

The Gippsland Anglican

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Wonthaggi students hike to higher ed



Photos: Josh Lloyd

World at their feet: Wonthaggi Secondary College students hiking in Tasmania with university mentors, teachers and Anglicare staff, including Cathrine Muston, who completed the two day, 36 km hike

Cathrine Muston, Anglicare Community Development Officer

For the first time for Gippsland, Anglicare Victoria have taken students and staff from Wonthaggi Secondary College on their "Hike for Higher Education" program to Maria Island off the east coast of Tasmania. The program aims to encourage secondary school students to discover their passions in life and build their academic journey.

The Wonthaggi students, along with students from Ararat, their teachers and Anglicare staff, spent four days alongside student mentors from both the Churchill and Ballarat campuses of Federation University. The program took the students on a journey that involved long hikes across sand and up the forbidding slopes of Bishops and Clerk twin peaks, alongside their university

mentors. The mentors took all opportunities to have a positive influence on the students through conversation and team activities highlighting that tertiary education is available to everyone, no matter what their background is.

The Hike to Higher Education program aims to improve school attendance rates, reinforcing the benefits of remaining in school and obtaining a VCE qualification.

The program began in Ararat five years ago and was developed by Anglicare Victoria's Community Develop

-ment Officer, David Law. "This is the first time we have offered the Hike to Higher Education program to schools outside the Wimmera/Grampians region and we are pleased to introduce the program into the Gippsland (Wonthaggi) area", he said.

Programs such as this are successful because of the partnership and support provided by a range of community groups and organisations. For this program, Wonthaggi Secondary College, and the Wonthaggi/Inverloch Anglican Church along

with Federation University provided assistance.

Dr Tim Harrison, Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education and Arts and Course Coordinator for the Bachelor of Social Science, said "It's wonderful that we have programs such as this where regional and rural high school students can connect with current university students".

"One of the key messages that we deliver whilst on the hike is that further study, whether that be at University or through TAFE, is accessible to everyone, and that students' educational history does not dictate their educational future", Dr Harrison said.

The effectiveness of the experience is evident from the students' enthusiasm and engagement with the program along with their feedback. One Wonthaggi student said:

"Hike to higher education really taught me not to be afraid of trying new things. I have always had an issue with putting myself out there with people I don't know, and I discovered that I just needed

to find courage. It really has changed me, and I think in the past few days I've learnt and grown so much. I truly am grateful."

Wonthaggi teacher, Kate Hill wrote: "I've read some of the testimonials the kids have written...they've really moved me. I know they are feeling more confident about themselves and their futures, and are clearer about the fact that they can reach success, despite some of the big challenges in their lives currently."

"The connections they've formed both with students and adults will be long lasting, and will hopefully remind them that there are always people out there that believe in them, and believe they can achieve whatever they set their minds to."

It is anticipated that this program will continue to gain momentum within the Wonthaggi region as Anglicare Victoria, along with our partners in the community, work together to build the aspirations of young regional Australians.



Synod at work

Photo: Karena King

Synod evenly split on euthanasia

The debate at Synod on euthanasia and assisted dying was personal and passionate, with people coming to the microphone to tell personal stories. But discussions remained deeply respectful. When it came to a vote, the Rev'd Graham Toohill's motion rejecting euthanasia was narrowly lost. However, another motion was passed asking Bishop in Council to form a working group which would give the diocese more time to consider the issues.

(See Synod report, pages 6-7)



Index

From the Bishop	2
Parish to Parish	2
150th anniversary, Bairnsdale	3
Tales from Canterbury	4
On holy ground: Creative Spirit Festival	5
Synod Report	6 – 7
Kids' Min: Lakes Entrance	8
James Oakley: Sound familiar?	8 – 9
President's Synod Address	10 – 11
Faith at Work: Margaret Hancock	12
Diocesan Calendar	12

“Here I am Lord”

The President's Address

Second Session of the 38th Synod of the Diocese of Gippsland
Bishop Kay Goldsworthy, 20 May 2017

We acknowledge the Gunai Kurnai people as the original custodians of this land; the land between the mountains and the sea. We continue to commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation and recognition. In our every step may these words, “Here I am, Lord” land softly and with respect on the land and the story of those who have gone before.

Welcome to the Second Session of the 38th Synod of the Diocese of Gippsland. As often happens, Synod this year falls during the great Easter season of the Church's year. Caught up as we are in the busyness of our everyday lives, it is too easy to leave the Easter cry, “Alleluia! Christ is Risen” behind sometime around the second Sunday of Easter.

The pattern which the Church in her wisdom has given us in the scriptures, songs and liturgical emphasis of Easter help slow this trend. We are pointed again and again toward the witness of the resurrection community and the gospel stories which tell of the experience of the risen Lord in the infant church. In the

50 days of Easter the common lectionary of readings that we are given every Sunday to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest includes stories from the book of the Acts of the Apostles and the early Church's growth into taking on the mantle of resurrection faith, as they witness to the power and presence of the risen Lord Jesus Christ among them.

It is not insignificant that we Christians were known first as followers of “The Way”. In Acts 9 Saul, on the verge of conversion, is described as breathing threats and murder against the disciples. As a Pharisee, he makes an alliance with the Sadducee high priest in Jerusalem aimed at strengthening the cause of religious purity. Damascus was a kind of checkpoint for pilgrims making their way to worship in the Temple in Jerusalem which made it a place of interest to Saul. A target for him seems to have been those he knows as “followers of the Way”.

Acts 9 goes on to tell the story of Paul's conversion. He is blinded by a light shining from heaven and a voice speaking directly to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” and which he answers, “Who are you Lord?” This is

Photo: Les Ridge



Bishop Kay Goldsworthy at Synod

the beginning of Paul's new life turned completely to Christ. It is dramatic. It is clear. It is a blinding conversion story which many of us haven't experienced and some of us have longed for.

There's another follower of the Way in Acts 9. Ananias, a disciple living in Damascus who also receives a vision from the Lord. His response is immediate and one which has been replicated by others throughout the history of God's people. He says simply, “Here I am, Lord”.

The Lord is about to ask something significant of Ananias – something which he questions at first, having heard of Saul's reputation. There is a moment of fear that comes through the text, fear with which many 21st century followers of the risen Lord Jesus can identify. All around the world our sisters and brothers in Christ face adversity,

threats and persecution. Ananias, like many today, is obedient to the voice he hears telling him to go to the very person who has declared himself an enemy of the people of the Way. His witness to those of us who deal with sneers and disinterest is a mirror before us exposing us. Yes, there is fear threaded through these verses from Acts, but there is also decision. Ananias says, “Here I am, Lord”.

Like all those who have walked the way before us, following in the footsteps of Ananias, including those who planted the church in this place, we too say, “Here I am, Lord”. Not because it seemed like a good idea to me, not because it looked like a strategic decision, but simply because You called me, simply because You need witnesses and friends to seek Your face and walk in Your way.

(continued on page 10)

The Gippsland Anglican

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Parish to Parish: praying for each other

“...That we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith...” (ROMANS 1: 12)

This diocesan prayer diary features three parishes each month. Diocesan organisations will also be included. Each parish sends in its own profile and prayer needs.

MAFFRA EASTERN REGION

St John, Maffra
St George, Boisdale
Rector: The Rev'd Janet Wallis

A highlight of Maffra Parish is the strong connections between parishioners and the genuine love they have for one another.

We are seeking to make connections into the community through *mainly music*, Messy Church and participation in community activities, like the Mardi Gras or the Christmas festival when the Combined Churches hosted free children's activities. We serve members of the community by visiting at our local aged care facilities.

Please pray that our visibility will encourage people to ask questions about the faith and learn of God's love; for our Messy Church team as we learn and develop this ministry; and for strength for ministry, willingness to serve and an ongoing strong, encouraging community of faith.

MIRBOO NORTH SOUTHERN REGION

St Mary, Mirboo North
Rector: The Rev'd Geoff Pittaway

Mirboo North is a small country town of approximately 1500-2000 people from which St Mary's draws a floating population of around 70 “members”, though not all are present each week. We have seen several new people join us in recent weeks. It is a very supportive community of faith, and has a disproportionately larger effect on the surrounding

community through school Brekky Club, Brick Club – for autistic kids and families, drop-in times, Men's Dinners, Craft Groups, funeral catering, Bible Study groups, and wider mission funding.

Please pray for our all-age Cafe Church (starting again in June), a planned Alpha in 3rd term, and our older members.

MOE / NEWBOROUGH WESTERN REGION

St Luke, Moe
St Aidan's, Newborough
(with Yallourn North, Erica and Walhalla)
Rector: The Rev'd Sathi Anthony

We would value prayers for our journey towards amalgamation of the two parishes. Moe and Newborough being only seven minutes apart, together, should have greater ministry potential. Between our congregations, we maintain both the Anglo-Catholic and middle-of-the

road/contemporary styles of worship. Small congregations do their best to maintain many of the traditional in-house ministries. New members have joined liturgical teams. Fundraising for the Cancer Council and domestic violence programs are attempts at connecting with the wider community. Pray that the “Anglican presence” will be a blessing to our wider community; that Anglicans in the community would desire to re-join our worshipping congregations; and that the old Trinity House building in the town becomes an effective space for Christian ministry!

Prayer

Gracious God, we bring before you the needs of these parishes: Maffra, Mirboo North and Moe/Newborough. May they discover new ways to serve You. Equip them to make the gospel relevant as they care for all wherever You may lead. And in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

150th anniversary for St John's, Bairnsdale

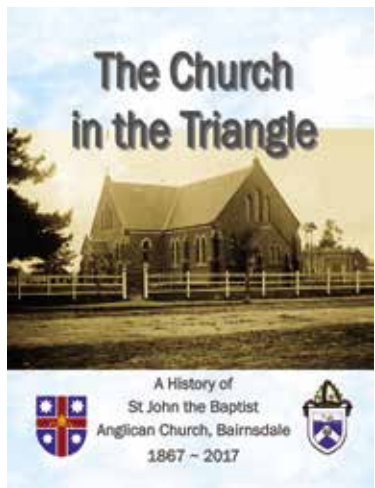


Bud McCoy and Caeleb Simmons, the oldest and youngest present at the celebratory luncheon

Ursula Plunkett

On Saturday 30th April St John's community of faith commenced the celebration of the 150th anniversary of becoming a parish in 1867.

The weekend began with a service of Evensong led by Bishop Kay and the Rev'd Tony Wicking. Rector Tony and a small choir chanted the psalm and responses with a congregation of over 100, doing well at remembering



the old tunes. The hymns filled the church with a satisfying sound.

This was followed by a dinner for parishioners and invited guests who came from far and wide: ministers who have served the church in the past and present; widows of ministers and Gwyneth Dickens whose father, J H Brown, was rector from 1936 – 1945.

Peter and Margaret Down had organised the dinner with nametags and a 150th Anniversary pen at each place setting. Tony welcomed 93 guests and the "Orchestra Royale" – consisting of four medical people, who played for us while the meal was being served. They are actually a group of six but duty does interfere with their availability to play!

Speakers were Joe Rottino, Bairnsdale's Mayor, followed by Judy Renwick who remembered when Paynesville separated from Bairnsdale in 2000 and became a parish in its own right. Bishop Kay, who was accompanied by her husband Jeri, spoke briefly and finished with a prayer. A very good three course meal was then served.

Before dessert Tim Gibson launched *The Church in the Triangle. A History of St John the Baptist Anglican Church, Bairnsdale 1867-2017*.

Tim gave an amusing and informative talk and mentioned that he was given this task by his father, Archdeacon Ted, at very short notice. Tim was under the impression that Ted was doing it! Tim is obviously an obedient and good natured

son; he started collecting and collating information from old papers, ledgers, archives and whatever was available. He burned the midnight oil on many occasions and finished the history of the church in two months. Tim thanked Linda Davies for her assistance with the book.

The donated anniversary cake (one of three) was cut by Gwyneth Dickens, for past and present parishioners and Carolyn Wylde, whose family is with us now.

Rector Tony thanked Peter Down for his excellent organisation. He then announced that the fundraising target of \$150,000, set by Parish Council, had been reached and thanked our many generous benefactors. The fund has been used for recarpeting the church, painting the outside of the church and rectory and many other jobs. Tony thanked everyone for coming and being present at the anniversary of St John's.

Bishop Kay preached at the two well-attended Sunday morning services, from Matthew 7:24-29 in which Jesus taught about houses built on sand and rock. She gave the example of her own house in Perth, built on sand 25 years ago and still standing, while Christ Church Cathedral in New Zealand was totally destroyed in an earthquake. Nothing is ever certain or stands firm except God's word. Bp Kay commented that St John's was a cornerstone in Bairnsdale and built on rock.

Food did not run out over the weekend! Breakfast was served after the early service and a substantial lunch after the family service. A second cake was cut by Bud McCoy, a long-standing member of our church, helped by Caeleb Simmons, aged eight, one of our younger members.

Memorabilia was displayed in the Emmanuel Centre throughout a wonderful weekend of celebrations, memories and thanksgiving.



Interior of St John's, Bairnsdale



Photos: Linda Davies

Gwyneth Dickens (daughter of the Rev'd JH Brown, previous rector); Rae Weston (wife of previous rector the Rev'd Arnold Weston); Shirley Pidgeon (widow of the Rev'd Dick Pidgeon – associate clergy); Bp Jeff Driver (Bishop of Goppsland 2001-2005); Archdeacon Edie Ashley (priest at Paynesville); the Rev'd John Davies (past curate); Marion White (widow of previous rector the Rev'd John White dec.); the Rev'd Graeme Winterton, previous rector; the Rev'd Tony Wicking, current rector; Canon Gordon Cooper (associate priest); Annabel Gibson; Archdeacon Ted Gibson (previous rector). Seated: Bp Kay Goldsworthy, Pam Davies, Carole Winterton and Rosemary Cooper

Philip Muston attends Rwanda consecration

Archdeacon Philip Muston, Archdeacon of the Western Region and Rector of the Warragul Anglican church, represented the Gippsland Anglican Diocese at the episcopal Consecration of the Rev'd Manasseh Gahima in Rwanda on 28 May.

Manasseh, who is well-known to the Gippsland Anglican Diocese, has been appointed as Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Gahini. The dioceses of Gippsland and Gahini have had a cooperative partnership since 2002.

Philip carried with him gifts from link parishes in Gippsland. He also presented Manasseh with a gift from the Gippsland Diocese: a silver pectoral cross, made in Sale. Philip travelled with his father-in-law, spending one week in Rwanda just after the Gippsland Synod.



Photo: June Treadwell

Gate into the Canterbury Cathedral precinct

Tales from Canterbury

7-8 July at The Abbey

June Treadwell

Come with us to Canterbury and, like Chaucer's pilgrims, sup at the Tabard Inn with assorted sweetmeats and mulled wine. Discover the history of Canterbury and its Cathedral from Saint Augustine's arrival in 597 AD to the partial destruction of the cathedral by fire in the 1174; the rebuilding of the choir and the cathedral's mixture of architectural styles.

We will explore the conflict between King Henry II and Thomas Becket leading up to Becket's assassination; its effect on English history and the controversy which persists to the present day.

As well we will look at TS Eliot's views on this in *Murder in the Cathedral*: here some play reading may occur.

Then the talented Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400) will claim our attention. A diplomat in service of the King, he travelled extensively through Europe but found time to write poetry. We will have fun looking at his unfinished Canterbury Tales.

Some time will also be spent studying the stained glass, sculpture and music of the time as well as other artworks in the Cathedral.

Presenters June Treadwell and Sue Fordham extend a warm welcome to all.

For further information and booking contact the Abbey: phone 5156 6580 email: info@theabbey.org.au

Synod 1995: privatisation not debated

Bruce Charles reflects on a missed opportunity

As we gathered at Immigration Park, Morwell, in March for the ecumenical prayer service for workers in the Latrobe Valley (see TGA May report, p1) I could not help but think of a pivotal moment in the life of the diocese in 1995.

The Synod was invited to debate the privatisation of the then State Electricity Commission through a motion that asked for an independent inquiry into the proposed sale.

I had prepared a pamphlet that reflected on the various arguments for and against privatisation as well as inviting us to address the bigger social issues of competition policy and privatisation, which had been adopted by government without real community discussion. The paper also suggested that cooperation rather than competition was a better Christian model of economic life.

The tragedy was and is that the Synod never debated the motion. With the swiftness of what smelt of political intrigue and I suspect the support of many in the diocese who saw the State Electricity Commission as slow and easy (mainly due to having a workforce big enough to handle outages for maintenance), the motion was not debated or put to Synod through a rarely used parliamentary motion called the 'Previous Question'. This motion stops all discussion, and if successful, leaves the motion it is applied to with no response from the Synod (assembly).

Consequently, not a word was uttered in discussion and debate and no motion was recorded on it.



So probably the greatest social and economic upheaval in the life of the diocese unfolded without even a whimper from our church.

Now our social dialogue centres around problems such as the rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer; the increasing price of essential services such as electricity and gas; the common interests of the society being subjected to the interests of shareholders, who are generally the richer people (in the case of Government owned utilities, everyone is a shareholder); the casualisation of the workforce and the slowest wages growth for many years that amongst other things, makes housing less and less affordable, especially for many young buyers.

Rather than saying "I told you so" and trying to score political points, a very basic conclusion can be drawn that will help us learn from this situation, which I'm sure God is unhappy with, that we should respect one another enough, even in Synod, to at least discuss each other's concerns, even if they are not very important to us, personally. As for the bigger consequence of our failure at that time, that is a discussion for another day.

The Rev'd Bruce Charles has been the rector of Newborough / Yallourn, Wonthaggi / Inverloch and Moe parishes.

Vale Pam Schmack

10.10.1947 – 12.3.2017

Pam Schmack was a member of St Paul's Cathedral Chapter, Sale, for many years. She then became a Lay Canon and Synod representative. On Easter Day (26 March) 2016 she was awarded the title of Lay Canon Emeritus in recognition of her significant service as a Lay Canon in the life of the Cathedral Parish.

Pam was usually to be found at the door welcoming people, or in the kitchen preparing, cooking and serving food. With incredibly

strong faith and courage, she fought cancer right up until her death on 12 March this year. She died peacefully surrounded by her beloved family. Her warmth and glowing spirit will be greatly missed.

Pam is survived by her loving husband, Karl-Heinz, and by her children, Robert and Judy, and stepchildren, Karen, David, Christine and Joanne and their families.

A funeral service was held at the cathedral on Friday 17 March.



Lay canons Arthur MacPherson, Pam Schmack and Christine Morris – taken after the installation of Bp Kay Goldsworthy in March 2015



The Very Rev'd Susanna Pain, Camille Monet and Margaret Hancock at the art show

On holy ground

CREATIVE SPIRIT FESTIVAL

Fay Magee

Bass / Phillip Island

A wonderful range of activities was available during the Creative Spirit Festival held in the Bass-Phillip Island Parish 5-7 May. The theme "sharing place – sharing ways" was evident from the opening of the Art Show on Friday evening by the Very Rev'd Susanna Pain to the final Vocal Nosh on Sunday evening.

The Festival is organised by representatives of St John's Uniting Church, with St Philip's and as well this year, Hope Church. The Art Show in the Parish Hall provided a wide variety of work, from oil and acrylic pieces to digital photography and sculptured wood. Camille Monet was our judge and the winning piece "Rushing Water", by Janet Taylor, captured a strong sense of

life force and movement. The Encouragement Award went to first-time exhibitor, Marina Allan, and the Peoples' Choice to Charles Watson with his painting of Kitty Miller Bay.

The Saturday program commenced with Dean Susanna leading us in walking the labyrinth at San Remo, in near perfect weather! This was followed by a communal make-your-own pizza lunch hosted by Lyn Francis. The rain on Saturday afternoon did not deter our creative weavers, led by Bev Watson and Terry Norquay. Frames were made from rough wood and inspired effort went into using the large quantity of found beach material to create four panels of "Gifts from the Shore".

The aim of the Festival is to explore spirituality and the arts, to see the overlapping insights providing ways that

deepen our understandings of faith in our daily lives. In responding to our theme there were conversations arising throughout the weekend. Susanna reminded us of the ancient sense that wherever we are, we are on "holy ground". In the Sunday sermon, she helped us consider the realities of "abundant life" and as we explored it in our coming together as three congregations in our Combined service.

A display of liturgical banners from Forest Hill Uniting Church added to the life and colour of our service. Two songs from a new collection by Rhonda Selleck-Holt were included.

After a shared lunch a small group ventured out on an informative walk around the Shearwater Estate wetlands where the highlight was Bob Baird sharing his extensive knowledge and the experience of establishing the site. This was such a concrete experience of so many themes of our weekend.

Harvest Festival celebration

**Glenda Amos
Yarram**

Harvest Festival on March 19, at Holy Trinity Yarram, was a joyous celebration and a thanksgiving for abundance in our gardens and our lives. Holy Trinity was decorated with garden produce and equipment thanks to Kristy and helpers.

We were also blessed with a pastoral visit from the Bishop of Gippsland, the Right Rev'd Kay Goldsworthy, who came for the weekend.

Friends of St John's, Port Albert, provided a musical soiree on Saturday evening with chicken and sparkling refreshments followed by the performance of a string ensemble. The audience filled the church.

On Sunday, at the 10:30am service in Yarram, Bishop Kay preached about producing a harvest not only in our gardens, but also in our lives.

An abundance of goodness is a grace and also a challenge, for if we have plenty then we have a responsibility to protect and care so that we may share that abundance. There is always something for which to be thankful, and in doing that, we were reminded to think of others as well as ourselves.

During the service, members of the congregation presented samples of our produce at the altar for blessing.

An enthusiastic congregation then shared the donations of garden produce with all those present. What a selection – apples, grapes, herbs, eggs, tomatoes, potatoes and of course zucchini were some of the produce on offer! A bring-and-share lunch then followed in the hall with delicious food provided by everyone, including a Simnel cake for Mothering Sunday.

We truly did have much for which to be thankful on this weekend.



The Rev'd Jo White and Bishop Kay Goldsworthy with some of the harvest at Yarram

SALE STARTS MESSY CHURCH

St Paul's Cathedral Sale has begun a new venture: Messy Church is now being held on the third Sunday of the month, from 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm in the hall at the Cathedral, 149 Cunninghame Street.

Messy Church is an informal church for families and people of all ages who may not find other forms of church appealing. It will include hands-on creative experiences, a celebration and

a sit-down meal together. It is an opportunity to attend a Christian church and find out more about God in a gentle, welcoming and creative environment.

Everyone can come! Bring the kids, or the grandchildren, or your neighbour and come along for some fun or simply enjoy meeting others for a chat! We'll look forward to welcoming you in the hall.



We ask adults to attend with their children under 12 years of age.

The next Messy Church will be on Sunday 18 June. If you'd like to know more, ring Susanna on 0418 637 469 or Marg on 0411 748 656.



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The Diocese is committed to ensuring all people in contact with the Church can participate in a safe and responsible environment. If you may have been harmed by a church worker, or know someone who has, please come forward.

The Director of Professional Standards, Cheryl Russell, is available, and will maintain confidentiality, on telephone 03 5633 1573, on mobile 0407 563313, or email cherylrussell1@bigpond.com



The Rev'd Graham Toohill, Leongatha



The Rev'd Geoff Pittaway, Mirboo North



Photos: Les Ridge

Rowena Armstrong, Chancellor

Synod Report 2017



Photo: Karena King

Bishop Philip Huggins, guest preacher at the Synod Eucharist

Jan Down

A fortnight before Synod met, the Bairnsdale church had just celebrated its 150th anniversary of becoming a parish.

So St John's, with its beautiful new paintwork and carpets, made a fitting and impressive setting for the Synod Eucharist on Friday 19 May, while the people of the parish provided a warm welcome on a rainy night.

Bishop Kay Goldsworthy welcomed Bishop Philip Huggins, Bishop of Oodthengong area of episcopal care in the diocese of Melbourne, as preacher at the service. Bishop Philip preached on John 15:12–17, focussing on Jesus' command, "Love one another as I have loved you". He suggested one aid to learning to love one another was the "three step waltz of life": 1. Pause. 2. Be attentive – to God and ourselves. 3. Then act.

On Saturday morning, Synod got down to business at the Bairnsdale Campus of the Gippsland Grammar

School at Wy Yung, just out of Bairnsdale. Lunch was served at the Clifton Waters Retirement Village nearby. The day was so warm and sunny, some tables were set up outside. There was the opportunity for interested people to tour the facilities, which include a Men's Shed.

The three course Synod dinner was back at St John's in Bairnsdale, with the parish also serving breakfast on the Sunday morning, so Synod members were provided for very well.

Professional Standards and other acts

Synod spent considerable time over important legislation. Acts passed included the Professional Standards Act 2017 (including 29 amendments); the Episcopal Standards Canon 2007 (Adoption) Act 2017; The Abbey Act 2017; and the Parish Administration (Amendment) Act 2017.

The Professional Standards Act was not the Provincial legislation adopted by the Dioceses of Melbourne and Bendigo, but was based on General Synod model legislation. The sense in the Gippsland diocese was that what we have now works well, with the work of the Diocesan Director of Professional Standards, Ms Cheryl Russell deeply appreciated.

Ministry to the dying

The Rev'd Graham Toohill, Assistant Deacon at Leongatha, moved a motion rejecting "euthanasia and physician assisted suicide as contrary to the will of God"; and encouraging the promotion and provision of good palliative care. This proved a controversial topic but the debate remained respectful and considerate. A show of hands was required and the motion was very narrowly lost.

The Rev'd Greg Magee put forward a successful motion to "request Bishop-in-Council to convene a working group to investigate the theological and pastoral implications of ministry to the dying, including 'assisted dying'".



Photo: Karena King

Lunch was prepared and served by residents at Clifton Waters Retirement Village

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The Rev'd David Head, Morwell

Closure of Hazelwood Power Station

The Rev'd David Head, Rector at Morwell, proposed a motion acknowledging the pain and suffering, loss of jobs, and wider effects on the community caused by the closure of the Hazelwood Power Station. The motion also included the probable closure of the Carter Holt Harvey Mill and the Heyfield Mill, with similar deep pain and trauma. The motion was easily passed.

The Rev'd Geoff Pittaway, Rector of Mirboo North, spoke in favour of the motion and also to encourage his neighbouring parishes of Morwell, Churchill/Boolarra/Yinnar and Traralgon, which are more affected by the closure of Hazelwood, to keep in touch with his parish. He said that the burden of ministry to the Latrobe Valley as it comes to grips with the closure of Hazelwood is too much for one or even two parishes to bear, and needed wider parish, diocesan and even ecumenical response.

New directions

On Saturday afternoon as well as hearing reports from diocesan organisations and schools, some time was allowed for group discussions on strategic directions for the diocese. A motion was also passed giving thanks for the opportunities



Heather Scott, Leongatha

arising from *Jesus Christ Here and Now for Gippsland 2013–2017*, expressing gratitude to the Rev'd Trevor Smith for leading consultations around the diocese in late 2016 and encouraging the diocese to participate fully in the next part of the process.

A motion was also passed in support of the Hope Restart Centre, a drug rehabilitation centre to be built in Bairnsdale, an initiative of Peter and Margaret Down.

The Rev'd Greg Magee and the Rev'd Tony Wicking were thanked for their ministry in the diocese and wished a happy, restful and blessed retirement. Both Greg and Tony commented that working in Gippsland Diocese was a pleasure as working together across differences is a feature.

Margaret Hancock, lay representative from Bass/Phillip Island, put forward the motion that Synod in 2020 be held at a suitable live-in conference centre.

While there were inquiries made about cost and location, there was strong support for the idea and the motion was passed.



Our Languages Matter
2-9 JULY 2017

NAIDOC Week Service 2 July

The Rev'd Phyllis Andy invites you to the diocesan NAIDOC service on 2 July at 2:30 pm, Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust.

Events will be held around Gippsland 2 – 9 July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Be a part of supporting the Aboriginal Ministry Fund

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Photo: Linda Davies

Riverine Street, Bairnsdale, looking towards St John's rectory with cross and memorial garden in foreground.



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Telephone Brian Norris on 03 5144 2044, or go to www.gippsanglican.org.au and search 'bequests'.

mainly music magic

Wendy Nickson
Lakes Entrance

We are in our fourth year of running the *mainly music* program at St Nicholas, Lakes Entrance. With a number of options for parents of pre-schoolers in our town, it was a slow start, but now a strong core of 22 children are associated with our sessions.

Initially, *mainly music* was held in an area at the rear of the church. In time, we replaced the solid glass dividing wall into the church with a series of glass folding doors, and replaced the old carpet, giving a clean, large and very usable space which included the Narthex. Attendances are impossible to predict but mostly in the 7 – 15 children range.



The sessions are currently led by Wendy Brady, experienced in running an *mm* group in Tasmania, with Kath Grandy as our very able Facilitator taking care of the organisation, and with regular Jeanette Marchant, and myself on projector, to make up the core team.



We find we need at least three helpers including a person to prepare the food (fruit and sandwiches) which the children have after the session. Then the toys come out and parents have a chance to chat.

It has been satisfying to see these young mothers growing



into a vibrant friendship group – they often discuss their children's development and any problems and are reassured by each other, which we see as invaluable. We have had positive feedback, with one mum saying that *mm* had turned her life around, and others travelling quite a distance

to attend. Children learn to listen to and follow instructions, get to know the routine and do activities with their mum/carer.

While these busy families have not gone on to coming to church formally, there has been ready acceptance of the couple of "God songs" in each session, and the message is gently passed on. As well, families feel comfortable, warmly welcome and safe in the building itself, and get to know the Rector, the Rev'd Barb Logan, one family choosing St Nicholas for a funeral service as a result of this.

However we do see it as mainly giving outreach and service to these little ones and their parents and, as one of those involved in running it, I can say that for all of us it is a highlight of our week!

Sound familiar?

James Oakley

"You need to apologise to your sister."

"I've already said I was sorry."

"Well, your sister didn't hear you."

Go and tell her again."

"Fine. I'M SORRY, OKAY?"

WHY WON'T YOU FORGIVE ME?!"

Sound familiar? We probably deal with some variation of this conversation multiple times each week, as our primary school-aged children negotiate the rough-and-tumble of life together.

As parents, Sally and I are trying to help our children to work through the difficulties of life in a fallen family, where we do hurt one another, and then need to work to repair and restore our relationships. We are trying to build into our children a family culture of accepting responsibility for our wrongful actions, repenting, seeking forgiveness, and working towards reconciliation.

I've noticed in myself a tendency sometimes to rush this process – I wish my kids would just get along peacefully right now! But the truth is that, even with the relatively minor

squabbles they have, they need the skills to express their hurt, and to seek and grant forgiveness and reconciliation.

I was struck by how crucial these skills are, when I was at a Safe Churches conference. A panel was reflecting on forgiveness and reconciliation after abuse or violence. One speaker commented that the way we treat forgiveness – the way we teach about it and talk about it – can have really significant implications for recovery post-abuse. Handled badly, pressure on a victim to forgive or to minimise the seriousness of what's happened can result in further trauma.

So I wanted to reflect on forgiveness and reconciliation – what they are and aren't, and how I speak with my children about them.



What forgiveness is not

Forgiveness is not minimising. "It's nothing." "It doesn't matter." "Don't worry about it."

Sometimes in our rush to get past the awkwardness of wrongdoing we want to pretend that nothing wrong has happened. But if this is true, then there is nothing to forgive. For forgiveness to be real, we need to be able to acknowledge that a wrong has been done.

Forgiveness is not forgetting. "Forgive and forget..." is well known folk wisdom, but it oversimplifies a whole lot of complex emotion. Some hurts simply cannot be forgotten (especially while they still hurt us!), and to require of an injured person that they forget what has happened is to force them into impossible psychological contortions.

Forgiveness (by itself) is not reconciliation. Especially within families, there is immense pressure to restore relationship, to reconcile

with one another, and to show trust again. However, forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation – although it might be a step on the road to reconciliation. The child hurt during a game will not readily go back to trusting her playmates in that same game.

Forgiveness does not negate justice. It is a common misconception that if one person forgives another, then there is nothing further to

happen. My own children will sometimes raise a "plea in bar of prosecution" – "we've already dealt with that, and my brother forgave me!" But nevertheless I might still need to follow through with consequences. We must be careful to acknowledge that it is possible for someone to forgive the person who wronged them, but still take the matter to the police or other proper authority.

(continued on next page)



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Sound familiar? *(continued from page 8)*

What forgiveness is

So what is forgiveness? The Bible talks about forgiveness in two main ways.

The first is as part of a pathway to reconciliation. We get an inkling of this in Matthew 18:15, where Jesus is telling his followers about restoration of relationship after one has sinned against another. The process is that rebuke can lead to repentance, which can lead to forgiveness, which can lead to reconciliation.

This is the idea of forgiveness that I often think of in my family, when I'm trying to help my children to get over a fight they've had, and to recover something of their healthy sibling relationship. I want to see them clear the air and come back to a point where they can live in love toward each other again.

The second idea of forgiveness stands independently of reconciliation. It is a more demanding call for forgiveness, because

often the wrong done is so destructive that the possibility of restored relationship is practically zero. Or alternatively, the wrongdoer is unrepentant, and will not take steps to restore relationship (as in Matthew 18:16-17).

But the call is there. In this case, forgiveness is reflected in the idea of release of the consequences of wrongdoing. Specifically, this forgiveness is a willingness to give up the right to exact retribution for wrongdoing.



It is the idea reflected in Romans 12:17-19 – “Do not repay anyone evil for evil ... Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath...” This concept of forgiveness is an exercise in trust in God's goodness and justice.

Talking with children

I'm keen for my kids to learn about and distinguish between these two ideas of forgiveness because I want them well equipped as they grow. I hope and pray that they will be able to work toward restored relationships in most areas of their life. While I hope that they are spared the trauma of serious wrongdoing, I also want them to be prepared to respond in a godly way if that happens. So our conversations often run along these lines:

- We try to help our children to articulate clearly and fairly if they've been hurt by their sibling – not over-exaggerating their hurt, recognising the difference between deliberate and accidental hurts, and recognising their own role in a fight.
 - We try to help our children to understand the hurt they've caused – not to rush to self-justification, but to feel empathy for their sibling. We also try to help them to articulate repentance – saying sorry specifically for the wrong they've done, and thinking through what restoration might look like.
 - We try to help our children to express forgiveness – recognising that this might take some time as pain passes and the memory of hurt passes. We try to get them to use language that doesn't minimise the wrongdoing: “I forgive you”, rather than “It doesn't matter”; “we're OK”, rather than “it's OK”.
 - We try to help our children to imagine what a restored relationship might look like, and specifically to be aware that, even where there has been forgiveness, there might still be some time needed before the relationship gets back onto an even keel.
- There are times too, when our conversation is to guide our kids to release their anger and desire for revenge. We try to encourage our children to forgive their unrepentant sibling, and to rely on us to bring fairness and justice into the family.
- There's no quick solution to the process of training people in forgiveness – I'm convinced it's a lifelong learning process. I pray that all our children get a head start, and grow in godliness in this area.
- James Oakley is a Children and Youth Ministry Worker in the Tasmanian Anglican diocese. This article is one of his “Parents as Pastors” columns, and was first published in The Tasmanian Anglican, October 2015.*

A graphic for the 'Seeds for Life' 2017 End of Financial Year Appeal. It features a large, stylized tree with a yellow-orange canopy and a green trunk. The trunk is shaped like a heart. Inside the heart, the text 'SEEDS FOR LIFE' is written in large, white, serif capital letters, and '2017 END OF FINANCIAL YEAR APPEAL' is written in smaller, white, sans-serif capital letters below it. The background of the heart is a textured green. To the right of the tree, there is a small silhouette of a family (a man, a woman, and two children) walking towards the tree.

The theme for this year's End of Financial Year Appeal comes from the parable of the mustard seed in Matthew 13. We are all familiar with the phrase 'from small things, big things grow', or the many variants of it.

This year we are celebrating the many ways in which the work of our partners overseas is like the mustard seed growing into something bigger than its beginnings. Over the years we have worked with Anglican and like-minded partners to provide the smallest of 'seed' investments in projects. We have continued to work with them in the belief that God's generosity will nurture these initiatives in unexpected ways.

From Gaza, to Mozambique and Solomon Islands, Anglican Overseas Aid has worked in committed partnership for many years, supporting life-changing work. Often the results of our work have blossomed in unexpected and abundant ways; ways in which we give thanks for the generosity of our God.

In turn, we are thankful for the generosity of people like you. This support really does make a difference. Your donation to our End of Financial Year Appeal will help us to continue to sow new seeds.

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A circular logo with the words 'REGISTERED CHARITY' around the perimeter and a stylized figure in the center.

The logo for Anglican Overseas Aid, featuring the words 'ANGELICAN OVERSEAS AID' in a bold, sans-serif font, with 'ANGELICORD' in smaller letters below it.

“Here I am Lord”

Bishop Kay Goldsworthy

20 May 2017

(continued from page 2)

Today is the 115th anniversary of the consecration of Arthur Wellesley Pain in St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne. This year therefore marks the 115th anniversary of the Diocese of Gippsland. In the foundation of this diocese and the ministry of its first Bishop we are each in some way part of the faithful response of those forebears who believed in God's providence and grace for the mission of the Church in Eastern Victoria as they willingly responded to God: “Here I am, Lord”.

I think of this response each time I go to St John the Evangelist in Cann River. Dedicated in 1928, St John's was a gift to the diocese from Miss Reece, one of the medical sisters appointed by Bishop Cranswick to minister throughout Gippsland. St John's is little used now apart from visitors on their way to Mallacoota or NSW who drop in to visit the small timber church. I wonder how many of them notice the photo in the porch, taken sometime in the mid 1920s, of a woman who looks as though she is in a white uniform sitting astride a horse. It is Miss Reece, one of those remarkable women who heard God's call to them and responded, “Here I am, Lord”.

Sometimes when I am there we are three for the service. A little while ago I arrived looking forward to seeing the regulars and lo and behold they had been telling people in town that there would be a service that Sunday. We were eight, one of whom was a musician. Oh, and a gecko who is usually pleased to be at worship there!

People in that part of the diocese talk about how the community has changed

over the years. The changes that take place over generations in industries like timber have meant that communities that once thrived now have much smaller populations and fewer job prospects. Almost every parish in the diocese has felt the impact of changes in dairy farming, closures and downsizing in coal mining and the timber industry. In such times, it has been absolutely clear that parishes are deeply connected in their communities with grace and practical care. Community connection is part of Anglican DNA.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the parish of St John the Baptist, Bairnsdale. The history of the diocese written in 1947 by Albert E Clark *Church of our Fathers* (pp166-167) says of Bairnsdale; “The earliest record I can find comes from the *Church Gazette* of March 1862, in which is a record of the Bishop's tour in these words: ‘The 18th and 19th were spent in reaching and visiting Bairnsdale, at which place his Lordship held an evening service, when some 50 persons were collected together...’ This does not mean that

[Most parishes have] felt the impact of changes in dairy farming, closures and downsizing in coal mining and the timber industry.

here you have a record of the first service ever held in Bairnsdale ... but one would be safe in saying that it was conducted by the Rev. E. G. Pryce, the first clergyman to visit Gippsland.”

In February 1867, a church committee was formed with representatives from Bairnsdale, Omeo, Lindenow Flats and Bruthen. In March of that year the Committee wrote to the Bishop of Melbourne with the promise of £200 and a house for the Reverend Amos Brazier who is listed as being the clergyman of the parish from 1867-1873.

150 years later people here continue to respond to human need and God's call. The dream of a residential rehabilitation centre in East Gippsland – the Hope Restart Centre – has come to life through Peter and Margaret Down. Having heard from one young woman of the devastation of her life particularly through the drug ice, and the transformation she has made in the grace and loving faith of Christ, they have begun a process which we hope will come to fruition for the well-being of young people, of families and of the whole community. “Here I am, Lord.”

2016 marked the 160th anniversary of the consecration of Christ Church Tarraville. A wonderful day of community celebrations organised by the parish of Yarram in conjunction with the local community and historical society saw people from around Victoria return to the site of the oldest wooden church building in the State to celebrate.

Congratulations to the Reverend Jo White, the churchwardens and members of the parish for the day. Churches like Christ Church are a mixed blessing. Services are no longer held there on a regular basis, there is no township anymore to speak of, and the church is a



Photos: Les Ridge

The Rev'd Geoff Pittaway, the Rev'd Greg Magee, Bp Kay Goldsworthy and the Registrar, Brian Norris, share a laugh as Greg is farewelled

bit off the beaten track. But this church is part of the narrative of the church in Gippsland and of people of faith who desired to mark the life they were making in this part of the world with a building in which they could gather to sing praise, to pray, to celebrate the sacraments of Holy Communion, of marriage, of baptism and from which their loved ones might be buried. Without doubt those who built Christ Church as well as that first committee in Bairnsdale meeting in 1867 were also saying, “Here I am, Lord”.

Jesus Christ here and now for Gippsland 2017-2020

These pioneers knew themselves as part of the bigger story of God's loving creation and salvation. We human beings need a bigger story. And to locate ourselves in that story is an unfolding of the psalmist's song of praise, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm 111:10).

The loss of a shared story is one reason why people are so isolated and uncertain about who they are and how they belong. Rabbi Lord Jonathon Sacks said recently, “We live in a world where people have a maximum of choice and a minimum of meaning”. Think about it in relation to the issues in front of the church today, or in relation to the increasing number of people whose family story is hanging by a thread. Shared story gives meaning, shared meaning.

Part of the shared story of the Diocese of Gippsland since 2013 is the Strategic Direction, or the Mission Plan: *Jesus Christ Here and Now for Gippsland*. Work began on this in 2011 before it came to Synod in 2012 for further discussion. It was then rounded out and has been widely used across the diocese since 2013.

Last year I signalled that it had almost reached its 2017 timeline and that we would take time to consider how it has been used, by whom, and how parishes have found it as a tool for planning mission. In October 2016, the Rev'd Trevor Smith facilitated consultations in each of the regions.

Since then smaller groups have been working to bring together an outline for our shared mission over the next three years. What has come through loudly and clearly from these consultations and conversations is that for Gippsland Anglicans in almost every parish the focus of ministry over these past few years has been making community connections.

Many programs run inside churches have been planned to invite people from the community into church, or provided to meet a community need. In her report to the Annual Meeting of the Co-operating Parish of Churchill, Boolarra and Yinnar, the Rev'd Brenda Burney wrote about one of these consultations: “Most parishes had worked hard at engaging with people in their communities but thought that we needed to go deeper into those relationships and provide more opportunities for people to respond in faith to Jesus Christ”.

Since October smaller groups have been working to draw that information together and bring to Synod a direction for mission over the next three years. This doesn't mean that the good things that people are doing should stop. Nor does it mean that everything outlined will be taken on by every parish. But it does point to some next steps for prayer, planning and programs.

So, we're great at community connection. But, we asked ourselves, how are those connections being developed to help us get better at telling the story, of creating spaces in which people can hear the story of God's love and find themselves within it? How is our reaching out helping people step across the threshold of the church, across the threshold of faith into the transforming love of Christ? How do we help people come to their own response to God in Christ to hear God's love calling to them and to say, “Here I am, Lord”?

The Mission Plan has three headings to play with. It has dot points just waiting to be expanded in your local context. It is permission-giving rather prescriptive. It's a page that I believe we can all get on together and then learn together.

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Our vision is “Growing in Christ into the fullness of human life and inviting others to go with us on the journey”. The headings are:

1. Faithfully growing in Christ as we...
2. Generously inviting others as we...
3. Celebrating this journey together as we...

As I said last year, our missionary call means learning afresh how and where to enter the culture we are trying to reach in the love of Jesus. However you take up these directions and shape them into your own plan my prayer and hope is that they will form part of your own response to God: “Here I am, Lord”.

The Diocese of Gahini

Next Sunday (28 May) Archdeacon Manasseh Gahima from our partner Diocese of Gahini in Rwanda will be ordained a bishop. Archdeacon Philip Muston will represent the Diocese of Gippsland and we send with him the assurance of our prayers for Manasseh and his wife Rose and their family as well as Bishop Alexis and the whole Diocese of Gahini. Phil will take with him the gift of a Pectoral Cross from his friends here in Gippsland including the Diocese, Gippsland Grammar school and St Paul's Grammar. A new day for Manasseh's response to God. “Here I am, Lord.” We will also send our greeting to Bishop Alexis in his continued leadership and ministry in the church.

A season for repentance and renewal

Harder to recognise, perhaps, is the truth that good order in the church is yet another way of saying “Here I am, Lord” with faith and integrity, and putting this reality into practice in effective and caring ways.

The Professional Standards Legislation in this Synod is not the Provincial legislation adopted by the Dioceses of Melbourne and Bendigo, as we anticipated last year. The legislation before us is, however, based on General Synod model legislation. Twelve dioceses around the country have passed legislation based on this model and after consideration we have felt this the best path for Gippsland now. No doubt General Synod in September will invite us to further consideration and

I expect that we will see amendments and advances in this area over the next few years.

Much of this has been done in the context of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Some of the most damning public hearings have involved the Anglican Church and we are all diminished by this terrible chapter in the life of the Church. The awful truth we must confess is our ability to glibly say, “Here I am, Lord” without ever bringing forth new life. On the contrary we have been “outed” as an institution capable of bringing destruction and unthinkable damage to human lives.

In April, the Commission published the analysis of complaints of child sexual abuse received by the Anglican Church dioceses in Australia. This information was collected from a survey of all 23 dioceses. 22 of the 23 dioceses reported receiving one or more complaints of child sexual abuse between 1980 and 2015. There were 1,085 complainants and 1,119 reported complaints in this time. 75% of complainants were male and 25% female.

The average time that had elapsed between the alleged abuse taking place and the date of the complaint was 29 years. These revelations have rightly shocked us and shaken the trust of Anglicans as well as the wider community in the leadership of the church. The Royal Commission has brought this shame into the full light of community scrutiny and focused on places in which people who have used their power to abuse all trust.

This is of course precisely what Royal Commissions are charged to do; to expose what has been hushed up, letting in the painful, healing light of day. Now that the Commission's work has finished and we await its report to be released later this year, the Church will be judged once more. This time by the credibility of our response. Not being seen to do the “right” thing, not as a public relations exercise, but in terms of truth. Some of the questions that travel with us into the future are about how we are to live more humbly and openly and truthfully.

How do we care for individuals without simply falling into the trap of protecting the institution? How can we look more like the Jesus of the

gospels who cared for and stood for the vulnerable, rather than those who occupy places of influence and power? How is the living Lord Christ to live among us and in us without our sin and frailty crucifying him all over again? And how do we give expression to Christ's love and mercy and justice and at the same time reject the temptation to become part of a mob seeking targets to blame.

There are no easy answers or quick fixes. Nor should there be. The stories told to the Commission by survivors has made this crystal clear. The next period for us in Gippsland means continuing to develop and adopt safe ministry screening requirements. It means requiring leaders and all who work with children to attend Safe Church and other training days regularly. It means learning and knowing what the seven child safe standards are that the Victorian government has introduced, and putting them into practice (see www.childsafestandards.org.au/the-7-standards/). It means educating and being vigilant. Getting the balance right will take time. As we navigate our way through all this we do need to tread carefully, fixing our attention not so much on the loudest voices, but on the still small voice of our crucified and living saviour who calls us to still higher standards.

Listening for and to the “still small voice” seems a monumental task in the face of all this. The curtain that has been drawn back has revealed that the church has been as good at if not better than others in ignoring and denying that such terrible things have happened. The culture of self-interest and protection of the institution has been revealed and it doesn't look like Jesus. We have heard these or similar words many times over since the Commission began its work. “It didn't happen”. “I didn't know”. “I wasn't told.” And perhaps even worse, “Well, it might have happened but it wasn't all bad. Perhaps they even liked it. It's what happened to all the boys”.

These are attitudes we have met at other times too. Most often they lurk in life's dark corners of domestic violence, of rape, of violence used against people because of colour or race or sexual identity. Attitudes like those implying that women need their husbands or partners to show them “who's boss”, or that women who wear certain kinds

of clothes were “just begging for it”, or that all Aboriginal people will end up in trouble because “they don't know any better”, or that because homosexuality is a “disgrace” they need it “knocked out of them”.

Somehow, we have allowed such attitudes to become normalised, we have turned away, and in doing so such violence is made the victim's fault.

As a bishop, I would

rather an easy time in the life of the Church in which to exercise a ministry of leadership and oversight; however we're not living back in some imagined golden era of another age. And the Holy Spirit is ripping through our lives with the force of a cyclone for repentance and renewal. *That's* our season.

Am I angry at those who have perpetrated these crimes? Yes. Am I perplexed at the failure of response by the church that nurtured my faith so well? Yes. Am I aware of some of the insidious ways in which I have been groomed to diminish harm? Yes. Am I challenged in walking a fine line between trust and suspicion? Yes. We all are. But, this is the season in which we are being called to give an account of the faith within us. Who we are. Why we believe. What the good news of Jesus is that we know and want to tell and live. The Bible shows us God's love in the human face of Jesus, and that love highlights the need for the most vulnerable to be cared for, protected, raised up. They have a special place in the heart of God's story of grace and loving welcome.

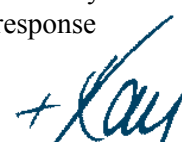
In all this we are not alone. We are in the company of each other and that unsettling, gusty and renewing Holy Spirit who blows us as we are willing to change and renew. If we are listening prayerfully, quietly for the still voice beyond and in the middle of all of these things, what does it mean for us then to say, “Here I am, Lord?”

Synod legislation enables mission

A wise member of a Diocesan legal committee once told me that the legislation Synods consider is meant to be enabling of our life, so that the mission of the Church can be lived more effectively. That is part of the reason that Synods are essential to our life. More than that Synod is a constitutional obligation for Anglicans. We don't live in isolated congregational settings but in a wider community of bishops clergy and lay people together, taking counsel, deliberating, debating, prayerfully considering how to ensure our frameworks are safe enough for the space we need to live more and more into the people Christ is shaping us into.

The parish notes for the Sundays of Easter in one parish read, “To be a risen church doesn't mean to be perfect. It means to be a church sharing the resurrection of the Lord convinced that this is the way to be fully human and fully alive. The church then, isn't just a struggling human institution. Its true identity is as part of the reality of the risen Christ. Its value depends on our living in Christ and in his resurrection and just letting ourselves float in that enormous and mysterious reality.”

May our resounding response to the Easter God be,
“Here we are, Lord.”
Alleluia! Amen!



(This is an edited version of
The President's Address.

For the full text, see gippspanglican.org.au)



Enjoying a break at Gippsland Grammar School, Bairnsdale campus

Jan Down

Margaret Hancock

Committee worker, nursery-woman, music teacher
Bass/Phillip Island



Photo: Les Ridge

Margaret Hancock

Margaret Hancock enjoys the great outdoors and a good argument, so it makes sense that she was President of the Conservation Society on Phillip Island for thirty years.

The Society battled for many years to persuade the government to buy the land to create the Nature Park on the island. Margaret explains that back in the 1960s, land developers were “making squillions”. But the conservationists finally won that battle, and the Nature Park is now celebrating its twentieth year.

“I frankly enjoy committees”, Margaret says, and she is quite the veteran committee worker. As well as the Conservation Society committee, of which she is still a member, Margaret has been Secretary of the Parish Council of St Philip’s Cowes, is a Synod Representative, is a stand-in for the parish Clergy Appointments Advisory Board, is still involved with Red Cross (having chaired a committee for some time), is a member of the local Rural Australians for Refugees and has been a member of Bishop in Council.

Her current role on the committee for the Conservation Society is dealing with planning issues and VCAT. “You get used to it”, she says; “You get to know how much of it is just theatre”. She describes Senior Counsels as ham actors: “I love all the theatrical part”. She came to understand “This person is not my enemy; they’re paid to put a different point of view”, and she saw there was no need to be afraid of them.

Margaret calls herself a “blow-in”, having only been a permanent resident on Phillip Island since 1972. “I’m not a local. You’ve got to be born here”, she says. There are still farmers on the island who are descendants of the early white settlers.

Margaret first came for a holiday in the summer of 1956/7 and loved it. So in 1960 she bought a block of land with a tiny hut, no water, power or phone; just sheep grazing in the paddocks, the peacefulness of rising and going to bed with the sun and the delights of walking on the beach at dawn.

As Phillip Island prepares for next year’s 150th anniversary of being opened up for closer white settlement, Margaret

looks back to what the island must have been like when it was part of the Aboriginal people’s annual circuit, with luxuriant native vegetation and teeming with wild-life. She points out that while there were no massacres there, the original inhabitants were dispossessed of their land, and stresses how important it is that the church recognise this.

She says “it must have been a very beautiful place” before white people came, clearing the trees for agriculture and quickly changing the ecology.

In terms of caring for God’s creation, Margaret says “We’ve effectively mucked up”. One example she mentions is the magnificent oyster beds at Rhyll which were fished out. In the early days the oysters were sent to Geelong by boat, then on to the goldfields of Ballarat and Bendigo.

Margaret sees many advantages in having been born during the Depression and growing up on the fringe of the Second World War. Children learnt how to be careful with material things because of rationing. “We learned very early in life to be good walkers – and later on, the joy and freedom of bike riding. ‘Where are you going?’ ‘We haven’t decided yet.’”

Sunday, however, was (and is) always church. Margaret grew up in the Anglican church at Ballarat, where her mother was the organist and her brother sang in the cathedral choir. Everything revolved around the

timing of the church services, and Margaret feels that this commitment is being lost today; it’s where “a lot of church people fall down – worship should be first priority on Sunday”.

So when Margaret, years later on Phillip Island, found the working bees for the Conservation Society were held on Sunday mornings, she would still go to church first. The other members of the committee – who had no religious affiliation – just accepted that she would be late.

Margaret has never been tempted to leave the church, but adds “I’ve argued with it a lot”. She remembers when services for *An Australian Prayer Book* were being trialled in Ballarat. People in the congregation were invited to meet afterwards to critique them and she thoroughly enjoyed those discussions.

Coming from the Ballarat diocese, where there had been no women on vestry, and which has only allowed women priests since 2013, Margaret was surprised – and pleased – to be invited to be Secretary of the Vestry at St Philip’s Church at Cowes. She is still very much involved in the life of the church and also has a strong awareness of the working of the diocese. “We don’t fully appreciate the good work the diocese does for us”, she comments, adding that her understanding probably comes from having grown up in a cathedral parish.

One of the joys of being a member of the St Philip’s congregation for Margaret is that there has always been

Diocesan calendar

First Saturday of each month: all welcome to walk the labyrinth at the end of Back Beach Road at San Remo, Phillip Island, from 10:30 am.

June

- 10 11:00 am Ordination to the priesthood of the Rev’d David Perryman
- 17 11:00 am – 3:00 pm The Rev’d Canon Professor Dorothy Lee at The Abbey, Raymond Island. Dorothy will speak to her new book: *The Gospels Speak: Addressing Life’s Questions*. Time for conversation, questions and learning together at The Abbey. \$40 including lunch. Bookings by Tuesday 13th please. Phone 5156 6580 or email info@theabbey.org.au
- 17 1:00 – 4:00 pm A Soiree: poetry and music from the folk tradition, St Paul’s Cathedral, Sale. Details Dean Susanna Pain: 0418 637 469
- 18 9:30 am The Rev’d Canon Professor Dorothy Lee to preach and celebrate at St Peter’s by the Lake, Paynesville
- 19–22 Clergy Conference at The Abbey, Raymond Island
- 23 1:00 – 4:00 pm The Crossing Drop-in Centre, Drouin, celebrates 25 years in service to God and community with a special afternoon tea, 134a Princes Way Drouin. Contact the Secretary: thecrossing@exemail.com.au or phone 5625 2655

July

- 2 2:30 pm NAIDOC Week service, Lake Tyers Aboriginal trust
- 7 5:00 pm Friday – 3:30 pm Saturday: Come with Chaucer’s Pilgrims to Canterbury Cathedral, then dine at the Tabard Inn Presenters: June Treadwell and Sue Fordham. History of Canterbury Cathedral, music and art. For full details: Phone 5156 6580 or email info@theabbey.org.au
- 22 9:30 am – 3:30 pm Lay Reader Training Day, St John’s Bairnsdale, Bishop Kay to lead
- 22 9:30 am – 3:30 pm Anam Cara Community Quiet Day, St Mary’s Morwell, with the Rev’d Dr Dean Spalding

August

- 11–12 5:00 pm Friday to 3.30 pm Saturday: Gippsland Diocesan Retreat at The Abbey, Raymond Island: “Winter Earth and Pomegranates”, led by the Very Rev’d Susanna Pain
- 19 12:00 noon: The Abbey Feast, with Chef Nikolai Blaskow

a congregation which has enjoyed singing and a series of priests and organists who have enjoyed introducing new communion settings and hymns. “And since Fay Magee has been with us, the joy of unaccompanied singing.”

Margaret’s earlier work has included running a nursery on Phillip Island for 20 years as well as being a specialist music

teacher in primary schools in Ballarat and Melbourne.

Currently she is writing six biographies for a book about women in conservation, a collaborative project which is part of next year’s anniversary activities. She has also lately played a role as a bag lady in Les Ridge’s annual Easter play at the church. What a varied life of service!