

The Gippsland Anglican

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Prayer service for Latrobe Valley

Jan Down

An ecumenical noon-day prayer service by the gazebo at Immigration Park, Morwell, on Tuesday, March 28 drew together about 80 people of various denominations, some of whom had travelled considerable distances to be there.

The service was held to express solidarity with, and pray for, the people of the Latrobe Valley over the closure of the Hazelwood Power Station. Prayers were also offered for the Heyfield community, concerned over the threatened closure of the Australian Sustainable Hardwood mill that provides employment for much of the town's population.

An initiative of the Anglican Bishop of Gippsland, the Rt Rev'd Kay Goldsworthy, the service was prepared and organised by the Rev'd David Head, Rector of St Mary's Anglican Church in Morwell.

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Gippsland, the Most Rev'd Pat O'Regan, and Bishop Kay were joined by local ministers of other denominations in leading the service.

The Rev'd David Perryman, Bishop's Chaplain and Curate-in-Charge of the Anglican parish of Avon, read from Proverbs chapter 8, which speaks of God's Wisdom in creation.

The two bishops offered brief reflections. Bishop Pat acknowledged the grief associated with the Hazelwood closure, while also speaking of Easter resilience. He described the current situation as an "in-between space", as new technologies begin to take over, and also in another sense, for all people on their Christian journey, who "always look to the one who is ahead".

He saw a certain fitness in the service being held in Immigration Park, drawing attention to the nearby statue of an immigrant arriving.

He pointed out that the man is striding forward, looking ahead, but also carrying his luggage from the past. Bp Pat concluded with a poem "Starting Over" by Anna McKenzie.

Bishop Kay said that the big issue for this community is power, and that many people are feeling powerless and uncertain about the future. She observed that there is an understanding of the need for "new ways to power the community", but also that people will be hurt in the process of change. Bp Kay then put forward the Christian understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit: "That power is strong, gentle, loving and wise", she said, adding that she prays the Spirit will help the community in finding its way forward.

Father Francis Otobo, Catholic priest at Traralgon, offered prayers for the families of those who had lost their jobs. The Rev'd David Head gave thanks to God for all the years that Hazelwood has powered Victoria and provided employment. He prayed for the shutdown, clean-up and rehabilitation of the power station and mine, and for new initiatives, businesses and industries for the region; for new health for the Valley and wisdom for decision-makers, asking God to "teach all of us how to care for the earth and its creatures, and how to protect the health and well-being of future generations".

Pastor Peter Harvey, Baptist minister at the



Photos: Jan Down

Bishop Kay Goldsworthy and Bishop Pat O'Regan before the Morwell prayer service



In solidarity: holding hands for the blessing

Christian Community Church, Morwell, spoke briefly about a young man at his church whose life had been turned around when he was offered a job at the Heyfield timber mill. Pastor Peter then prayed for the community of Heyfield.

One of several Anglican clergy attending the service was the Rev'd Brenda Burney, from Churchill/Boolarra/Yinnar. Her parish has been affected by the closure of Hazelwood, as some of her parishioners

have children who have lost their jobs.

Her own husband, Rod, was made redundant two and a half years ago when the Morwell power station was closed. A close friend of Brenda's, who was working in administration at Hazelwood has now also lost her job, but has found part-time work at another power station.

The following Sunday, 2 April, Brenda also held a special service at Churchill.

(See page 3).

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Mission in place

The Abbey on Raymond Island is a favourite place for many Gippsland Anglicans. Some people remember going there on camp as young people, others with gatherings of adults at Cursillo or on a parish retreat or Parish Council planning weekend.

These days people who make the ferry ride across the water look forward to participating in some part of The Abbey program, a retreat, a seminar, to volunteer in the environmental program, to take a break, or to have a holiday.

I have recently been at The Abbey with a group of bishops, all women, from around Australia and New Zealand.

There are seven of us at present and this trans-Tasman gathering was a first.

I was a little nervous about how all this might unfold, the content and the place. Having been part of affirming the mission of The Abbey as a place of hospitality, environment, mission and spirituality I was eager to see how these things would be experienced by a group from outside the diocese. A group who doesn't know or "get" what The Abbey means in our local context. A group who were travelling not only the four hours from Melbourne to get there, but from as far away as Christchurch and Waikato in New Zealand,

and in Australia from Perth, Brisbane and Grafton as well as Melbourne.

I am the kind of person who wants others to experience a welcoming hospitality that means they can unfold, settle into a space and all that God is offering within a conference, a gathering, a retreat. It rained. Well actually for the first time in a few weeks it bucketed down. It was chilly. There was a short power outage.

And the sun shone, the banksias and red gums were flowering, the chapel provided a quiet and hospitable place for praying together, kangaroos simply ignored us and koalas offered an opportunity to reflect on how to look at ease while out on a limb. Abbey Priest, Edie Ashley spoke about

the theology of place and biblical scholar Dorothy Lee opened the scriptures for us to understand more deeply how encounters with Jesus resulted in women becoming missionaries and apostles.

This was a time when a vision and mission often spoken of in the abstract around a meeting room was

a living breathing thing. It was blessed and so were those who gathered with each other over these few days.

Synod meets this year in Bairnsdale from 19-21 May and will consider, among other matters, the next steps or phase of the Diocesan Strategic Direction. The current mission plan "Jesus Christ – here and Now for Gippsland" has served the Diocese well since 2013. The dreams, hopes, prayerful consideration, planning and action undertaken in Parish Council meetings, at mission plan meetings and in other ways have been lived out and borne fruit in every parish across the diocese.

It is clear that being at mission has been lived out in so many places by finding new ways to connect with members of local communities, to learn more and more about the inclusive welcome of Jesus, and to become clearer about the ways in which we can pray, speak and act in the love of Christ.

I pray that our words about mission will continue to be translated into action on the ground, in the places and spaces in which you live and among the people of your community for the love and in the power of the Risen Christ.

All grace to you,

+Kay



Bishop Kay Goldsworthy, Gippsland; Bishop Victoria Matthews, Christchurch; Bishop Alison Taylor, Brisbane; Bishop Genieve Blackwell, Melbourne; Canon Professor Dorothy Lee; Bishop Sarah McNeil, Grafton; Bishop Kate Wilmot, Perth; Bishop Helen-Anne Hartley, Waikato

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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 year TGA introduces a diocesan prayer diary, with three parishes featured each month. Diocesan organisations will also be included. Each parish sends in its own profile and prayer needs.

KORUMBURRA SOUTHERN REGION

St Paul, Korumburra
All Saints, Poowong
Locum: The Rev'd Amy Turner

We are a large parish with increasing residential development, presenting us with both challenges and opportunities. Inclusiveness is important to us and we work together to achieve positive outcomes. Presently without a Rector we are open to exploring new ways in which to be church and to present the challenge of faith in Christ within a post-modern environment. We have a core of faithful people but small, aging congregations, lacking children. A significant

challenge is the need to attract the millennium age group.

The church is valued within the local community and we practise an open-door policy, aware that people enter the church for quiet reflection.

Both centres enjoy good, well maintained buildings. Our op shop functions well, with a dedicated team of volunteers.

LAKES ENTRANCE AND METUNG EASTERN REGION

St Nicholas, Lakes Entrance
St John, Metung
Rector: The Rev'd Canon Barbara Logan

Lakes Entrance is by tradition a fishing and seaside town and Metung a lakeside village, and both centres not only care for their resident communities but also for the visitors who join us each week. Worship needs to be accessible to all and the welcome warm.

Our outreach and connection

into both communities comes in many forms – including men's breakfasts, *mainly music*, the opportunity shop, SecondBite, day care, fellowship group, Bible studies, school mentoring, aged care services and meals on wheels. Please pray for these ministries, for those who come to us in answer to the "still small voice", for the older members of our congregations, and future ministry and mission.

LEONGATHA SOUTHERN REGION

St Peter, Leongatha
St David, Meeniyan
St Andrew, Dumbalk
St Andrew (Union Church)
Tarwin Lower
Rector: Archdeacon Graham Knott

Leongatha is an active parish with diverse daily ministries. The usual Sunday attendance in the main centre is around 110 adults plus 35 aged under 16.

We would value prayer for our youth ministry which is growing and has a large and enthusiastic leadership team. Children's ministry continues on Sundays and through Pray and Play and *mainly music* during the week. Our members are encouraged to belong to small groups which meet for fellowship, support and prayer during the week. We currently have fourteen groups and would like to see more. We have been developing a Pastoral Team recently and would ask for prayer for the nine on team. We need to see the numbers involved grow and for each to develop to their full potential.

Prayer

Gracious God, we bring before you the needs of these parishes: Korumburra, Lakes Entrance / Metung and Leongatha. 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.



Photo: Ken Highton

The construction of Hazelwood power station

Churchill remembers and mourns Hazelwood

Ruth Place

The Rev'd Brenda Burney held a service at the Cooperating Churches in Churchill to acknowledge the closing of Hazelwood Power Station; to appreciate the part it has paid in our lives personally and as part of the community infrastructure and capacity of our area, for production of electricity, the provision of jobs, training and sponsorship of many organisations.

It was also a time to recognise the grief, hardship, anxiety and uncertainty surrounding this closure; a time to pray for positive outcomes for the future; to stand with each other, to support, encourage, and help in whatever way we can.

There was a recognition that the town of Churchill has been home to many of the power station workers and that the power station was one reason to build Churchill.

On the altar Brenda had a display of briquettes, hard hat, overalls and work boots.

Her opening remarks began: "Life is full of twists and turns and sometimes we fall upon hard times. No matter what the circumstance we can rest in the fact that God is always faithful. He will hold us in the hollow of His hand and when we ask, He will help us through the hard times". She read from Jeremiah 29:11, "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope".

The service included singing of many meaningful hymns, two Bible readings (Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 and Philippians 4:6-8), and a time of sharing what Hazelwood meant to those present, which evoked many memories. There was an opportunity to light a candle for the things that concern us, and things we wanted to give thanks for.

Brenda chose the readings to acknowledge that there are many different facets of life – the good times and the hard

times – but also to acknowledge that these things shape who we are.

The readings reminded us, too, that God is there with us through these changes and that what God ultimately wants for us is to be happy.

The last two verses of the Ecclesiastes reading say: "I know the best thing we can do is to always enjoy life, because God's gift to us is the happiness we get from our food and drink and from the work we do."

Brenda spoke about the way happiness is hard to find when you are worried about how to put food and drink on the table, pay off your house and clothe your family. But God puts hope in our hearts for the future – hope that one day things will change for the better – to how it is meant to be.

In the meantime, she said, we need to stand by each other, support each other and pray for each other. Joy can still be found when we do this.

A time of prayer was led by Ian Combridge.

Chaplains assist after Thorpdale fire

Sue Jacka

When the Thorpdale Pub went up in flames in the early hours of Tuesday April 4, the town lost so much. The publican, Johnny Bantock, tragically died in the fire, numerous people lost their jobs and the town lost a gathering place which for many local people was a second home.

It is in situations like this that the VCCEM (Victorian Council of Churches Emergency Ministries) is well equipped to bring a ministry of listening and presence. The night of the fire a very large gathering of local people at the footy rooms saw four VCCEM volunteers – the Rev'd Geoff Pittaway and Denise Martin from Mirboo North, the Rev'd Chris Duxbury, my Trafalgar Uniting Church colleague, and me.

The local people were mostly very pleased to talk with us in small groups or individually. Our distinctive vests and tee-shirts made our role quite clear. In the following days we were invited to a meeting to plan for support and to hear the fate of the historic Art Deco pub. This co-ordinated approach includes locals, Baw Baw shire workers and members of the Red Cross,



The Rev'd Geoff Pittaway, VCCEM coordinator for South Gippsland

including Sheryl Hastings who incidentally is from Warragul parish.

VCCEM volunteers have attended the exceptionally large funeral and burial, and are available to listen to those in distress. We are working with Red Cross in this ministry. I personally have been called upon by several people since this terrible event, as I am sure others have too. It is a real privilege to walk alongside others in their time of need.

If you are interested in training as a VCCEM volunteer, contact the Rev'd Geoff Pittaway from Mirboo North parish on 5668 1346.

The Rev'd Sue Jacka is Rector at Trafalgar.



**Be a part of supporting the
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The AMF exists to resource employment of Aboriginal people in ministry; training of Aboriginal people for ministry; development of Aboriginal ministry in the community; the planting of Aboriginal churches; education of the Diocese about Aboriginal issues.

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The Rev'd Thelma Langshaw (left) and Beryl Brien (right) were awarded Life Memberships of Gippsland Mothers' Union at St Paul's Cathedral on Lady Day in March. Centre: Jenny MacRobb, MU Diocesan President

Mothers Union celebrates Lady Day

Friday 24 March was MU's celebration of Lady Day, at Sale. With MU Gippsland's theme for 2017 being "Faith in Action" the obedience and faith of Mary is a wonderful example to us.

Our speaker in the afternoon was Peter Down who explained his reason and plans for the Hope Restart drug rehabilitation centre at Bairnsdale. It was good to hear how Peter is putting his faith into action in our community.

Two new Life Memberships of Gippsland MU were awarded on the day to Beryl Brien and MU Chaplain, the Rev'd Thelma Langshaw.

Beryl joined her mother at meetings and was enrolled

into Mothers' Union in Norlane, in 1961. Beryl lived in the Bendigo Diocese before coming to Gippsland and becoming very involved at Branch, then Diocesan and State levels of MU. She has held a number of positions over the years, currently being the Minute Secretary and back-up support person for the Diocese. We thank you Beryl for your years of faithful service and for portraying the MU vision of "Sharing Christ's love by encouraging, strengthening, and supporting marriage and family life" so capably.

Thelma Langshaw equally deserved her recognition for the amazing role she has played as our Chaplain. She has always liaised with the

Dean and Bishop to arrange the Lady Day celebration and she and Lauren and Kaycie (with their dog) host our short break for families in need of some time away, held each year at The Abbey.

Moe and Newborough MU groups to combine

Over February and March the Moe and Newborough MU groups met and shared fellowship. At the March meeting members discussed our futures and the suggestion of combining our groups. This was agreed to by all those present with a feeling of excitement and anticipation. As with all areas of our joining together there will need to be adjustments made along the way.

The perils of war

A Darwin evacuation 75 years ago

Allan Huggins

Ray Elliot, as a schoolboy of 14, was evacuated from Darwin just before that city was bombed in 1942. With only a suitcase each, Ray and his mother flew with other evacuees on a "round Australia" trip in a Lockheed Lodestar, to resettle with his grandparents in Brisbane.

Ray's father was left behind in Darwin, where he was in charge of maintenance at the RAAF airport in Darwin. The house where the family had been living was later bombed.

Ray said "It was a terrible flight". Flying at low altitude, all the passengers suffered from air sickness, due to turbulence. They landed first at Katherine, then Alice Springs for refreshments, but at this stage all passengers had lost their appetite!

Oodnadatta (unbearably hot in January) was the first planned overnight stop, but a burst tyre on landing forced the travellers to sleep two nights, the extra night on the lawn outside the local pub.

The "refugee" passengers arrived next in Adelaide where Ray and his mother boarded the overnight train to Melbourne. After 24 hours in Melbourne they travelled on another overnight train to Sydney.

The final part of the round-Australia journey was a further train ride to Brisbane, where Ray's mother and Ray were met by her parents, with whom they lived for the next few years. Ray's mother found



Archdeacon Ray Elliot

work in a department store to support herself and Ray until her untimely death from a heart attack at 43, with Ray only in Year 11. This necessitated Ray's leaving school and working to support himself.

The Ray Elliot known to Gippsland Anglicans came to Ridley College in Melbourne for his theological education, and as a candidate for the Gippsland diocese.

Ray met and fell in love with Joyce when they met in Spotswood parish, where Ray was gaining ministry experience. However, the marriage had to be delayed, as in that era the timing of a clergy marriage was subject to the decision of the Bishop of the diocese.

Archdeacon Ray Elliot will celebrate his 90th birthday in November. He ministered in many Gippsland parishes, is a former Archdeacon of the Southern Region and was Dean of the Cathedral at Sale from 1974-1977.

Archdeacon Allan Huggins is a former Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, Sale and was Diocesan Archdeacon in the Canberra/Goulburn diocese in the 1990s.



A LASTING GIFT: A bequest to the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland or your parish

The Church, over the years, has been blessed with the generosity of Anglicans and others in support of its mission. One way you can support this ideal in a relatively easy way, is to make a gift through your will. In the first instance, of course, you will consider carefully the needs of your immediate family and friends before proceeding with a bequest to the church.

We offer a way of helping you to carry out your wishes. Your gift, through your bequest, will be very much appreciated. You may wish to support the Diocese of Gippsland as a whole, or your own parish, or for a particular purpose.

Making your bequest in your Will is a simple procedure, although in preparing or amending your Will you should always consult a solicitor. The Registrar of the Diocese of Gippsland has information to assist you in making a bequest, including the form of words you and your solicitor might want to use.

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

GFS Adult Friends



GFS Adult Friends gathered at Rosedale: members from Sale, Traralgon, Moe, and Stratford; Carol Johnstone, GFS Gippsland Chairperson,



Writer and cast, L-R: Les Ridge, Margaret Hancock, Minifie – Canine Lucretia Bianca Boniface “Lucky” and the Rev’d Ian Turnidge

The Right Wrong

An Easter play, written and produced by Les Ridge

Reviewed by
Trudy-Marie Sharman
Bass/Phillip Island

The Easter Play at Cowes Anglican Parish Hall has become, for me, part of an annual reflective “pilgrimage” preparation for Easter Week.

Successfully performed in the “Readers Theatre” genre (dramatised play reading) this year’s intimate presentation was preceded by the usual meal, with the audience set around tables. This created an enjoyable cosy ambience for the theatre restaurant-like setting.

This year’s theatrical event, written and produced by Bass local playwright, Les Ridge, is in its 8th year. Titled *The Right Wrong* Les’s play has again creatively challenged our Lenten contemplations with his unique ability and wry wit in tackling some serious theological and life issues, enabling the audience to consider some hard-hitting topics.

Our perceptions of others were challenged as Richard, the Gardener, declared “Sometimes we fail to see others as they see themselves”. Themes considered include resentment, bitterness, and unforgiveness in relationships; the “blame game”; guilt; money; the Nazi/Jewish issue; rules, consequences, choices, free will; and how these issues impact on a person’s life.

The Right Wrong action is set at a park bench in a public park where the plot involves lunch time conversations between two strangers – Alice the Bag Lady, with her sole companion pet canine Lucretia Bianca Boniface – Lucky and the Park Gardener – Richard or Dick.

Margaret Hancock, as Alice the Bag Lady, brilliantly captured the acerbic, bitter, isolated, alcoholic character of Alice. The script provides a multi-layered character with such a mixture of unexpected revelations as her personal story is gradually divulged.

This role demanded a flexible, strong, in-depth portrayal and Margaret believably combined the contradictions of the appearance of a street vagabond bag lady with an unexpectedly cultured, educated vocal delivery and vocabulary which caused Richard’s response: “You don’t sound like a bag lady!”

Margaret intrigued the audience as Alice’s story of pathos was gradually revealed – also, despite the bag lady’s irascible personality, Margaret’s interpretation of the character endeared the audience to ‘Alice’.

The Rev’d Ian Turnidge (Pastor at Cowes, St. John’s Uniting Church) excelled in the role of Park Gardener – Richard – “Dick”). A born actor, Ian’s fine acting skills and well modulated vocal delivery confidently presented

the character of Richard as a very believable, well-intending person, who is willing to stop and spend lunch time with a repelling unknown vagrant whom others “pass by with haste and distance”.

Ian’s insightful interpretation proved a balanced counterpoint to Alice. He smoothly handled some difficult theological topics and dialogue with a casual conversational vocal ease supporting his role as Richard, the sincere, concerned, non-invasive, warm, caring non-judgemental man who is willing to listen yet is not prepared to compromise in leaving Alice without another choice.

Supporting actor Minifie – Canine Lucretia Bianca Boniface – “Lucky”, (referred to as “a dog of rare distinction”) debuted in her first performance. Brave are the actors who venture on stage with pets in the cast – “Lucky” did as they always do: with no effort she upstaged her fellow cast members, being type-cast as herself, much to the delight of us all, even nodding her head in acknowledging audience applause at the end of the show.

The Rev’d Greg Magee has requested that our local playwright/producer, Les, consider publishing, in paperback form, his collection of Easter Plays. They are short, with a small cast, simple sets, and each has a different theme to challenge the audience. These surely beg to be travelled more widely.

Apparently next year’s offering is vaguely in the melting pot at this stage.

Dorothy Lee to speak at the Abbey

Edie Ashley

Dorothy Lee will be at the Abbey on Saturday 17 June to speak about her latest book, *The Gospels Speak: Addressing Life’s Questions*.

The Rev’d Canon Professor Dorothy Lee is the Frank Woods Professor in New Testament and Dean of Trinity Theological School.

Her very busy life and considerable theological reputation make it all the more remarkable that the Abbey has managed to get her here to spend time with us in discussion of this most recent book.

This book speaks to the things closest to our hearts as Christians, the questions most commonly asked by people in existential crisis of one sort or another: what is life all about? Why do the innocent suffer?

Can what I do really make a difference?

Professor Lee is an erudite and entertaining speaker. It is anticipated that her visit will allow time for participants to reflect, question and learn together as we join her in exploring our sacred text for answers.

The workshop on 17 June will begin at 11:00 am and conclude at 3:00 pm. Morning tea and a light lunch will be provided. The cost to participants will be \$40. Reservations are essential as strong interest is expected. Please contact the Abbey for further information and bookings. RSVP by 13 June – phone: (03) 5156 6580 or email: info@theabbey.org.au

Archdeacon Edie Ashley is Archdeacon of the Eastern Region; Priest, St Peter’s by the Lake, Paynesville; and Abbey Priest.



Photo: Courtesy Trinity College

The Rev’d Canon Professor Dorothy Lee

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Southern Regional Deanery



Photo: Marion Dewar (L)

Back L-R Elizabeth Watkins (WI), the Rev'd Greg Magee (BPI), Elaine Visalli (BPI), the Rev'd Amy Turner (locum KP), the Rev'd Geoff Pittaway (MN), Julie Hislop (KP), the Rev'd Colin Oakley (W), the Rev'd Graeme Peters (WI)

Front L-R Mary Hodgson (W), Pat Chapman (W), Janette Elder (WI), Archdeacon Graham Knott (L), Maryann Ashton (L), Rosanne Tutti (MN), Janet Staben (KP), the Rev'd Jo White (Y)

Marion Dewar Chapter Clerk

Southern Regional Deanery members met at All Saints Poowong on Friday 17 March. There are three meetings each year.

The activity of the day varies, according to the needs of the Deanery, the Diocese or the liturgical season.

For the first meeting of the year an ice breaking exercise is often undertaken. Sometimes, early in the year, the business of Synod is considered. Guest speakers are enjoyed, whether from within the Deanery or further afield. Discussion of "hot topics" encourages all present to make a comment or voice an opinion.

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On occasion, an item in the report from a particular parish will engender conversation about whole-of-site planning, building maintenance, ministry to a particular section of the church family, faith sharing or community engagement. Readers will remember the Southern Regional Conference of 5 March 2016, which brought together regional deanery members and other parish members from across the deanery.

This year the venues and dates are Poowong (17 March), Inverloch (21 July) and Tarwin Lower (20 October). Those in attendance include clergy from the eight parishes (Bass/Phillip Island, Corner Inlet, Korumburra/

Poowong, Leongatha, Mirboo North, Westernport, Wonthaggi/Inverloch, Yarram) and the two Regional Deanery representatives or supplementary representatives (elected at the parish annual meeting).

Meetings are open to all clergy and lay members of the Deanery. The day begins with morning tea at 9.30 and ends with lunch at 12.30. Catering is provided by the parish or centre. The business usually includes reports from the Regional Dean (the Rev'd Geoff Pittaway) and Southern Region Archdeacon (The Ven Graham Knott), reports from all parishes, the activity of the day and a service of Holy Communion.

Transported by vintage car to MU afternoon tea

Ursula Plunkett – Bairnsdale



The annual Bairnsdale MU afternoon tea

Mother's Union, for their second annual afternoon tea, invited past and present parishioners. It was beautifully served with special cups and saucers and silver teapots. There were dainty sandwiches, cakes and a sponge cake that just had to be eaten.

Some ladies from a nursing home and others, who had given up driving, were collected in vintage cars. This correspondent was thrilled to be in a 1940s Jaguar! Thank you, President Marrolyn Wiles and Secretary Pat McKeon, it was a good time of fellowship.

FareShare—giving back to the community

Year 10 Food Discovery students and staff from St Paul's Anglican Grammar School recently had the opportunity to give back to the community, as well put into practice the Sustainable Food Production concepts they have been learning about by preparing meals for FareShare, a non-profit based organisation located in Abbotsford.

FareShare uses rescued and donated food to prepare meals which are distributed to over 300 charities in Victoria for those in need.

Food Relief in Warragul receive meals regularly from FareShare to distribute within our local community and the students and staff also visited Food Relief from whom 80 families per week in the Baw Baw Shire receive assistance.



Year 10 St Paul's students Phoebe Weichert and Isabella Whitty preparing pies at FareShare which will be distributed to those in need

Palm Sunday Tree for Peace

Paynesville



This was the second year of the Tree for Peace initiated by St Peter by the Lake, Paynesville, with the support of community groups and sponsored by the East Gippsland Shire. Chris Shields (back, right) offers a prayer for peace.

Greg Magee to retire

Jan Down

The Rev'd Greg Magee, Rector of the parish of Bass / Phillip Island is to retire following long service leave in May.

Greg has been in the parish for the past nine years, having been installed in December 2007. Bass / Phillip Island is the only Gippsland parish where Greg has ministered. He had been approaching ten years as vicar of Altona in Melbourne, when Bishop John McIntyre invited him to discuss the idea of coming to Phillip Island.

During his time in the Gippsland diocese, one of Greg's roles was as Convenor of a theological working group (2009–2011) that arose from a Synod motion put forward by the Rev'd Bruce Charles, and seconded by Greg, concerning "the last things" – heaven, hell, death and judgement. He remained part of the group after handing over the reins to the Rev'd Don Saines.

Greg is originally from Brisbane, coming to Ridley College in the late 70s to complete his theological training. He returned to Brisbane to take up a curacy, followed by two parishes. Greg then served in two parishes in Melbourne before coming to Gippsland.



Greg Magee

After working in two very large dioceses, Greg has appreciated the smaller, cohesive diocese of Gippsland where clergy all know each other. As a priest, he has found most satisfaction in "helping people discover God's love in all its different manifestations, and being there for people – trying to represent Christ to people".

On retiring to Trentham, where he and Fay already have a house, Greg looks forward to catching up with lots of reading, and being able to sit in a pew rather than leading services.

He sees the best hope for the future growth of the Kingdom of God as "faithfulness to our gospel call and acceptance of one another; understanding that in all our different ways, God works through all of us".

Friends of St Paul's Cathedral to meet

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of St Paul's Cathedral will be held on Sunday 28 May, 3:30 pm, at 149 Cunninghame Street, Sale, and will be followed by afternoon tea.

As the Friends of the Cathedral have not met since 2012, this gathering is in fact a revival of the group. Dean Susanna Pain said in her letter of invitation "It is encouraging to know that the Cathedral has friends of longstanding, supporting the life of the



cathedral, the faith community and its plant" and she looks forward to meeting Friends, both old and new.

Susanna listed some of the cathedral initiatives currently being planned, including concerts; an arts-focused youth/young adult group; a series of speakers; the formation of a pastoral care team; Christian meditation; Bible study groups; retreats and quiet days.

There is also the opportunity at 5:00 pm on the same day to attend a concert with the Affinity String Trio at the Cathedral (details in the calendar, page 12).

Easter Children's Ministry Day

Lyn Gilbert – Korumburra

On the first week of the school holidays members from the Combined Churches of Korumburra held an Easter Activities morning for primary age children in St Paul's, Korumburra hall from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.

Over thirty children attended and enjoyed Easter egg hockey, singing, and hearing the Good Friday and Easter message through an animated DVD and flannelgraph. Each child made a diorama resurrection garden and a small Easter book.

All the children had a great time and we had prepared exactly the correct number of

items needed for making the dioramas, books and bags to carry them home. Praise the Lord! This was the largest number of children who have attended these holiday activity days.



Easter egg hockey at St Paul's, Korumburra

Earth Hour

Trafalgar

On March 25, about 40 people gathered to celebrate Earth Hour at St Mary's Trafalgar. We had the campfire going to cook jacket potatoes, damper and of course marshmallows.

The kids enjoyed the billy cart races organised by Rev'd David Head and Mrs Sandra Wagner who brought young people from their parish. The children played outside until it was too dark. We made paper bag lanterns, a craft common to many Earth Hour celebrations. The adults enjoyed conversations around the fire.

There were people from various parts of the community as well as people from the congregations. This year was the 10th anniversary of Earth Hour, a time when across the world we are encouraged to remember that our energy resources need to be managed well if future generations are to share our standard of living.



Toasting marshmallows at Earth Hour, Trafalgar



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Children and youth in our congregations

**Carolyn Raymond,
David Head and
Kathy Dalton
Morwell**

St Mary's congregation values the children and young people who are part of our church family. We want all of them to feel welcome and for them to know that we see their presence as integral to our worship Sunday by Sunday.

So much of what we do comes from the joy of having children with us. This is obvious when we share the Peace with one another. The children are always included; in fact sometimes they are selected ahead of their parents! The youngest members of our congregation are always invited to help take up the collection. This includes young visitors to the service.

Some of our young people have been invited to read a lesson and some have been trained to be servers. It is a joy to see them up the front of the church fulfilling such an important role in the service.

No one is irritated or annoyed if a child or a baby cries. No one minds if a small figure wanders around the church exploring.

Most importantly the service of baptism is often part of the Sunday service, when we welcome the child as a member of the church.



A recent baptism at St Mary's Morwell: The Rev'd David Head holding baby Benjamin Ibrahim with his mother Amira Adam behind. His father Kuti Ibrahim was not able to attend as he had to work. The server is St Mary's Annalise Strini

We also try to provide a place in the church where children feel comfortable. There is a special area, a table and seating to the side and to the front of the church where pencils and paper are available for children to sit and draw. To the back of the church is a bookcase full of children's books and a box full of toys.

We hope to show the children that they have an important place and they are valued members of our congregation.

Sunday School

Sunday School is offered every second week during the school term, using the program Seasons of the Spirit.

The Rev'd Kathy Dalton is the principal teacher and

Jacqueline Johns the relief teacher. Other members of the congregation will assist during lesson time.

Our rector, the Rev'd David Head always calls out the teacher and the children to the front of the church and blesses them and their time together, before they go into the hall for their lesson, which is based on the Gospel for the day.

There is always learning and fun, (and sometime a lot of noise!). At the end of the service the children are invited to come out the front to show the congregation their work. We clap them back into their seats as they proudly carry their work back to their families.

The running of the Sunday School is supported by regular meetings between the teachers and Fr David.

Youth Group

St Mary's Youth Group meets about once a month. It used to be very small but now averages between six and ten. The growth has been through

the South Sudanese youth attending.

The group meets on Saturday usually from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Activities vary from full-on active games to discussion nights and an occasional night out at a park or elsewhere.

At the end of March, we joined the Trafalgar Youth Group for their Earth Hour Family Night and Fr David organised some games for a group of very wide age range, from toddlers to the youth attending from St Mary's. It was a challenge to manage, but everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. The evening ended with a barbecue and campfire. There were hot potatoes and marshmallows, with paper lanterns made to light the night without electricity.

The Rev'd David Head is rector at Morwell and the Rev'd Kathy Dalton is Associate Priest, Koori Ministry. Carolyn Raymond is a licenced Lay Reader.

Kidsplus+ Camp packed with fun

The 2017 Kidsplus+ Camp held in March at Forest Edge again proved to be a very happy occasion packed with fun and challenge activities.

Thirty three participants representing Moe, Newborough, Traralgon, Drouin, Warragul, Poowong, Korumburra and Heyfield (Cooks) went "WITH THE FLOW", this being our camp theme around which our Chaplain, the Reverend Jenny Ramage, based our devotional and worship activities.

The spirit of cooperation

and encouragement abounded. Activities included, high ropes, flying fox, climbing wall and crate stacking challenges, archery, puppetry, disco, crafts, and great dining – thankyou Deb and David Chambers and Jannette Stevens.

Plans are underway now for the 2018 camp, so set aside the third weekend of March next year, being 23 to 25 March. Sticking to this consistent weekend we hope will help new parishes to plan for involvement. The camp venue will be announced shortly.



Low Ropes Course: Willow and Branigan front; back, from left: Bailey, Emily, Amalie, MacKenzie, Aluel, from Warragul, Moe, Traralgon, and Drouin

Gippsland Grammar School Open Day

An Open Day will be held Wednesday 3 May 9:00-11:00 am.

This is an opportunity to see the school in action.

For further information contact Marji Craven on 5143 6318.



St Mary's young people joined in the Earth Hour fun at Trafalgar

Investigating truth

The claims of Jesus can be examined

Glen Treble

Photo: courtesy St Paul's Grammar School



Glen Treble

Have you ever been portrayed as something you're not?

Some people are pretty casual about their appearance and about what other people think of them. Others care greatly about their image and how they are portrayed. We are often rigorous about maintaining who we think we are, or want to be, yet confused about who we really are.

This happens both personally and on a global scale.

media and what is accurately communicated to the greater public. How do we know what to believe?

To be honest, some sources are more reliable than others in dealing with the truth of a situation, but how do we know which ones to trust? There is also an interesting irony about relying on media to inform us about people's opinions on the reliability of media!

Information can be misleading. While on holiday overseas some years ago, my mum rang to find out how we were, because she'd heard there was a raging fire in the state we were in. In reality it was small and a long way away from where we were staying. Not insignificant (especially

for the place where the fire was), but not a danger to me. On the same trip, we heard tales in the country where we were staying of Queensland being overrun with koalas and the possibility of a state cull. An element of truth, but not reality.

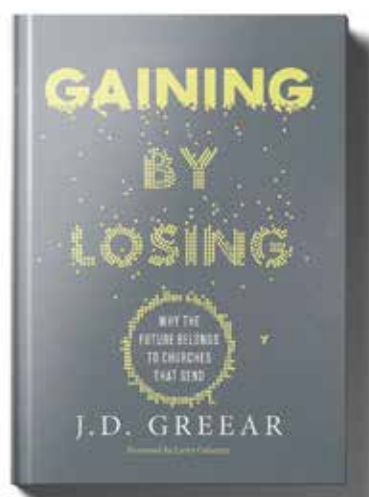
Not many of us are willing to investigate truth or find out what really goes on. Interested maybe, but not investing time. In some of my classes we have been investigating the person, Jesus Christ. I am always interested to hear what students think and always amazed and maybe a little saddened how quickly they can jump to conclusions about the man – Jesus of Nazareth.

Some are instant sceptics,

others politically polite, others scared and some hesitantly curious. Not many have investigated. One of the things we have talked about in class is that the claims of Jesus can be looked at. A man who was born into a specific time in history, in a particular town with a specific message. It's open for all and any to investigate.

I'm glad we have the opportunity to explore, investigate and expand our minds. Like all things, what we do with that information is another story, but I'd encourage each of us to explore the claims of Jesus Christ.

Glen Treble is Chaplain at the Traralgon Campus, St Paul's Anglican Grammar School.



Reviewed by
Cathrine Muston,
Community Development
Officer for Anglicare

Gaining by Losing

J D Greear
(Zondervan 2015)

you are not happy with your particular cruise line, there are plenty of others to choose from.

Or, he suggests church can be like battleships – lots of noise and action but with an implication that the Christian life is about targets and guns. He says the church should be more like an aircraft carrier which equips pilots and is a launching place for mission. This is more of what Jesus had in mind when He gave us His great commission of Matthew 28:18-20. Greear then provides practical and inspiring ways for churches to become more like aircraft carriers.

"Sending" is the only way in which in our modern world, unbelievers will ever hear the good news of the gospel. It is in "losing" church members who are "sent" out in mission that our churches will "gain" in richness of life and purpose. This is the reason for the title of the book and its core focus. The challenge is to recalibrate our churches to be missional, so that our focus is on sending out rather than attempting to drag in.

How do we send? J D Greear provides a number of ways in which the church can "send" people, drawing on the experience of his own church and others. Firstly, we need to transform our congregations into armies where leaders are

identified and trained. Some of the ways in which he suggests this can be done is through the church "blessing" or enabling Christians to be involved in addressing needs in the local community. In many parts of our diocese there are churches where this is already happening through community partnerships. This has been very encouraging, but the challenge here is, how do we make the invisible Christ visible in our communities?

Greear claims that a missional church will have strong links with its local community; it will break down racial and cultural divisions and embrace diversity. Again, there are encouraging signs of this in many of our parishes. He concludes that our response to the Word and the Spirit will take three key forms: faith and obedience; a love for God's Kingdom (not our own); and the courage to risk. This, he suggests, requires real tenacity and persistence, keeping the compelling vision of Jesus' Great Commission as our focus.

If the Kingdom of God is an upside down Kingdom, then to "gain by losing" will make no sense to the broader community, but absolute sense to a missional church. And that is what J D Greear's book is: a common sense and practical approach to the mission of the Church in the world.



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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

John Shaw Neilson

Ken Parker

Charles Blackman's series of paintings "Schoolgirls" currently showing at Heide Gallery is inspired by the poet John Shaw Neilson, in particular, the poem *Schoolgirls Hastening*. Neilson should not be forgotten. He is the other great Australian born at Penola in South Australia – in 1872. Most of his life was spent in the Victorian Mallee and the Wimmera. He had two years of formal schooling, lived a tough life as an itinerant day labourer, and yet is our greatest lyric poet. He is also a profound spiritual thinker.

His most startling theological statement is *The Gentle Water Bird*, where

*In the dim days, I trembled,
for I knew
God was above me
always frowning through.
And God was terrible
and thunder blue.*

He tells of the bird that would visit at a lake he loved in The Wimmera and of his conversion:

*Long have I learned that
all his speech was true;
I cannot reason it
– how far he flew
– God is not terrible
nor thunder- blue.*

Abide With Me was a favourite hymn and this strongly influenced the poem. Verse 4 in the old Presbyterian hymn-book gives the clue:

*Come not in terror,
as the King of Kings,
But, kind and good, with healing
in thy wings,
Tears for all woes,
a heart for every plea;
Come, friend of sinners,
and abide with me.*

Throughout his poetry he strives to present a Christ who is not "gentle Jesus meek and mild" nor the handsome blond Jesus of church windows. He seeks Christ in an Australian context. Thus the poem, *He Sold Himself to the Daisies*

*The traders knew no pity,
They called him shapeless clown,
And they put long prayers upon him
And chained him in a town.*

*But he rose ere the day was broken,
He rose when the stars hung high,
And his heart did hope within him
To die as the daisies die.*

Here the poet reflects on the ministry of Jesus and his own ministry too.

In his poem, *To a Red Lory*, he invokes the Holy Spirit –

*Come, charge with thy challenge of
colour our thoughts cool and thin;
Descend with the blood of the
sunlight – O lory, come in!*

Neilson gives a very different take on the Holy Trinity!

And of sacraments too! His startlingly Eucharistic poem *The Poor Can Feed the Birds* is set at the Melbourne Exhibition Buildings, where he worked in his latter days. It is a cry against the failures of the church to bridge the gap between rich and poor and between nature and the supernatural. He tells of the poor people feeding the birds, with the rising spires of St. Patrick's in the distance –

*The rich go out with clattering
pomp...*

*But 'tis the poor who make the
loving words.
Slowly they stoop, it is a sacrament:
The poor can feed the birds.*

Photo: Jan Down

Flight over Port Albert



His poem *The Orange Tree* is one of the greatest Australian poems and a plea for contemplative living. Inspired by the orange plantings at Merbein, and by Botticelli's painting Primavera, this poem came out of Gippsland soil. At various times Neilson worked in a quarry near Harkaway, on the Mirboo line, at the Yallourn open cut and on the building of Glenmaggie Weir. He tells of the beginning of *The Orange Tree*, "It was really started in Gippsland. I was driving a horse and dray there but it was a very boggy place and so I knocked off and went to work among the oranges up near Mildura."

*The young girl stood beside me.
I saw not what her young eyes*

could see:

*– A light, she said, not of the sky
Lives somewhere in the Orange Tree.*

You can read the whole poem at: poetrylibrary.edu.au/. Neilson's strong Presbyterian background shaped both poet and man. He rejected its fundamentalism, but it was the *King James Bible*, Presbyterian psalmody and hymnody that gave life and form to his poetry. He wrestled with his heritage in the context of a tough Victorian landscape where he found great joy.

The critic Cliff Hanna says, "[Neilson] never tires of writing about Love and he never lost his initial faith".

I plan to explore Shaw Neilson's work at a spirituality day in Balnarring on November 18.

*The Rev'd Ken Parker is
locum priest at Bunyip.*

EDITORIAL

Water – for body, soul and country

If we believe in holistic mission, we will care about water. We will be offering the living water that Jesus promises while ensuring people have access to the clean water that is necessary for physical life. Our concern will extend to the soil and groundwater on which plants and creatures depend.

Even if we didn't do this out of love for all that God has made, we would have reason to do it out of self-interest, since we humans are ourselves part of the inter-connected whole.

Gippslanders and other Victorians have pushed hard over the past few years to protect our farming land and ground water, which has led to a ban on all unconventional onshore gas exploration and an extension of the moratorium on exploration for conventional gas, though gas companies are still pushing against this (see *The Australian*, 4 April 2017, "Graziers, gas firms seek prosperity pipeline").

In Queensland, Adani's proposed Carmichael mega coal mine in the Galilee basin has been granted access to groundwater by the Queensland government "in a move farmers fear will drain huge amounts of water from the Great Artesian Basin" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 April 2017). The water licence does not expire until 2077 and the mine would also require enormous quantities of surface water.

Then there is the deepening famine in East Africa, which Anglican Overseas Aid says "has the potential to affect up to 20 million people". The aid organisation says the causes of the famine include "drought, failed rains, conflict and a lack of humanitarian access to communities in need". In South Sudan alone, 270,00 children are suffering severe malnutrition.

AOA, the Anglican Board of Missions, TEAR Australia, Barnabas Fund, Act for Peace and World Vision are some of the organisations running emergency appeals for East Africa. It is easy to donate via their websites.

Water for thirsty souls and bodies. Water for country, all countries. Jesus, Good Shepherd, lead us beside still waters, refresh our souls, that we might bring refreshment to others.

ABC Radio National's Religion Programs

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

Religion and Ethics Report

Andrew West

Wednesday 5:30 pm – repeated: Thursday 5:30 am

The Spirit of Things

Rachel Kohn

Sunday 6:00 pm – repeated: Wednesday 9:00 pm

The Rhythm Divine

Geoff Wood

Sunday 5:30 am – repeated: Sunday 9:30 pm

For more details: abc.net.au

As it is in Heaven

Billy Williams

In my home country, the Gamilaraay, Big Sky Country of Northwestern NSW, we have a 213km long flood channel that crosses our land. It starts near Mungindi on the Queensland border, runs down past Lightning Ridge and my hometown of Collarenebri, and then ends up in between Walgett and Brewarrina. It only ever flows in big rain/flood times and it is called “The Big Warrambool”. Interestingly, “Warrambool” is the same name in our language for the Milky Way. This is because in Aboriginal understanding, land stories connect with sky stories.

This informs our lives. Why? Because the land (our earthly lives) must be influenced by and correspond to the sky (the spiritual realities)... there is an ever-present connection between physical and spiritual life. The two should never be separated. It is dangerous and damaging to forget the link. We are simultaneously spirit and flesh. This is at an individual level but also collectively as people. This calls us to a literal connection to country and to Spirit... it beckons us towards an integrated life, balanced and holistic. This is who and how we are created to be.

When the tribal man Jesus, the one who made both Warrambools (!), sought to model prayer to His people, He demonstrates the same thing. He makes it clear that their land stories should match the sky stories. He instructs them to keep a connection between their earthly lives and the

spiritual realities of the Creator. Whatever the All-Father is after, whatever He has determined in the spiritual, ask Him to help you to make that a reality in the physical... hence, His words, “on earth as it is in Heaven.”

Even prayer, as understood from an Aboriginal perspective, is about ceremony. Ceremony is the link between the tangible and the intangible, the way to remember the spiritual truths and to pass them on. Ceremonies were not merely performance but mainly practical; they expressed the link between the Creator, the country and the community. Some dances when completed would literally leave a map on the ground showing the people where they needed to travel in order to get to their required destination.

Ceremony is essential and ever-present throughout the Scriptures. Postures and practices point beyond the physical and link to the spiritual. Ceremony is sorely needed in the Australian landscape. To forget the ceremonies is to forget the link.

Also important to consider is time. In Aboriginal culture, time is considered as more interconnected than linear. It wasn't merely one day only leading to another; nor was the focus predominately on the future. Much like the Israelites who were reminded constantly to think of their heritage, those who came before them, what had happened as a people, traditional cultures often see the future by remembering the past and making it inform their present.

Jesus prays: “as it is”. We must understand that the Kingdom is. He isn't just praying to give us information, but calling us to application – specific actions in specific places. There is a strong biblical call to live out our faith today, to make the realities of the all-time come to fruition here and now. Heaven isn't merely real estate that's far away, it's a reality that's to be lived out today.

So look at Jesus' prayer from my Aboriginal heritage:

1. Jesus is saying that He wants my land story to match the realities of the Spirit Creator's story
(Don't know what they are? Then lucky He talks a lot about it eh? Search them for understanding!)
2. Jesus wants me to commit to ceremony, to be a prayer because, not only does that remind of the connection to the Creator, but it also taps into and maintains that link to Him for myself and created-ones around me

(Think of the actions that actually best represent the prayer, not just merely the words we say. Act out your prayers, symbolically and actually, in His strength and with His guidance!)

3. Jesus wants me not to just stare off longingly into the future to when Heavenly realities might invade my spaces; He's actually calling me to join Him in making them true here and now.

(The Kingdom has been and is already made known. Join Him in activating this in your places!)

Billy is a Gamilaraay man from central northern New South Wales. He is the pastor at Dhiyaan Northside Church, an Aboriginal Church in North Brisbane.

This article and photo were originally published in TEAR Australia's Target Magazine (2017) www.tear.org.au They are reprinted with kind permission.

“Giir ngaya Baiame yalwunga warrangaluu winangaylanha!”

In the Gamilaraay language:
Giir (*truly*)
ngaya (*I*)
Baiame (*The All-Father*)
yalwunga (*always was/will be*)
warrangaluu (*all powerful*)
winangaylanha (*acknowledge*)

“I acknowledge the everlasting, all powerful Creator!”



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EARTH CARE CARD

- Tips and inspiration for churches and households

29 Protect local waters



Photo: Christine Morris

Gippsland is known for its amazing lakes, its bays, rivers and wetlands. Everything depends on healthy water for survival, and there are simple ways to protect the waterways at home and church. Use biodegradable detergents, identified by NOP (no phosphorus) on the label; recycle glass, plastics, paper, metals and oils wherever possible, to reduce waste going to landfill. These and other tips, and much fascinating information, can be found at: loveourlakes.net.au under “Living here”. Many community groups also need volunteers to help keep the waters healthy. Consider joining a Landcare group (see landcarevic.org.au); Friends of the Gippsland Lakes, Parks and Reserves; Westernport Seagrass Partnership; or Trust for Nature.

Jan Down

Sue Fordham

Grandmother, journalist, teacher – Paynesville

Sue Fordham has been a journalist and a teacher, but these days it is her children and grandchildren that come first in terms of occupation.

Having retired to Paynesville, she says, “We ran away from home twenty-four years ago, but the kids found out where we’d gone” and followed them down there. But jokes aside, she is really happy they did as she is so glad to be involved in the lives of their son and daughter and the five grandchildren. “Family has always been really important to us”, she says, adding that their children also really value the cohesion of family.

During the Easter school holidays, Sue was planning to take one of the grandchildren to Melbourne for an overnight trip, and hopes to do the same with all of them over time, offering each one a special time on their own with Nanny. She sometimes collects the children from the school bus and kinder, and is available for babysitting when needed.

Sue and her husband Robert Fordham AM (a retired Victorian MP) were city people, and wondered how long it might take for them to be accepted into a country community, but they were delighted at the friendly welcome they were given. Sue loves the “earthiness” of the place and says “I’ve really found home in coming to the country”.

A parishioner at St Peter’s by the Lake in Paynesville, Sue is on parish council, sings in the choir, is a Synod representative, and is, of course, the parish *TGA* correspondent.

Paynesville is a town with extremes of wealth and poverty, so the church, through its strong connection with the local primary school, helps out with food for people who are struggling.

In response to the Principal’s request, Sue promoted the concept of a partnership at Parish council and to the congregation. So far \$1,000 and three baskets of food have been offered. Sue comments that she is “not a street corner preacher – for me the way to spread the gospel is to live the gospel”.

Sue grew up in Footscray in a close-knit family on a low income. Her parents were convinced that education was the way out of poverty, but



Photo: Robert Fordham

Sue Fordham

Sue’s two older sisters had to leave school to work when their mother contracted pneumonia and had to stop work. Sue’s parents then did everything they could to keep her at school, with the result that she eventually became a high school teacher.

Her parents were not regular church goers. As a result of a visit from the local minister, Sue’s mother “donated the children” as Sue puts it; she sent the children off to Sunday School as an escape for herself.

Sue did not find Sunday School very interesting, but she loved church! This was the high Anglican Church of St George’s in West Footscray, where Sue appreciated the prayerfulness, the music and the atmosphere. She was on the parish council by the age of 17, while still at school. It was at the church that she met Robert, who was then attending All Saints’, North Footscray, then under the care of the same priest.

Although Sue loved teaching, by the time her son reached year 10, she was feeling rather stale and in need of a change. She had always wanted to write, so applied to RMIT to study journalism, but was warned they would only accept 35 people. Despite the barrage of tests, being a mature age applicant who had actually been taught English grammar, Sue had no trouble with tests or interview, and was accepted into the course.

One of Sue’s lecturers at RMIT was the well-known Melbourne Anglican journalist, Muriel Porter, and it was through Muriel that Sue was offered

work at Anglican Media. She worked in the cathedral office in Flinders Street for one to two days a week, going out to parishes to interview people and writing up profiles. At the time, there were just the Editor, Angela Grutzner, and Sue working in the office, so she was covering all the news. She found she could write articles quite quickly, and “just loved it”.

Through this work, for the first time in her life Sue developed a concept of “diocese” – grasping the richness and diversity of “how good the church could be”. Coming from the Anglo Catholic parish of St George’s in Footscray, she had felt some trepidation about interviewing people from evangelical parishes such as St Hilary’s, Kew. The job helped her to question her biases and broaden her horizons.

Initially, Sue just wanted to write, but as she gained experience, she began to realise the significance of what she was doing and to develop a sense of doing God’s work. Looking back, she sees her time at Anglican Media as her happiest and most fulfilling job.

Asked how her faith in God affects the way she does her work, Sue says “It totally dictates *what* I do, and how I do it”. She adds “You can never take a holiday from it – the injunction to love God first, and love others as you love yourself”. And while she comments that this often leads to a sense of guilt, that guilt is also motivating: “It reminds you of what your responsibilities are to creation”.

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.

May

- 5 – 7 Creative Spirit Festival, Parish Hall, St Philip’s, Cowes, Phillip Island.
Details: anglicanparishbassphillipisland.com
- 13 10:30 am Farewell morning tea for the Rev’d Anne Turner, St Paul’s Cathedral, Sale
- 19–21 Synod at Bairnsdale
- 25 11:45 am Ascension Day at Bunyip: a joyous Eucharist and lunch, BYO balloons!
- 28 9:30 am Stations of Resurrection at St Thomas Bunyip – responding to images by Eric Gill
- 28 3:30 pm Friends of the Cathedral AGM at 149 Cunninghame Street, Sale. Details page 7
- 28 5:00 pm Affinity Collective Afternoon Concert, St Paul’s Cathedral, Sale, followed by meet the artist and refreshments. Music of Beethoven, Dohnányi. Guest pianist, Alex Waite
Tickets at Gippsland Music & Sound 51447860: \$20 Family \$40 with concessions available.

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 to speak at The Abbey, Raymond Island. Details page 5.
Phone 5156 6580 or email info@theabbey.org.au
- 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

- 2–9 NAIDOC Week
- 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



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