and know already the beauty of the place and the spirit of welcoming that resides there.

Cath is an Authorised Lay Minister in the Diocese of Melbourne, and hopes to be licensed as a Lay Reader in Gippsland. She is a member of both the Australian Association of Supervisors and the Australian Network for Spiritual Direction. Her academic qualifications include a Grad Dip (Theology), a Bachelor of Social Science (Pastoral Counselling), a Master of Arts (Spirituality), and a Doctor of Ministry degree. A former small business owner herself, she also has a Cert IV in Small Business Management.

Her book, *Handbook of Hope: Emerging Stories Beyond a Disintegrating World* (2020), has been described by one reviewer as 'perfect food for the soul . . . inspiring, enlightening . . . full of practical wisdom.'

Abbey Priest, Edie Ashley, is delighted: 'Cath brings understanding of the big picture . . . She is gentle and focused, welcoming, determined, and clear thinking. Go well Cath – my thanks and prayers are with you.'

As are the prayers of us all. We are fortunate indeed to have such a well-equipped and committed leader to build on Edie's legacy and to open up new ways for The Abbey to serve the diocesan and wider communities.

Grace and peace,

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Website www.gippsanglican.org.au

Committed in Christ, Connecting in Service, Creative in Spirit