



P3-6  
Synod  
2025



P10  
Sand, psalms,  
and stillness

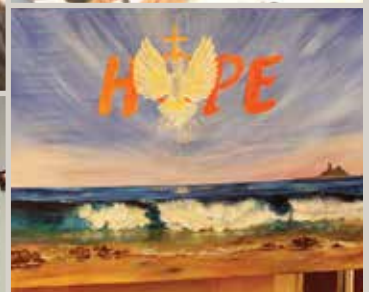


P19  
Transforming  
lives one gift  
at a time

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## Synod 2025







# As we pray, so we believe, and so we live



This adage, beloved of Anglicans, especially in its Latin form – *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi* – is a classic expression of the principle that worship informs belief, and belief informs action. Sometimes *lex vivendi* is replaced by *lex agendi* – as we pray, so we believe, and so we act.

At a recent General Synod Liturgy Commission meeting we were discussing something of a 'paradigm shift' regarding the direction in which this sequence flows.

Until quite recently, the (1662) *Book of Common Prayer* clearly set out the parameters of prayer – the *lex orandi* – for Anglicans around the world. What Anglicans believe has always been inextricably linked with that set of formularies, supplemented in the latter part of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries by authorised local prayer book revisions, including *An Australian Prayer Book* (1978) and *A Prayer Book for Australia* (1995). Thus, in the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia, for example, we read: 'This Church ... retains and approves the doctrine and principles of the Church of England embodied in the *Book of Common Prayer*' (section 4). In this paradigm, moral theology and missional activity flow from that liturgically embodied doctrine.

Today, Christians are just as likely to be moved to act by a sense of ethical imperative which may not be immediately connected with doctrines and principles embodied in an authorised prayer book. That action then invites theological reflection upon its spiritual import, which, in turn, seeks underpinning with worship resources. In this paradigm, the traditional formula has almost been reversed: *lex vivendi* (or *lex agendi*), *lex credendi, lex orandi*.

Of course, things are never quite as neat as that. This is what we might call a 'virtuous circle' whereby the three aspects of worship, faith, and praxis are mutually reinforcing. We could also describe it as a



Christine Morris

'hermeneutical circle', meaning that these three are mutually interpreting: constantly informing and shaping each other.

In this 'reverse' direction of the circle, or spiral, the role of theological reflection and liturgy is to 'thicken up' the instinct for action in relation to any given issue. If something presents as an ethical imperative, seemingly demanding a response, how does this connect with a Christian worldview, and how is that understanding of faith and discipleship expressed in worship?

By way of example, the National Church Life Survey recently released data that shows 57% of churches surveyed in 2021 engaged with First Nations peoples or cultures in one or more of ten ways, as compared with 37% in 2016; a significant increase in just five years.

How have theological reflection and liturgical resources 'thickened up' the *lex agendi*, the law of action, in this case? What further work needs to be done in this space such that the praxis of engagement is informed by – and informs – belief and worship?

The NCLS has also reported that 88% of church leaders and 77% of churchgoers agree that Christians have a responsibility to be active with respect to environmental issues – reflecting a steady increase over the last 15 years. Again, are we devoting sufficient attention to developing

worship resources and engaging in biblical and theological research that 'thicken up' a distinctively Christian response to what is clearly a priority for Christians and non-Christians alike?

Whichever way the circle turns – and, in reality, it's ambi-directional – for Anglicans there is an essential connection between worship, belief, and action. Which is why I have so valued serving on the Liturgy Commission of General Synod since 2012 and am sad to need to take leave of it in order to make room for other commitments.

In my Presidential Address excerpted in the June edition, I reflected on the relationship between what happens 'centrally' and what happens 'locally' at an intra-diocesan level. The same relationship applies with respect to the wider church: General Synod, for example, being a 'central' expression of church and dioceses, like Gippsland, being 'local' expressions of church.

We need instruments that connect the 'central' and the 'local', and vice versa, and the Liturgy Commission – like all Commissions of General Synod – is one such instrument.

For Gippsland Anglicans, *TGA* is another: connecting us with each other and with the wider church, and connecting the Anglican Church of Australia and indeed the global Anglican Communion of Churches with Gippsland Anglicans.

This is the second edition of *TGA* that Krista Mountford has produced as standalone Editor, and on behalf of its readers I express our gratitude to Krista for the professionalism and attention to detail she has demonstrated in preparing to take up the role of Editor in her own right.

I would also pay tribute to Trevor Poulton, who – as Production Editor from March through May – helped us to effect a seamless transition from Jan Down as Acting Editor to Krista as Editor.



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



Les Ridge

# Collation of an Archdeacon and Commissioning of Regional Deans

L-R: The Ven John Webster, Rev'd Sue Newcombe, Bishop Richard, Rev'd Canon Dr Fran Grimes and Rev'd Daniel Gebert

The opening Synod Eucharist was cause for celebration as the congregation committed to support the licencing of The Venerable John Webster in his

appointment as Archdeacon, The Rev'd Canon Dr Fran Grimes as Regional Dean of the Southern Region, The Rev'd Daniel Gebert a Regional Dean of the Western

Region, and The Rev'd Sue Newcombe as Associate Dean of the Eastern Region. Smiles abounded and applause bounced around the Cathedral rafters.

The ministry of *TGA* relies as much on you, our readers and contributors, as it does on those on the Editorial Committee, including Les Ridge who now joins the team. With the cost of print publications such as this one rising, your ongoing support of the Diocese's flagship publication is greatly appreciated.

You will see elsewhere in this edition that one of the motions carried at last month's Synod was in relation to a diocesan communications strategy. If you would like to see *TGA* in its current format continue as part of that strategy you might consider taking out a personal subscription, which represents great value. Every subscription helps reduce the extent to which the Diocese subsidises the editorial, production, and distribution costs of *TGA*, which currently represents about \$100 per reader per annum.

*Lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi* – as we pray, so we believe, and so we live. May our worship, faith, and actions be interwoven, integrated, interdependent: each one informing, evoking, and expressing the other. And may the news and views in these pages encourage you, as in word and image we share stories of what this looks like in Gippsland and beyond.

*+RL*

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# Hope on the move

## Stories of faith and outreach from across the Diocese

**HOPE25**

L-R: Hope25 panellists Sharron Lane, Dave Perryman, Bec Hayman, Daniel Gebert and Robert Mesley with facilitator Susan Liersch

### ■ Susan Liersch

I had the privilege of facilitating the Hope25 panel at our recent Synod. The aim was to give Synod representatives a taste of some of the Hope25 activity that has been occurring across the Diocese and to present the following motion which was received unanimously by Synod members with applause:

That this Synod commit to maintaining the focus on outreach generated by the Hope25 project as a Diocesan priority, and asks the Bishop and Diocesan Staff to identify opportunities each year for parishes and ministry centres to share what they have been doing with regard to outreach and how that has impacted the life of their communities.

Panel members shared the following:

Robert Mesley from my own parish of Wonthaggi/Inverloch spoke of our Gospel Music Open Mic and how much it had impacted him personally. He reported that he is being stopped in the street by people who attended the open mic for a chat about singing. Connections with community members was the result of going out into our community with the hope of Jesus through music. Some of us, me included, have continued to attend subsequent open mics, taking the opportunity to sing songs of faith.

Daniel Gebert from Warragul parish shared how at their parish camp parishioners learned from Julie-Anne Baird how to effectively share their faith. In addition, throughout Easter to

Pentecost the church offered a sermon series on common questions people ask about faith, with parishioners inviting non-church attendees to come along.

Dave Perryman from Avon parish shared how teaming up with Sale Cathedral parish made running an Alpha course possible. He emphasised the benefits of churches working together to achieve a common purpose.

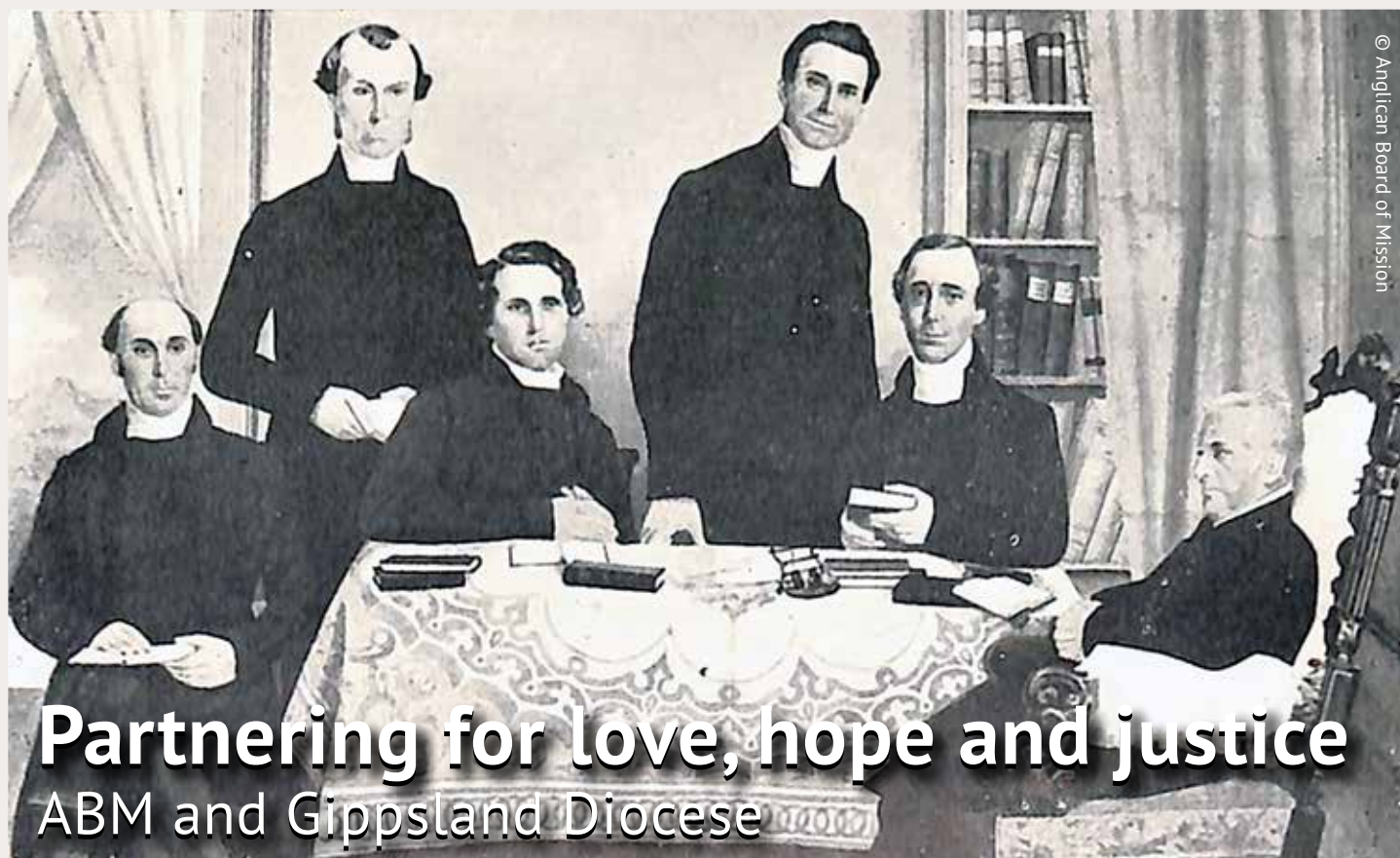
Bec Hayman from Churchill ran The Ripple Effect course teaching parishioners how to share in, and use, ordinary spaces. This has led to some creative ideas. One such idea was to have a campfire on the front lawn of the church; a piece of land that had been seen as a burden has now become recognised as a valuable resource. One local family joined in the campfire in response to the church's gentle invitation to surrounding families.

Sharron Lane told us about the Gippsland Camino which was a three-day pilgrimage along the East Gippsland Rail Trail from Traralgon to Stratford. This event was ecumenical with various churches along the trail opening and providing refreshments and sanctuary for participants. Twenty-five pilgrims participated including the Bishop who filmed his Synod Eucharist Sermon along the way so Synod reps got a feel for what it would have been like to make the trek – nicely done Bishop Richard! For people along the track who were not participating the pilgrimage became a talking point creating opportunity for sharing hope in Jesus and giving away Hope25 Luke Gospels.

I was very encouraged by the Panel members' sharing and I know members of Synod were also, for they enthusiastically engaged in table discussion afterward around how, as a diocese, we can continue to encourage outreach and pray for each other in our evangelistic efforts. There was overwhelming support for the continuation of the Diocesan Hope25 facilitation team as a core group who can support parishes in their outreach endeavours and ensure the Synod motion maintains traction. Developing effective channels of communication, further opportunities for training, access to resources, and developing working partnerships across neighbouring parishes were common responses to the questions. The idea of simultaneous pilgrimages around the diocese next year was also a popular response.

Overall, it seems that no matter where parishes were at when Hope25 was launched all were encouraged on some level throughout the season. Parishioners' own hope in Jesus has grown and so too a renewed boldness to take the hope of Jesus into the community. So let's keep that hope alive by continuing to pray the Hope25 prayer which calls us to be witnesses in this uncertain world and to allow the Holy Spirit to awaken in us a true vision of God's Kingdom, a greater certainty of our salvation and a deeper dedication to serve God so that many who are lost may find their hope in Jesus.

The Rev'd Susan Liersch is Parish Deacon at Wonthaggi/Inverloch.



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# Partnering for love, hope and justice

## ABM and Gippsland Diocese

The six Bishops at the 1850 conference. L-R: Bishop Short, Bishop Selwyn, Bishop Nixon, Bishop Tyrrell, Bishop Perry and Bishop Broughton

### ■ A reflection from Meagan Schwarz, ABM, on her time at Gippsland Synod

I was delighted to spend time with Gippsland Anglicans at your recent Synod and worshipping with the Cathedral congregations on the Sunday morning.

As much as I was there to share the story of ABM, particularly in our 175th year, I was also there to learn more about your diocese. I was encouraged by what I learned. We share the hope we find in Jesus, and the desire to share that hope with others. Just as you share hope in your communities, in practical ways unique to your place in those communities, ABM works with our partners in Australia and overseas to share that hope with their communities in their own practical and unique ways: from Auntie Di Langham sharing hope through Campfire Church in Newcastle Diocese, to St John's Anglican Seminary in Zambia training clergy to share that hope with their congregations, to communities in the Solomon Islands acting in hope to protect their land from rising sea waters and increasingly unpredictable weather patterns.

I thank Bishop Richard for allowing me to speak to Synod and share a little of ABM's 175-year history. Mission looks a lot different today to how it looked in 1850 when ABM was formed by the then six Bishops of the Church of England in Australia and New Zealand. You can get a lot right and a lot wrong in 175 years!

ABM is working to acknowledge those areas where we fell short of God's call to love our neighbours as he loves us. As we celebrate all that we have achieved together, we are holding the space for those stories that are not so easy to hear. From our foundation as a missionary training and sending organisation, ABM now proudly works as partners in mission with fully independent and localised churches, providing encouragement, support and funding as they raise up their own leaders, draw on their own strengths and harness their own resources to tackle the problems their communities face.

I shared a story of transformation from a community in the Philippines that has particular significance to me as I visited them 10 years apart and saw the transformation with my own eyes. Up in the mountainous centre of the island of Luzon, a farming community first participated in an ABM funded program about 12 years ago. I visited them when they were two years into the program which was designed to help them discover and harness their own strengths and design their own path out of poverty. They were taking tentative steps, learning to trust each other and work together. Ten years later I visited a now thriving community that has 'graduated' from the program and has lifted every family out of poverty – sending all

their children to school and improving health and living standards. Together they have built a building that serves as a community hub, local store, vegetable storage, and is even used by local health services for health clinics. We sat and chatted, listening as they eagerly shared with us what they have learned and how the members of their community now encourage each other and work together, each working to their individual strengths. They have great hope for the future of their children. The community gives thanks to God for the opportunity given to them, and they now encourage other communities to take up the challenge to act on the hope we have in Jesus' promise of life in all its fullness.

I heard similar stories at Synod of Gippsland Anglicans stepping out in faith, sharing the hope they find in Jesus, from singing Gospel music at 'open mic' nights to the work of Anglicare.

ABM's 175-year history tells many such stories of love, hope and justice, and we are grateful for the part the Diocese of Gippsland has played in our story. We look forward to seeing where God will lead us together in the next 25 years.

Meagan Schwarz is the Key Relationships Manager for the Anglican Board of Mission – Australia.





## 'Enloven' others A call to deep reconciliation

The Ven Canon Uncle Glenn Loughrey, with Springer Spaniel Jemma, delivering the homily

### ■ Libby Willems

Sunday morning's Eucharist service was a celebration of God's love for His people and His creation. Rev'd Kathy Dalton led the worship assisted by The Rev'd Canon Auntie Phyllis, distinguished guest The Venerable Canon Uncle Glenn Loughrey, and The Rev'd Sue Newcombe.

The sound of Kathy's claspsticks to gather us together was an immediate and clear cultural message that filled the Chapel and all our hearts. Seeing the beautiful stoles decorated with Aboriginal symbols and, in Uncle Glenn's case, made of possum skin, reminded the congregation that Anglican worship can be inclusive and proud in the best possible way.

Uncle Glenn delivered the homily on John 13.31–35 'A New Commandment'. He spoke about love being a disproportionately popular topic of modern music and that even for people who are perhaps yet to know Jesus, they nearly always seek the outcome of giving and receiving love. Uncle Glenn challenged us to 'enloven' others – a newly shaped word that I don't think is in any dictionary yet, but has the distinct sense of being wrapped (or wrapping others) in love so that we learn, renew, grow, and leave behind our old forms, as even Jesus Himself did, said Uncle Glenn.

The congregation sang new hymns penned by The Very Rev'd Keren Terpstra and Sharron Lane. The entire service had a uniquely local quality, which reflected Uncle Glenn's comment on cultural

inclusivity in the yarning panel later, 'You need to make it a church of the Country, not a church that came on a boat'.

Bishop Richard shared with the Synod that the deep honour of receiving communion from these respected Aboriginal priests moved him to tears.

When the Synod discussions resumed later, all members listened intently to the yarning panel. Uncle Glenn Loughrey spoke about his role as Provincial Archdeacon for Reconciliation, First Peoples Recognition and Treaty. He is

one-year into a five-year role that will establish a provincial (Victorian) Council of First Nations members that informs and advises the Anglican Church on '[First Nations] ways of seeing and doing things'.

Auntie Phyllis shared about the difficulties and privilege of serving the Lake Tyers community. 'There is acknowledgement that the church is there, but it is difficult for people to come,' said Auntie Phyllis. Prayers for this community and ministry are encouraged.

Rev'd Kathy Dalton spoke about positive changes she has seen in how Culture is being included in Christian ceremonies. 'Funerals are changing,' said Kathy. 'They do have Christianity but they have Culture.' Kathy's stories of mob using dance and cultural music to guide their loved ones to the Dreamtime were inspiring and strong.

Kathy shared specific ways that parishes can improve their cultural safety for First Nations people. Visual messages through acknowledgement plaques, art, flags, books, cultural items (e.g. claspsticks, coolamon, possum skin and digeridoo) are important'.

Participate in 'Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week', Kathy advised. Displaying the 2008 transcript of the former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's formal apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples, particularly the Stolen Generation, acknowledges this pivotal moment in modern Australian history. (Sorry Day – 26 May annually; Reconciliation Week 27 May to 3 June annually; NAIDOC Week 6-13 July 2025).

Uncle Glenn ended the yarning with a reflection on Reconciliation, the Yoorrook Justice Commission and the Anglican Church's testimony to it. 'I think the Yoorrook process has been a very important one,' said Uncle Glenn. 'The honest and transparent testimony of the Anglican church was recognised and respected. The Anglican Church is taking action ... [and] maybe in a very important cultural space. Embrace it, bring it in, use it.' Reference was made to the recent decision of Bishop-in-Council to positively adjust the proportion of funds that are directed to Aboriginal Ministry in Gippsland to align with the Diocese's redress responsibilities.

As he spoke about the pursuit of Reconciliation, Uncle Glenn highlighted the primary role that non-Aboriginal people have: 'Reconciliation begins with non-Aboriginal people – reconcile with the truth of [your] personal family, [your] personal history, what the church has done before you, then come and talk to us. Until you do we have no space to work in.'

Uncle Glenn also pointed out the dependence that First Nations have on non-Aboriginal people for political change simply due to the population imbalance. When speaking about negotiations for Treaty(ies) with First Nations Peoples, Uncle Glenn said, '[Non-Aboriginal people] have to be comfortable enough to allow us to have those things. You have the power.'

Libby Willems is the TGA representative for Drouin.



L-R: The Ven Canon Uncle Glenn Loughrey (with Jemma at his feet), Rev'd Canon Auntie Phyllis, Rev'd Kathy Dalton and Bishop Richard at the yarning panel



# The Spirit moves

## A snapshot of Synod 2025

At Synod 2025, Gippsland Anglicans gathered under the banner of shared hope and faithful action to discern the next steps in mission and ministry.

In addition to Bishop-in-Council motions reporting to Synod on work undertaken over the previous 12 months, presenting the audited accounts, and putting forward the budget, eight

motions from members of Synod were supported by the gathering in May. These ranged from encouragement of the work of ABM and the Hope25 initiative, to consideration of insurance for volunteers, clergy retirement age, and celebrating and supporting women's ministry in the Diocese. There were motions commending a comprehensive

communications strategy, a more intentional approach to healing ministry, and building resilience in the face of climate change.

For a full list of motions, election results and responses to Synod questions, visit: [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/news/articles](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/news/articles)

# 'Making Room'

– an excerpt of +Richard's video homily for the Synod Eucharist [John 14:1-6a]

*In my Father's house there are many rooms.*

How often have we heard this passage from John chapter 14 at funeral services? And it does bring great comfort as we apply that image of roominess to the heavenly realm. But of course, in John's Gospel, the house of the one Jesus called Father is not just in the sphere of the eternal. It's also very much in the here and now. In Jesus' public ministry, one of the opening acts in the fourth Gospel is Jesus really clearing out the temple that it might be a space for prayer ... an example of Jesus dramatically making room in his Father's house.

As we embark on this First Session of our 41st Synod, it's a gift to us that this passage turned up in the lectionary for today. And we can think about how it might apply to our life as a diocese, as a church, as Gippsland Anglicans. How we are constantly learning and relearning to make room for each other: to make room for diversity; to make room for a variety of voices; to make room for difference in theological perspective, in liturgical expression; to make room at our governance tables as we do in an election synod, room for fresh faces and new input. We make room at our leadership tables for people being collated and commissioned at the Synod

Eucharist for these roles in our diocese. And even the process, the practice of synodality itself is an example of making room ... walking together on the way, *syn hodos*.

Making room for our First Nations peoples to take their full place in the life and leadership of our church, to make room for their culture and the riches of their spirituality. There are so many examples of how we can apply this image, including in the way we conduct ourselves as we debate important motions before us in the days ahead ... that we would listen deeply to each other and deeply for the prompting of Holy Spirit.

Notwithstanding my capacity to get lost, and I managed to do that several times trying to find the start of the rail trail this morning... as Christians we can never be lost, for Jesus himself is our way. He is the one who walks with us on the road, the Emmaus Road, the pilgrim way, who walks in our shoes in all things of the flesh, and who goes before us to prepare a place in the roomy house of the Father.



And he is our life, not only in the sense of life at the end of our earthly pilgrimage, but life in all its fullness in that Johannine sense: the eternal life that begins now, that we must take hold of again and again in him who is our life.

And he is our truth; he is how we live truthfully and authentically as human beings and as Christians. Truth that is not enshrined in a doctrine but is embodied in a person – a person who is with us and who is ahead of us. Truth that we are always walking towards in God's good providence and the guidance of Holy Spirit.

May this much loved and familiar Gospel text be a model for us of how we live together in the church, of how we bear witness in the world to the hope that is within us of God's good news in Jesus: a world so divided, a world so fearful, a world that God so loves.

To view the full homily (7 minutes) go to [www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrWCewKkpz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrWCewKkpz4)



# Hasn't Science disproved God?

## Why believe in life after death?

HOPE25

Hope25 seeks to empower Australian Anglican parishes and communities in an intentional season of sharing hope in Jesus from Easter to Pentecost in 2025.

### ■ Carol Monson

To do justice to such a mission, the Warragul Anglican Church organised six weekly Sunday services to address key questions of Christians and non-Christians alike. Rector Daniel Gebert designed the questions, and each week a member of the Warragul Anglican Parish addressed the question in an interview format, followed by a sermon relevant to the question. There was also time and space to ask questions.

On April 27, science lecturer from Monash University, Adelle McArdle, considered the question: *'Hasn't science disproved God?'*

On May 4, Jenny Worboys, a GP and frequent palliative carer, considered the question: *'Why believe in life after death?'*

Other questions have included:

- May 11 *Where can I find my true self?*
- May 18 *Why is there suffering?*
- May 25 *Isn't the church full of hypocrites?*
- June 1 *What is faith?*

**From Adelle McArdle:**  
***'Hasn't Science disproved God?'***

*Can you share an example of your work?*

I am a teaching and research academic. One of my favourite things to teach and research is physiology, which is human biology. In my PhD, I studied placenta development – an amazing organ that allows the coexistence of another growing organism within a 'host' body. I was also interested in how this organ may change in circumstances where the mother has high blood pressure.

My research background now intersects with my teaching. One of the most interesting things I get to teach is the female menstrual cycle. We spend a lot of time examining the hormones involved in controlling the whole process. We focus on the four main hormones that ensure everything occurs properly. I explain to students that there is one particular hormone – LH (luteinising hormone) – that is turned off when estrogen is present, except when ovulation (the release of the egg from the ovary) is about to occur. For some reason, estrogen switches to turning LH on.

Every single year, I am asked questions like, 'Why does this happen? What is the mechanism that allows this complete switch to occur?' Every year, I watch a class of students struggle with why we don't know how something so important remains unknown to us.

*Do you think there are misconceptions people have about science vs religion?*

I think one of the important misconceptions about science vs religion is the assumption that science is trying to answer the same types of questions as religion.

Science offers fascinating insights into what things are and how they might work. But when we use science to try to answer the kinds of questions that religion poses, it often proves unsatisfying.

- *What is love?*
- *What is a soul?*
- *Who am I ... being described as a bag of amino acids and water is not particularly uplifting.*
- *What is good or bad?*  
*These are moral judgements.*

In the example I gave earlier about teaching the science of the female menstrual cycle, the students begin wrestling with how these hormonal changes occur. I try to shift their focus toward the idea that knowing exactly *why* or *why these changes do not happen* won't necessarily make them better or more caring doctors. Rather, it is through their humanity – empathy, sympathy, and listening – that they will become some of the most helpful people in their profession.

The very nature of our humanity is crucial in a science-based profession. Some problems cannot be sufficiently answered by scientific study alone.

*Can you think of something in your field that you think points us towards God?*

For me, there is much to be found in the idea of intelligent design. When I look at the complexities of the human body, the uniqueness of each person, and the fact that there is still so much we don't understand about how it works, it all points to something greater. The vast variation across individuals suggests, to me, the presence of a loving Creator.

Science fits together with faith – each asking different questions.



L-R: Adelle McArdle, Rev'd Daniel Gebert and Jenny Worboys



## From Jenny Worboys: Thoughts on Life After Death

*Why do you think belief in life after death is such a cherished belief in Christianity?*

It is central, vital and cherished.  
See *Corinthians 15*:

*If Christ has been raised how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?*

If Christ has not been raised, our preaching and your faith is useless ... Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, death, is your victory, where, death, is your sting?

Thanks be to God – he gives us the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus has taken the sting out of death. Death is not the end. Untimely death is still tragic and sad – but Jesus brings us the hope and assurance of life to come, of reconnection with those who have gone before. Jesus puts death into perspective – and, by doing that, life too.

*In your experience what difference does it make when people facing death have this hope?*

This hope makes a profound difference. It brings a sense of peace, reduces anxiety, opens the door to forgiveness and reconciliation, and offers hope and joy while removing fear.

Christians may still face difficult deaths, but the presence of God is with them in it. The peace and comfort of God are real and tangible. Suffering is temporary, and the future is certain.

***The peace and comfort of God are real and tangible. Suffering is temporary, and the future is certain.***

*How have you found faith in life after death helpful when assisting people in times of grief?*

Life after death takes the sting out of death and puts everything into perspective. Untimely deaths can still be tragic, but in the perspective of eternity, our time on earth is always brief. Eternal life – and the promise of new life – offers new bodies, free from the ravages of physical and mental illness and disease.

I have the hope of Jesus: He loves us all and will never leave us.

*What advice do you have when comforting others?*

Turn up. Make contact – even if you don't know what to say. You don't have to say anything. Just listen. There is power in your presence. Don't avoid using the name of the person who has died. Practical support is often deeply appreciated.

When the initial stages of 'busyness' pass – those linked to the shock of the death and the funeral – the flurry of support often fades as life 'gets back to normal' for others. But for the grieving, life is not the same. Know this.

Keep showing up. Keep supporting your friend. There is no timeline for grief. Jesus brings hope.

Death is not the end.

Jesus still grieved over Lazarus even though he was going to raise him up.

It is okay to grieve. Christians are not immune to grief. The promise of life through the sacrifice of Jesus does bring huge comfort. We have hope.

Be kind to yourself and others, always.

Carol Monson is the TGA representative for Warragul.

# Prayer in the everyday: a conversation with God

As part of the Warragul **HOPE25** program, Jill Dixon, a parishioner, was asked to reflect on her personal prayer life.

*Tell us how you pray?*

I pray simply and often. I talk to the Jesus I know. Sometimes I pray on the run, because life is hectic. Sometimes deliberately with prayer notes I receive, for example, from mission organisations. Personally, I use lists.

Most times I pray on my own but sometimes with others.

Val (my housemate) and I often prayed together. I don't think our shared household would have worked otherwise.

*What do you pray about?*

I give thanks for my food three times a day and that's an easy way to stay connected with the Lord. I also pray for other people's needs. If I get a message that someone is hurting or in need, I pray.

When I was working my prayers were often about the day, people I worked with, and for, sometimes for protection or to sort out an ongoing problem.

Sometimes I pray for bigger issues such as world and national events; things I think our government could do better; the things I find hard in life.

I think the Lord can handle anything, so I tell Him. This sometimes produces action on my part, even if it's an SMS or a phone call.

*Should you pray every day?*

Well, yes, I think so, even if it's thanks for your food or the day ahead. I think we all need to keep in touch, as you would with any friend.

*Why do you pray?*

I pray because I believe God wants us to share our lives with him. There are many examples in scripture that show this. Jesus gave thanks for food; Jesus prayed on a mountain, in the garden of Gethsemane; Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

Moses prayed on Sinai for the rebellious people, David prayed, Paul prayed.

The Bible is full of examples of people praying and of specific prayers: Hannah in the temple praying for a son, Samuel, and so on.

*We are commanded to pray*

*We are encouraged to pray.*

We're also entreated not to be show-offs with our prayers so I wouldn't like you to think I have it all together! However, it's lovely to have more time to pray.





## Celebrating a season of service, farewell to the Wickings

The Rev'ds Jenny and Tony Wicking receiving a tablecloth gift from the congregation

■ Glenda Amos

Sunday 27th April was the final service for Rev'ds Jenny and Tony Wicking and marked the end of their unique joint ministry in the Parish of Yarram.

Jenny and Tony began their ministry during the COVID pandemic in 2020. The Parish was looking forward to a new ministry after 'steering the ship' with many locums and lay ministries during the previous two years. Jenny and Tony set about contacting all parishioners by phone, but no ser-

vices were allowed in the church and no normal parish meetings or gatherings were allowed either.

Out of this strange 'new world' grew 'Zoom' services and Bible study. Nearly five years later these initiatives are still going strong. Eventually services were held again in COVID-safe circumstances.

The three churches in Port Albert, Tarraville and Yarram continue to function with small congregations and special services at Christ Church, Tarraville. However, the community connection with the other churches in Yarram and community dinners, coffee mornings and markets has

grown. Looking at different ways of meeting the needs of people in small parishes has allowed the Yarram parish to continue to flourish.

We continue to have a variety of liturgy in our services and on-line hymns that allow music to continue to be a part of our services without having a resident organist.

We wish Jenny and Tony a well-earned retirement from Parish ministry. Thanks were extended and a presentation made at the end of the service by Glenda Amos. Wendy Pope also presented them with a tablecloth, which she had created with icons of the parish, which everyone signed with good wishes for the future.

St John's and the Umbrella club also made presentations. Lunch was served in the church hall, where ministers from the other churches also expressed their thanks.

Glenda Amos is a parishioner at Holy Trinity, Yarram.



### Supporting the Aboriginal Ministry Fund

- employment of Aboriginal people in ministry
- training of Aboriginal people for ministry
- cultural education within Gippsland Diocese
- development of Aboriginal ministry

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### Wednesday Weekly Bible Study

If you would like to meet with others in Gippsland to read and discuss the Bible, you are welcome to join The Rev'd Bec Hayman's Zoom Bible study group on Wednesday evenings from 8:15pm-9:00pm.

Bec Hayman is the Anglican priest in the cooperating Parish of Churchill/Boolarra/Yinnar.

For more information or to receive the Zoom link contact Bec by telephone 0467 023 363 or email becca\_mike@yahoo.com



# Sand, psalms, and stillness

## Discovering God at Wingan Inlet



Pilgrims gather for communion

### ■ Jude Benton

Over the first weekend of May, while the Gippsland Camino was taking place near the centre of the diocese, at the far eastern end of the diocese another pilgrimage was also occurring.

Back in 2023, within the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong, a few of us began feeling like we needed to combine prayer and the environment and looked at the idea of pilgrimage. In late July 2023, a small group of parishioners walked and prayed from St Peter's in Mallacoota along 32km of the Wilderness Coast track at the Eastern end of the Parish and the feedback was excellent.

So, on the first weekend of May, 11 people (seven men and four women) came together to camp for two nights at Wingan Inlet, an isolated campground one and a half hours drive from Mallacoota or Cann River, being

geographically close to the centre point of the parish. We started and ended each day in prayer and reflection on the psalms of ascension that were used by the Jewish Pilgrims to Jerusalem. Then we spent much time walking, talking, laughing, praying and getting to know each other. Although our walking was limited to about 10kms, it was a valuable time together.

We concluded on Sunday morning with an outdoor communion set up on a fishing table by the inlet – rather fitting for our following of Jesus who called the fishermen. This was one of our two 'Hope 25' project ideas, and with half of the attendees being regular parishioners and the other half family members or friends, it was a great time of gentle evangelism and relationship building. It was also a way of us 'joining in Spirit' with the Gippsland Camino and feeling connected even from such a distance. There is great enthusiasm to have another pilgrimage within the next year around Cann River at the Western end of the Parish.

Pilgrims were invited to rewrite a Psalm reflecting on our own pilgrimage – here was one offering:

### Psalm 121 - The Wingan Inlet version

I look to the top of the hill,  
where will my help come from?  
From the chains designed to help me  
scale this giant sand dune,  
that lie burnt and twisted in the sand?  
From the metal trig point, designed  
to let me know exactly where I am?  
From the cargo ships moving steadily  
across the horizon, carrying all I am told  
I 'need' in life?  
From the distant lighthouse, in daytime  
just a minute white dot on the far head-  
land, at night a beacon of life and safety?  
From the friends awaiting at the top,  
with chocolate and encouragement?  
From my own strength, and youth,  
and energy?

Where does my help come from?  
As I gaze on the vastness of a creation  
almost untouched by humans?  
The sand extending both ways as far  
as I can see. Are God's thoughts about  
me as numerous as the grains of sand?  
In the endless flutter of the robins  
and wrens gathering invisible insects,  
provided for in what they need.  
Will I trust, as the fat possum does,  
believing he will come to no harm and  
have the table spread before him in  
the presence of humanity, his enemy?

Where does my help come from?  
From the Lord who makes heaven  
and earth – but will I be still enough,  
quiet enough, alert enough to see  
and receive the peace I am offered?

Rev'd Jude Benton is the Priest in Charge  
Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong.



Communion on a fishing table next to Wingan Inlet



## Music Foundation Trust exceeds fundraising goal



The Trustees are pleased to announce that the fundraising goal of \$1,000 per year (from 21/11/2021) has been well and truly exceeded due to the generosity of donors. Recently, the amazing amount of \$10,000 was transferred to a Term Deposit in the Diocesan Anglican Development Fund. The interest from the term deposit will be directed to scholarships to support the music program of the Cathedral.

More details about scholarships are available from the Chairperson. Financial gifts may be made via the Trust bank account (details in the adjacent flyer).

*Thanks are extended to retiring Trustees:*

The Hon Robert Fordham AM (Paynesville) and Mrs Meg Knight (Corner Inlet).

*And to new and continuing Trustees:*

Mrs Glenda Edebohls (Traralgon) and Mr Tim Gibson (Paynesville), join The Rev'd Brian Norris (Tambo), Mr Ian Maxfield (Drouin) and Mrs Marion Dewar (Leongatha) in continuing the work of the Trust.



**St Paul's Cathedral Sale Music Foundation Trust**  
ABN 41 695 239 960

**St Paul's Cathedral Sale Music Foundation Trust**

The Trust seeks to provide financial assistance to such persons from time to time to enable the performance of sacred and secular music at or in association with St Paul's Cathedral, Sale, by musicians with a particular focus on the choir and the organ.

**Some ways we invite you to contribute:**

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**CONTACT** ↙



St Paul's Cathedral Sale Music Foundation Trust  
149 Cunninghame Street  
PO Box 691 Sale VIC 3850

Marion Dewar  
Chairperson  
0427 519 534  
musicfoundation@stpaulssale.org.au

## Plaiting the trinity A Pentecost project at Warragul

■ Carol Monson

As a child I loved learning to plait.  
I think my mum taught me with three

stocking legs of different colours.  
I loved plaiting my dolls hair and my

own hair. The plait is a helpful symbol for understanding that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are three in one.

For the children's talk on Pentecost Sunday I decided to make a really long plait with blue, green and white fabric from my craft supplies. (There was no significance in these colours, just what looked pretty together.)

The children at Warragul Anglican Church worked together to create a plait as long as the aisle. We had a few dicey moments of getting tangled and we needed a song, bible readings and half the sermon to finish it. Eventually the three strands formed a lovely long plait the children were proud of creating. We decorated the front of the church with the plait for all to see.



Weaving a colourful plait down the aisle at Warragul

Carol Monson is the TGA representative for Warragul.



Gippsland diocesan missionary and previous diocesan bishop, Jeffrey Driver, has stepped down as the Principal of the Modawa Institute of Higher Education in PNG after seeing the institution through to government recognition as a higher education provider.

Over the past eight years, Bishop Jeffrey has helped transform a once struggling theological college into a thriving institute of higher education, now offering courses in theology, education, and health.

Not long after retiring as Archbishop of Adelaide, +Jeffrey was invited by the House of Bishops to visit what was then Newton College and to assess its viability.

What started as a week-long visit became an eight-year commitment, with Bishop Jeffrey, supported by his wife Lindy, spending about half of each semester in Popondetta, teaching, reorganising, planning and building.

The Modawa Institute expressed its thanks to Bishop Jeffrey in a service and celebration not long before he recently returned to Australia. Bishop Jeffrey preached at a celebratory Eucharist, which was attended by various government and community representatives as well as the Modawa community. The service was followed by a *bung kai* (special feast), including food prepared in a traditional *mumu* (food wrapped in banana leaves and slow cooked in the ground with heated rocks).

One of the speakers at the feast, Provincial Education Advisor Mr Maino Vegoli, said that Bishop Jeffrey had come to the province as a gift of God. 'We had tried for ten years to get a teachers' college going and we failed. But then you came to us and now we have our teacher's college.'

Acting Archbishop Nathan Ingen sent a message of congratulations and thanks. 'We give thanks to God for the service you have given us especially for taking the Modawa Institute of Higher Education to be recognized by the Government – a vision that has been close to our hearts



## Building foundations Bishop Driver's eight-year journey with Modawa Institute

Bishop Jeffrey is thanked for his work in establishing the Modawa Institute of Higher Education, by Oro Province Governor, the Hon. Gary Juffa

and now has taken form through the grace of God and through partners like you.'

'Your wisdom, commitment and theological insight have played a vital role in the shaping foundation and direction of this important institution as you continue to support and offer partnership. We give thanks to God for the many ways in which your presence has blessed not only Modawa but also the wider Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea. To God be the glory: Amen.'

Bishop Jeffrey said that while he was

stepping down from the role of Modawa Institute Principal, he would continue to support the institute as a mentor and advisor. 'In this institute we have something wonderful. But it is just an infant. It will need support and care for years to come. This institute has grown to the point where a part-time principal flying in from Australia is just not enough'.

The Bishop said that he would commit to another two years, spending four to six weeks in PNG to continue mentoring and supporting the development of the Modawa Institute.



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





# Gippsland women raise more than \$10,000 at 'Brunch for Better'

Gippsland Grammar Foundation Chair Jessica Cane (middle) with clinical psychologist Dr Briohny Cotter and women's health GP Dr Stacey Smith

A morning of meaningful conversation, community connection and women's health advocacy has raised more than \$10,000 for the Gippsland Grammar Foundation.

Held at the picturesque Mewburn Park in Maffra on 4 May, the inaugural *Brunch for Better* brought together more than 110 guests – including mothers, grandmothers, Old Scholars, friends and students – for a Mother's Day-inspired celebration with purpose.

The sold-out event featured an engaging 'In Conversation' panel hosted by Foundation Chair Jessica Cane, with East Gippsland clinical psychologist Dr Briohny Cotter and women's health GP Dr Stacey Smith. Both speakers, also Gippsland Grammar parents, tackled important topics facing women today, including the mental load, mental fitness, self-care, and perimenopause.

'We were just blown away,' Ms Cane said. 'I just loved seeing women from across each of our three campuses meet each other and form new connections. And while the event was a lovely occasion to frock up and enjoy a weekend cocktail, it was also a valued opportunity to delve into some important issues that all women are facing.'

The *Brunch for Better* was the Foundation's first fundraiser for 2025 and sets the tone for a year of meaningful giving. Upcoming initiatives include the school's annual *Giving Week* from 23-27 June, and an inaugural Father's Day breakfast on 29 August.

Founded 40 years ago as the fundraising arm of Gippsland Grammar, the Gippsland Grammar Foundation supports the school through spearheading capital improvements, such as the recent Art & Design Centre at the Garnsey Campus, as well as scholarships for those who may not otherwise be able to access an education at the school.

Gippsland Grammar Acting Principal Bo Power said the Foundation's role is pivotal to enriching the school experience.

'Many independent schools have similar avenues for fundraising, and giving has been a part of our school community since it was founded more than 100 years ago,' Mr Power said. 'Some of our earliest fundraisers included car rallies and in the 1950s the Saxon family even donated the profits from a local pine plantation to the school. Events such as a women's health brunch or a targeted Giving Week represent a new era in families creating a legacy and supporting future generations of Gippsland students.'

One standout historical fundraiser is the 1966 publication *Is Emu on the Menu?*, a cookbook created by dedicated school supporters. Combining local recipes with sketches of Gippsland homesteads, the book received acclaim, including a review by the BBC. Republished nine times over 21 years, it remains available today for \$15 from Collins Booksellers in Sale, the School's Garnsey Campus reception, or via email at [development@gippslandgrammar.au](mailto:development@gippslandgrammar.au).

Looking ahead, the Foundation's next major capital focus is a new Early Years precinct at the St Anne's Campus.

This project, foreseen to commence construction in 2026, will include a larger Early Learning Centre with enhanced connection to Foundation classrooms and expanded kindergarten offerings for local families.



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# Students dig into conservation with rare Billy Buttons project

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's Dr Meg Hirst and Natasha van Velzen with Gippsland Grammar Year 11 students Ewan Logan and Bella Lobley

Gippsland Grammar students are giving a green thumbs up to plant conservation.

The school's VCE Agriculture and Horticulture students have partnered with the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's 'Raising Rarity' program to help conserve the threatened plant species *Craspedia Canens*, more commonly known as 'Grey Billy Buttons'.

This striking yellow flower, a relative of varieties often seen in florist bouquets, is now found in only one known wild population in Victoria, near Traralgon. Through the Raising Rarity initiative, the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (RBGV) aims to increase the seed supply of this vulnerable species as a long-term safeguard against extinction.

'The *Craspedia Canens* population is at a critically low number and it's incredibly important to keep this population alive,' RBGV's Dr Meg Hirst said. 'The aim of this project is to prevent what we call plant blindness – we want students to understand that plants are significant in their own right and underpin the living ecosystems that humans and animals live in.'

Dr Hirst visited Gippsland Grammar on 20 May alongside RBGV colleague Natasha van Velzen to introduce the program and assist students with their first planting. The Year 11 students will grow the plants in custom-built garden beds, monitor their growth and collect

seeds. These seeds will then be sent back to the RBGV for viability testing and long-term storage in the Victorian Conservation Seed Bank.

Ms van Velzen said the Raising Rarity citizen science program empowers students to play an active role in conservation. Gippsland Grammar is now one of five local schools involved in the conservation of *Craspedia Canens*, alongside Rosedale, Loch Sport, Bundalaguah, and St Mary's (Maffra) primary schools.

Acting Principal Bo Power – who teaches the VCE Agriculture and Horticulture subject in the school's new outdoor classroom – said the students had overwhelmingly embraced this opportunity to make a real-world impact.

'Raising Rarity was a wonderful concept for us to engage in because of the conservation angle and the links to the science of Horticulture,' Mr Power said. 'And when our students were exposed to both Tash and Meg's energy and knowledge, they couldn't help but get swept along.'

More than 50 per cent of Gippsland Grammar families have direct ties to the agriculture industry, and the school introduced Agriculture and Horticulture as a VCE subject this year in response to this strong connection.

'We're intentionally growing an agricultural education program that connects

students to the land, the science, and the progressive thinking that will shape the future of farming,' Mr Power said.

Gippsland Grammar is intentionally incorporating age-appropriate agriculture curriculum to its teaching and learning programs, from ELC to VCE. This term, three-year-old students at the school's ELC have been learning about worms, soil and sustainability. While the school's Bairnsdale Campus received the 'Schools Sustained Environment Award' at this year's Clean Up Australia Community Awards, and the Year 4 Sustainability Program at the St Anne's junior campus in Sale was recently named as a finalist in the 2025 ResourceSmart School Awards.

Gippsland students who are not current students at Gippsland Grammar are invited to apply for the 'Finish Strong' VCE scholarship for 2026. The Finish Strong scholarship offers a 50 per cent tuition fee remission and is open to current Year 9 students who are looking to transition to the Gippsland independent school from Year 10 in anticipation of 'finishing strong' in VCE. Students studying Years 11 or 12 in 2025 are also invited to apply. Finish Strong applications open on 2 June.

Visit: [www.gippslandgrammar.au/enrolment/scholarships](http://www.gippslandgrammar.au/enrolment/scholarships) for more information.





# Looking to the future and celebrating the past

Head of St Paul's Drouin Junior School, Rowan van Raay, with Drouin students at the Anniversary Service in Warragul

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School has celebrated its 43rd Anniversary hosting two memorable events across the Warragul and Traralgon Campuses.

For the first time, students from the Drouin Campus joined in this cherished tradition, gathering together with Prep to Year 12 students from the Warragul Campus to celebrate as one united school community.

Meanwhile, the Traralgon Campus held its own celebration, bringing together Prep to Year 10 students for a special assembly that also honoured the school's rich history and growing future.

Both campuses welcomed representatives from their respective Anglican churches (The Rev'd Daniel Gebert of the

Warragul Anglican Church and The Rev'd Gradwell Fredericks of the Traralgon Parish of St James Anglican Church), who shared thoughtful reflections during the services.

Bishop Richard led the rededication at both services and shared, 'As well as celebrating what has come before, our Anniversary Service is a great time to recognise and commit to our role in shaping the future of the School.'

Adding a light-hearted twist to the services, a fun quiz-style game show took centre stage, featuring staff and students testing their knowledge of St Paul's past and present. And, as is tradition, students joined in a spirited rendition of *Happy Birthday* to the school – a joyful and heartfelt highlight of the services.

St Paul's commenced with 19 students in 1982 in the Sunday School rooms of St Paul's Anglican Church in Warragul. Since then, the school has grown to be a leading independent, co-educational school of approximately 1,900 students across three campuses in Drouin, Warragul and Traralgon. Over the years, the school has grown steadily, adding a primary school in 1998 and a kindergarten in 1999. The Traralgon Campus was established in 2002 and now accommodates over 640 students from Pre-Kinder to Year 10, expanding next year to include VCE. Continuing this trajectory, the new Drouin Campus opened its doors this year for students from Pre-Kinder to Year 3 and will grow annually to reach Year 6.



Bishop Richard addresses the Traralgon Anniversary Assembly

## Our commitment to a safe church

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

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# Learning, listening, and committing to Reconciliation



St Paul's Traralgon Junior School students Luca, Mohan, Kyra, Saya and Katie in front of the letters to the Stolen Generations

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School students took part in a reflective week of learning and engagement to mark National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week.

Guided by this year's theme, 'Bridging Now to Next', students across the school's three campuses explored the importance of understanding Australia's past to build a more inclusive future. In classrooms, students read books, viewed videos and took part in thoughtful discussions about the experiences and histories of First Nations peoples.

Educators at the Traralgon Junior School also facilitated a meaningful school community installation from Prep to Year 4 students who wrote their personal commitments to reconciliation

on paper leaves, which were then assembled into a reconciliation tree. Students also wrote letters to the Stolen Generations, offering messages of empathy and support that were assembled into a second installation.

Meanwhile, at the Drouin Junior School, students were invited to wear yellow and bring a gold coin to support Children's Ground, an organisation that provides tools and resources needed for the education, health and employment of First Nations children.

Both Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week serve as powerful reminders of the community's shared responsibility to acknowledge the past and work together toward a reconciled future.

## Thoughts from The Abbey

■ Cath Connelly

Let's talk about mantras. Last month I had the privilege of walking the Wicklow Mountains in Ireland. This was a solo walk, covering about 25kms a day, traversing the mountain tops and valleys of countryside both lush and daunting. I found that my body found its own rhythm, walking in a pattern of four. Left, right, left, right. One, two, three, four. My mind also lapsed into a four-fold pattern, finding words that accompanied my steps. One particularly demanding stretch of path I found myself giving thanks for so many people in my life, again in a four-fold rhythm. Thank you Rich-ard. Thank you Sus-an. Thank you Anne pause ...

This use of a continuously prayed mantra is one with roots right back to the desert mothers and fathers of the 4th and 5th centuries CE. The repetition of the Jesus Prayer, the recitation of Maranatha (both of which fit nicely into a four-fold walking pattern) are widely known examples of this. These prayers, these mantras, keep our minds focused, lessening the useless chatter that so often fills the internal dialogue. We are invited to 'pray without ceasing'. Maybe our daily walks can become such a time of mantra immersion.

The Abbey is beautiful here in winter. Rug up well and come visit. You are assured of a much quieter time than our summer chaos – an ideal opportunity to find that space to hibernate.

### Save the date



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

#### JULY

- 6 Harp Concert – Emily Sanzaro
- 10 *Hush Day* – Three Celtic Saints: Cuthbert, Columba and Aidan. Facilitator: June Treadwell
- 10 Celtic Music session
- 11-13 Coming of Age: Stepping Boldly into Elderhood. Facilitator: Janet Munro

#### AUGUST

- 8-10 Circle Dance Retreat. Facilitator: Robyn Sussems
- 14 *Hush Quiet Day* – Maximillian Kolbe: Saint, Reformer, Influencer or Disrupter? Facilitator: Dennis Webster
- 14 Celtic Music session
- 17 Harp Concert – Ben Creighton Griffiths
- 30 Abbey Feast

#### SEPTEMBER

- 11 Celtic Music session
- 18 *Hush Quiet Day* – Journey from the Centre Facilitator: Cath Connelly

## Rev'd Canon Dr James Connelly OAM – A voice for faith, justice, and Gippsland



## ■ Krista Mountford

A beloved priest, teacher, historian and storyteller, Reverend Canon Dr James Connelly – once described as 'the conscience of Warragul' – has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in this year's King's Birthday Honours. The recognition comes after decades of dedicated service to both church and community across Gippsland.

Known simply as 'Jim' to many outside the Diocese, Rev'd Connelly was nominated for the honour without his knowledge. Ever humble, he sees the medal not just as a personal accolade, but a recognition of the region he holds dear.

Born and raised in Garfield to Irish and English parents, Jim's early career was in education, beginning at Garfield State School. His vocation as a teacher took him from Victoria to Sydney, England, Canberra, and back again. He concluded this chapter as the founding principal of Bayview College in Portland.

It was in mid-life that the call to ordained ministry became clear. A lifelong Anglican, he had served as parish councillor and warden before entering theological training.

Over nearly two decades, he ministered in Traralgon, Neerim South, Maffra, and Drouin. In 2001, he was named an Honorary Diocesan Canon of St Paul's Cathedral, Sale, recognising his pastoral leadership and tireless advocacy. Throughout his long and active retirement, Jim has continued to serve, holding the bishop's Permission to Officiate.

His ministry has always extended beyond the pulpit. He has been a staunch advocate for refugees, Indigenous reconciliation, and against the harms of gambling.

Also a prolific writer, Jim has authored 14 books spanning children's fiction and local history. His works, such as *Round and About in Gippsland* and *Mountain Boy*, celebrate the people, places, and stories of the region.

We warmly congratulate Jim on this much deserved recognition.

## A Life of Service: Wendy Pope OAM – honoured for dedication to Yarram and the church



Wendy dressed up to the nines as part of the Easter Parade held in Yarram this year

## ■ Jenny and Tony Wicking

Congratulations to Ms Wendy Pope for her Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM), awarded at the recent King's Birthday 2025 Honours. Wendy was recognised for her services to the community of Yarram.

There are not many people in the Yarram community who do not know Wendy. She has been a tireless worker in the community and the church for over 70 years. There would not be many community groups in Yarram in which

Wendy has not been involved or still involved. These include Rotary, Red Cross, Historical Society, and the gardening, golf and sailing clubs. She has also held committee positions within most of them.

Within the Anglican Parish she has been actively involved with all three churches through participation in

services as well as flower arranging, cleaning and providing morning teas. In addition, she is a natural cook and has provided the church and other people in the community with meals, biscuits, jams and marmalades. One only has to visit her place to see the evidence of these skills. There is either something cooking or freshly baked cakes, biscuits or soup on the kitchen bench.

The Parish Council has greatly benefited from her wisdom over the years

where she has served as warden, parish treasurer, secretary and council member. Her historical knowledge of the area and the parish has been invaluable. She was a founding member of the Twice Blessed Op Shop and continues to serve there after 22 years.

This award is richly deserved, yet in her humble way she says that she does not do things to be recognised.

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Win and his daughter preparing food for their pigs

# Transforming lives, one gift at a time

## ABM Anglicans in Development needs your support

Ten years ago, Win, a rural farmer from Myanmar, was 31, with a young daughter and a newborn son. Every day, as he worked hard to provide for his family, Win worried about his children's future.

How could he give them a better life than his own?

Despite his hard work, the family lived on just a few dollars a day. There was no money to pay school fees once his children were old enough. Without an education, Win knew that their chances would be as limited as his own.

### **But in 2015, thanks to a \$60 gift from a donor, everything changed for Win.**

In 2015, ABM AID's local church partner, CPM1, arrived in his village.

Win received two pigs, funded by a \$60 gift from a donor. He also joined a training program to learn animal husbandry – skills that would change everything. Under his diligent care, Win's pigs began to multiply. He kept the animals he needed for breeding and sold the extras, producing an income. Some money went on daily essentials – food, clothes – but Win set a little aside for his children's schooling.

### **He allowed himself to hope that their future might be better.**

Just last month, ten years since Win was given two pigs by a generous donor, a church staff member visited him at home. The news was better than he could have imagined ...

The money earned from Win's pig business has enabled him to send both his son and his daughter to school.

Win, now 41, says:

Thanks to the training we received through the project, a door was opened to a new source of income. With this blessing, we have been able to support our children's education and provide for all our family's needs. Our daughter is now at boarding school, and our son is in Grade 3. Life has improved so much compared to the past.

That \$60 gift didn't just buy pigs. It transformed Win's life and the life of his family. It broke the cycle of poverty and enabled Win to

send his children to school – with an education, they now have a chance at a different future.

But there are still thousands of people like Win – in Myanmar and around the world – who are trapped in the cycle of poverty.

ABM is urging people to make a tax-deductible gift to ABM AID's Sustainable Communities program. Your gift can be life-changing for people like Win who live in the world's poorest countries.

- \$60 can supply a family with two pigs to start a business and earn an income
- \$120 can provide pipes for a new tube well, giving reliable access to clean water
- \$320 can give a family seeds, tools and training to boost productivity and improve access to nutritious food

For people like Win, who live in the world's poorest countries, this support is transformative. It opens up new opportunities – for work, for health, for education – and gives them a chance at a more abundant future.

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Win attending an agriculture training program at his local church in 2015



# A climate change hypothetical

## ■ Jan Down

Laughter is not something usually associated with climate change, but there were plenty of laughs at the very entertaining Climate Change Hypothetical on Thursday 1 May at the Bond Street Event Centre in Sale.

Darren McCubbin, CEO of Gippsland Climate Change Network, who has a background in theatre, was in his element questioning the four fictitious characters on the panel: Jack Foley, the Minister for Climate Change, Energy and Environment; Dr Prya Das, academic and inventor of the Direct Air Capture Pack (the DAC Pack) which sequesters carbon dioxide from the atmosphere; Reuben, a local farmer who offers to install the DAC Pack on his farm; and Vince, the CEO of 'Gippsburn Energy', a coal-fired power station in the 'CoalBorough' region.

The power station is about to close as it is reaching the end of its life.

The four parts were played very convincingly by John Gwyther of Wellington Climate Action Network; Ashley Hall (Economic Development Advisor in the State Government); Dr Jo McCubbin, a medical doctor; and Rod Horton, Managing Director of Nrgwise, a solar power company.

Around the walls of the hall was an exhibition of paintings on the theme of climate change by Julie Mielke, a Sale artist and parishioner of St Paul's Anglican Cathedral. Before the hypothetical began, Julie spoke briefly of her concern about climate change, and about her paintings as a form of protest. One painting, depicting a small island on fire in the ocean, was titled 'Drill, Baby, Drill'.

The scenario for the panel centred around the question of making CoalBorough carbon neutral, and

the impact of the DAC Pack for each of the sectors represented, with panellists bringing out different perspectives.

Darren introduced extra elements at times, such as suddenly announcing that Dr Ras, when visiting the farm where the DAC Pack was installed, has just stepped on a rare, endangered 'laughing frog', leaving only 49 in existence.

Will she tell?!  
(More laughter from the audience.)

After this enjoyable and thought-provoking evening, David Willington, who runs the Bond Street Event Centre, said he was keen to hold a series of hypotheticals on different topics.

Jan Down is Chair of ACTinG (Acting on Climate Together in Gippsland) and a TGA representative for the Parish of Sale.

Darren McCubbin, far right, briefing panel players before the hypothetical  
L-R: Dr Jo McCubbin, John Gwyther, Rod Horton and Ashley Hall

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## An open letter to ACTinG

Dear ACTinG,

Thank you for the thoughtful and vital work you continue to do in leading our diocese to care more deeply for God's creation.

I just wanted to elaborate a bit further on the question I raised at Synod recently, something I've been thinking about for a while now. As someone who teaches Geography and works with young people on issues like sustainability, biodiversity, and land use, I've increasingly found myself reflecting on the role our parishes can play in addressing not only climate change but also ecological degradation more broadly. I know ACTinG already champions important conversations around energy, theology, and household action, but I wanted to encourage ACTinG to consider an additional two areas in particular: biodiversity and parish consumption. In relation to parish consumption, credit is due to David Atkinson who raised the question of consumption as a priority for ACTinG at Synod.

In relation to parish consumption, I think there is a lot of scope for churches to examine the resources they use week to week. Things like electricity sources, catering practices, and even digital versus paper communications all provide opportunities to ask, 'Is there a more sustainable way we could be doing this?' I imagine many parishes would welcome a set of simple,

practical suggestions or reflective questions to get them thinking along these lines, especially if presented as a supportive invitation rather than a demand.

I'd love also to encourage ACTinG to give some attention to biodiversity, particularly in how we steward the land we already occupy. Many parishes have gardens, grassy verges, or churchyards that could become havens for native flora and fauna. I've seen firsthand the kinds of local ecological restoration projects that can make a genuine difference, not just to biodiversity, but to people's connection with the place they live in. Even small changes like planting indigenous species, creating habitat zones for pollinators, or reducing mowing frequency can add up to something significant. Nesting boxes for native species are another relatively low-stakes initiative that could be enacted on parish land. Ideally all of this could be undertaken in partnership with First Nations people, who have been steadfast stewards of our natural environment for generations.

Mapping and sharing the types of land parishes care for could be a helpful step. It would be exciting to see a shared visual record across the diocese of land use, biodiversity initiatives, or even potential areas for regeneration. This could help inspire

and connect parishes who are just starting out with others who have already taken some steps.

In this spirit, it would be wonderful to see biodiversity considered as a theological and ecological priority alongside carbon reduction. There is something really beautiful about local churches not only proclaiming the good news but also visibly nurturing the good earth – something that can in turn bless the communities in which we live.

When creation is allowed to flourish, the whole community flourishes with it, as echoed in the call of Jeremiah 29:7 to seek the peace and prosperity of the places we inhabit. With the level of care and concern that ACTinG already brings to its mission, I have no doubt that this would fit naturally into the work you are already doing.

Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

Jeremiah 29:7

Thanks again for the work you do. I look forward to hearing more about some of ACTinG's further initiatives in the coming year.

Blessings,

**Jack Beamish**

Youth Minister,

Warragul Anglican Church

## Forest's reply to Jeremiah May 2025

Dear Jeremiah,

How good it is to have contact with you through the centuries. I have shared your letter with my community, and we have a sense of solidarity with you knowing that there were people who cared about the impact of your actions on us 300 years later. Even though greed was riding high in your time, we see signs of life, hope and future concern. In our time we name this as the movement of Spirit.

Your letter has caused a lot of discussion. We are wondering whether one of the changes over the centuries is our understanding of our relationship with other-than-human beings. We know that all beings, whether animal or vegetable, are interconnected. As such, we do our best to work in harmony with all. This is not easy, and I do not want to paint an idyllic picture. Far from it – we are crawling our way back from near extinction. We are, though, living as best we can with the

mindset of being one with the 'universal choir of creation.'

Jeremiah, how your people must cry when you see the unfolding devastation resulting from the greed you write about. If we can offer a voice from the future, and therefore maybe a wider picture, we see growth in your time of a rising of consciousness about our interconnectedness. Both CreatureKind and the Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals are two such examples of church-based groups which claim this as a core understanding. Hold on to this, Jeremiah. Because of you and others like you, and because of the continual movement of Spirit, we are here.

In gratitude for making this connection with you, and in hope that this might continue,

**Forest**

Winter Moon Day, 2325

# The meaning of singleness

## Retrieving an eschatological vision for the contemporary church

Danielle Treweek

IVP Academic

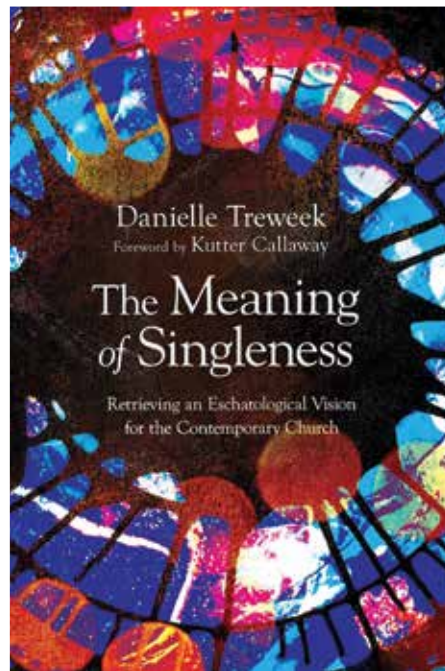
2023

■ Keren Terpstra

When Bishop Richard asked me to review this winner of Book of the Year 2024, I groaned internally, thinking of the complexity of my relationship with my own singleness as a person in ministry. When still in theological college I had two vivid, sharp experiences which revealed something to me of our Anglican Church's view of the single. The first was in preparing for a service in an October of Year A (Sunday between 2 and 8 October), and seeing the two collects APBA offers, reflecting the Gospel reading of the day (Matthew 21:33-46), one of which celebrates marriage, and the other of which celebrates children. As far as I know, there are no other collects in the regular Sunday cycle which celebrate in any way singleness either as situation or vocation; in the church (apparently) one is either married – or a child. The second encounter was a senior priest saying to me, 'As a single person in ministry you will represent a threat to many.'

As I began to read Treweek's book, I found myself resonating strongly. Although she is addressing a largely evangelical (reformed) audience, her assessment of the attitudes of society and the (protestant) church towards singleness echoed eerily true. Treweek begins her monograph by providing an outline of how singleness has been viewed by Western societies since the Reformation. Western societies, as Treweek says, have consistently typecast unmarried persons – especially women – as the 'other'. And so has the church. She traces the development of evangelical protestant attitudes, which have in many cases taken societal views of singleness and marriage – and baptised them, to the point that the societal thrust towards the nuclear family, established around a romantic relationship infected the church too, enshrining marriage, 'family values', and the breadwinner/homemaker paradigm as 'the biblical model of marriage'.

Even sources that speak of singleness as a topic do so within the context of 'marriage' or 'family'. And when they do speak about singleness, it is because in this frame of thinking, single Christians are deeply problematic.



It's worth noting that singleness is hard to define and includes a number of different groups: the never married or partnered, the not-yet married, the widowed. Yet evangelical discourse tends to assume as a given that those who are not married just haven't found the right person (yet), their singleness oriented towards its obviation in marriage. Singleness is a deficient, aberrant state, in direct contravention of God's command to multiply and fill the earth. It is selfish and self-serving, and almost dangerously sinful. The exception to this is those (in this line of thinking, very rare few) who have actively embraced celibacy. Treweek points out that views about singleness often see it as contrasting with the 'biblical model of marriage' or 'what God intended in creation', which is a partnership of male and female together.

In search of a 'thick' theology which in contrast to these narratives looks at singleness through the lens of eschatological hope, Treweek mines the resources of (pre-Reformation) church history, key scripture passages, and historical theology. This survey reveals a deep and greatly varied picture, albeit one that is inextricably bound up in questions about the place and meaning of sex even within marriage.

Treweek's 'retrieval' opens a potential vista for exploration: the notion that singleness, as eschatologically oriented – a representation of the future in which 'they neither will give nor be given in

marriage but will be like the angels' – is the embodiment of resurrection life in the present. The presence of the single (for whatever reason that singleness has come about) is an invitation to the church community to engage in that liminal space of the now-but-not-yet.

This throws a foil to the 'Disney-fied' narrative of romantic love as the ultimate goal of human existence, and the heteronormative, narrow theological focus on marriage, the meaning of sex, and indeed singleness as vocation.

I am not completely convinced that Treweek arrives in her monograph at the 'thick' theology she was setting out to develop. Granted, this volume is a reworking of her PhD thesis which had to operate within manageable limits. However, I found the engagement with sources somewhat superficial and completely absent the usual laying out of methodology, including weighing its merits and demerits as applicable to the task. Further, Treweek's biblical exegesis didn't engage me; while I come from a different hermeneutical tradition, I missed a deeper, richer, and more far-reaching way of engaging with the levels present in the text.

What would also have helped the book overall was further engagement with some of the themes Treweek alluded to but conveniently danced around: like the relationship between the treatment of singleness and the place of women in the church.

I also wonder whether she has not fully resolved the issue of singleness and sexuality – preferring to toe the 'traditional' line about continence if single or same sex attracted. I did not find her engagement with these issues convincing in the context of her eschatological vision.

What I valued most in this monograph is Treweek's voice beginning to name and embrace a position in a conversation which largely is negative towards singleness. She lays claim for a space for singleness in the church to be celebrated for the gifts it brings. Rather than being a threat or an anomaly, singleness points beyond itself to the life hereafter. That singleness has something sacramental to offer the church? That's something I'll be continuing to ponder.

The Very Reverend Keren Terpstra  
is the Dean at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.



# The Fountain of Public Prosperity

Evangelical Christians in Australian History 1740-1914

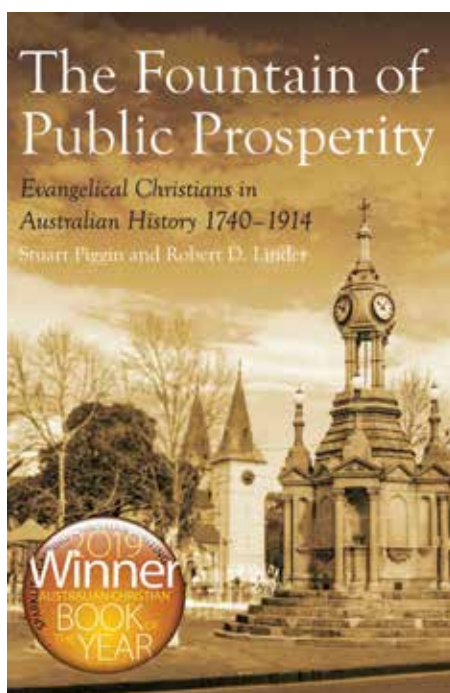
Stuart Piggin and Robert D. Linder  
Clayton, Monash University  
Publishing, 2019

■ Richard Prideaux

This volume is an extraordinary picture of the early history of Australia from the arrival of the First Fleet to the beginning of the twentieth century with a particular emphasis on the history of Australian evangelicalism. Australian Stuart Piggin and the late American historian Robert D Linder produced this exceptional history in honour of Australia's bicentenary.

It is the first of two major texts, the second being entitled, 'Attending to the National Soul: Australian History 1914-2014', published by the same two authors. Key scholars who helped lay the foundation of Volume 1 include Brian and Jan Dickey, John and Judy Harris, David Hilliard, Marcus Loane, Hans Mol, Donald Robinson, Paul White, John Harris and Brian Dickey. In addition, over 140 key scholars provided information and substantial religious history and background from the first fleet until 1920.

A key admission by the writers was an acceptance of the failure of the newly arrived 'aliens' from Britain to communicate, care for and work effectively with the varied Aboriginal communities who must have been completely stunned by the strange newcomers to Sydney Cove. This makes for sad reading throughout the 1740-1914 narrative and indeed is still not making great progress today. Despite hundreds of deaths, no white person was punished by law for killing an Aboriginal person until 1838. Aboriginal resistance forces, and pitched battles were fought in what is now Sydney's western suburbs. This pattern was repeated throughout the continent for over a century with the



rounding up and destruction of Tasmanian Aboriginals ... the worst of a very bad story.

Without in any way diminishing the trauma of the Aboriginal community, the rest of this story makes for fascinating reading for Christians seeking an understanding of the commencement of Christian faith across the Australian continent. The story includes Christian denominations of all sorts including Anglicans, Methodists, Dissenters, Baptists, Wesleyans, Quakers, Presbyterians, Catholics, the Salvation Army and others – too many to mention. There are also significant chapters on very effective ministries

to Aboriginal communities over the years even if the numbers of ministries are heart-breakingly small.

Outstanding evangelical bishops of the nineteenth century included Charles Perry of Melbourne and Frederick Barker of Sydney, both of whom made huge impacts on the development of Anglican faith in Melbourne and Sydney respectively. At the same time there were many challenges and opponents of the Christian faith, especially assaults on the Bible, the impact of scientific developments including Darwinian explanations for the origin of species.

The extensive study includes every Australian State, cross-cultural missions overseas emanating from Australia, the development of Ridley College, Keswick Convention, the Holiness revival, Moore College, bush preachers, the rise of modernism and Anglo-Catholicism, liberalism, missions and revivals, the influence of Australia on revivals in Wales and India, and a very thorough concluding summary of a range of propositions on the vitality of evangelical Christianity in the Australian story.

This is a seriously important book for Christians and indeed for all Australians. It will make you feel some pride in our Christian heritage while reminding us that there is always more to do. Five stars and rising!

Richard Prideaux is a Diocesan Lay Reader in Bass/Phillip Island Parish.

## EVENTS

For events at The Abbey, see page 17

### JULY

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 6-13 | NAIDOC Week: <i>The Next Generation Strength, Vision &amp; Legacy</i> |
| 19   | Primal Election Board meets in Sydney                                 |
| 26   | Special Session of General Synod                                      |

### AUGUST

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| 2 & 16 | Lay Reader Seminars (Drouin and Sale)                     |
| 23     | Seminar on Luke's Gospel, St Paul's Sale 2-4pm            |
| 21-24  | East African Revival Centenary Conference, Gahini, Rwanda |

### SEPTEMBER 1 – OCTOBER 4

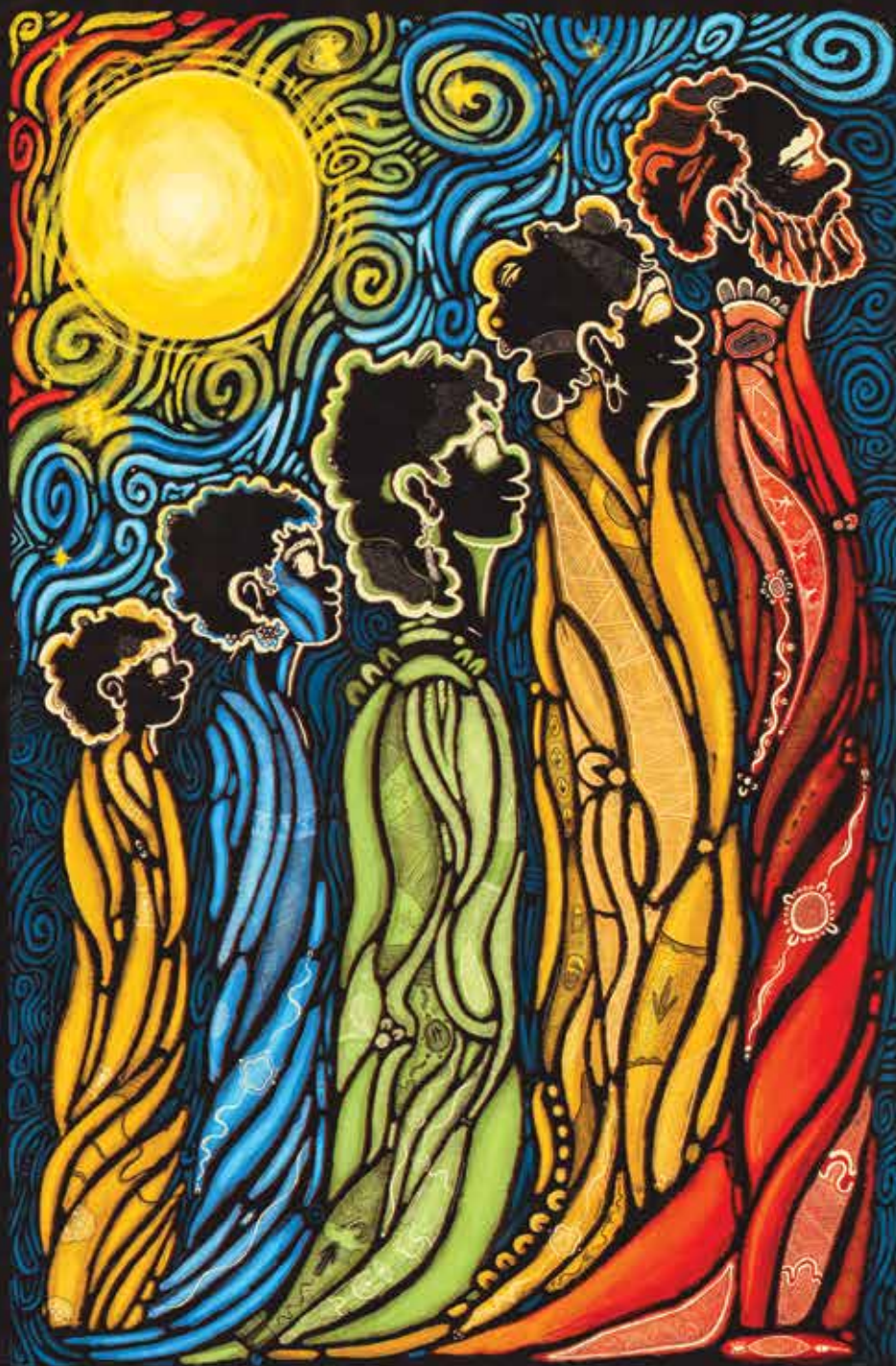
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## THE NEXT GENERATION: STRENGTH, VISION & LEGACY

6-13 JULY 2025



Aboriginal Flag designed by Sir Ronald Thomas. Torres Strait Islander Flag reproduced by kind permission of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council. Designed by the late Sir Bernard Narmak.

### Ancestral Lines by Jeremy Morgan Worrall

This artwork is a visual representation of the generational lines that carry through my mob. When I think of the next generation, I think towards my ancestors—Lucy Wright, Enoch Wright, Nanie Wright—through to my Nanna Audrie and my Mother Vanessa. Looking back gives me the strength and vision to look forward. Each figure in the painting is tied to family lines, like songlines, reflecting what they knew and what they passed on. The first represents lore, hunting, and tracking. The second reflects care, weaving, and love. The third shows the two combined, while the final two carry unfinished elements—symbols of knowledge and care in motion. Above them sits the essence of Country—swirling skies and a giant moon over Emmaville. It is by the fire, under these cool skies, where the next generation finds their strength, vision, and legacy.

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