



**P7**  
Blessings  
at Bunyip  
Market



**P8**  
From Lent  
to light



**P16**  
SCAMPS  
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# The <sup>Gippsland</sup> Anglican

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## Walking the Gippsland Camino 2026



# The love of Christ urges us on

Excerpts from Bishop Richard's Presidential Address Synod, 16 May 2026

This verse from St Paul's Second Letter to the Church in Corinth (5:14) has always been a favourite of mine. Biblical scholars would ponder whether this is a subjective or an objective genitive: is it Christ's love for us that compels us, or our love for Christ? Personally, I like the ambiguity, and see it as both/and, rather than either/or.

Mind you, I am one who has a high tolerance for ambiguity. I think that's why I'm an Anglican. Anglicanism at its best, I would argue, has a comprehensive theological worldview which allows space for people to move, and question, and differ, and to remain in eucharistic fellowship – in communion – under the one canopy.

Alas, the worldwide Anglican Communion – some 85 million people across 42 autonomous and interdependent Provinces in some 165 countries – is showing signs of becoming less comprehensive, more rigid, and – as a consequence – more brittle. I could talk at length about this, with an IASCUFO hat on, but I don't intend to, for two reasons.

First, I don't wish to give any credence to the idea that there is some alternate or parallel form of the Anglican Communion apart from that connected with the historic See of Canterbury, to which our Province of Australia is constitutionally bound.

Second, I want us to focus this weekend on what is happening at the local level: in the Diocese of Gippsland and its 30 parishes, two schools, and various chaplaincies; in our agencies and other partner organisations; in the communities we serve, where people's lives can be healed and transformed by the love of Christ, which urges on.

We will hear back from the various Working Groups which have been formed in response to Synod motions from previous years. This is work that Synod has commissioned, and it's important to share the progress made on those fronts, including creation care, evangelistic outreach, responding to family violence, supporting women's ministry, optimizing communications, safe ministry, good governance, and financial stewardship.

2027 marks the 125th anniversary of the Diocese of Gippsland (and of Bendigo and Wangaratta) as regional dioceses were birthed from the Diocese of Melbourne, and what a joy it was to welcome our Archbishop and Metropolitan, The Most Rev'd Dr Ric Thorpe, and Mrs Louie Thorpe, at the Synod Eucharist.

Such longevity in terms of European connection with this region is, of course, but a blip in the context of the world's oldest continuous cultures which have been on Country for tens of thousands of years. Nonetheless, as we approach this milestone, it behooves us to reflect, give thanks, celebrate, and press ahead with our share of God's mission to the world in Christ.

To that end, the Diocesan Vision has been given a little tweak – a freshen up – which I hope will encourage us over the next 18 months or so both to tell the stories of our history, and to dream dreams of our future in God's good providence.

**Gippsland Anglicans:  
Committed – Connecting – Creative**

**Towards 125 years of service  
to the region: 1902 – 2027**

**The love of Christ urges us on**

### Committed

The love of Christ urges us on as those who are committed in baptism as ministers of his Gospel, lay and ordained, to build up his body and come to full maturity as members of it. Our own discipleship will always be the most compelling witness to our crucified and risen Lord and his kingdom of justice and grace.

Following on from Hope25, and emboldened by a motion from last year's Synod, our Diocesan Outreach team has developed a Strategic Plan for keeping 'discipling' – our own and others' – at the centre of all that we do.

This takes many different shapes – as it should if we are paying attention to our contexts – anything and everything that forms our people in faith and baptismal ministry, and empowers them to give an account of the hope that is within us. That is our core business, and if we forget that then we are just another community organization or self-help group, however worthy. No, we are committed in Christ, whose love urges us on to kindle hearts and minds on fire with love for him.

You are the local experts, and the role of your bishop, along with Bishop-in-Council and the Registry Office, is to release you into local initiative, and local decision-making, by clearing away as many of the burdens and barriers to that as possible. It's why we have invested in a diocesan Clearance Officer, for example. And it's why the Governance Committee is looking to streamline the Parish Administration Act.

One of my mantras is 'give permission and get out of the way.' If I can do that more effectively, or if at the Registry Office we can better serve your ministry in this sense, please let us know, so that



**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.**

we can set you free to do what only you can do in your communities.

### Connecting

The love of Christ urges us on to reach out in partnership with our ecumenical sisters and brothers, with our Anglican schools and agencies, and with all of good will, to meet the needs of those Christ came to heal and save.

We're delighted therefore by the appointment of Sarah Gover, one of our recent ordinands, to Gippsland's Parish Partnerships position at Anglicare Victoria. To have a permanent deacon in this outward-facing diaconal role makes perfect sense.

Anglicare's auspicing of a DFFH grant awarded to the Parish of Wonthaggi / Inverloch shows us what is possible when we connect in service. As does the Emergency Relief work happening out of St Mary's Morwell, also supported by government funding acquitted by Anglicare.

In April we commissioned Marinus and Hannah van Meerton as BCA Ministry Trainees in the Parish of Bass / Phillip Island and the Diocese of Gippsland. BCA's ongoing support at Croajingolong means that, at either end of the Diocese, we are engaged in partnership with this agency that has a long history in our region, to resource ministry in places that might otherwise struggle to harness the opportunity of growth, or to meet the needs of a more remote community.

Good communication is essential to our capacity to connect. When first published as *The Church News* in 1904, what we know as *TGA* cost tuppence to buy. I'm not sure how that compares with today's RRP of \$7.95, though most of our readers enjoy it freely, courtesy of a heavily discounted parish subscription.

Producing and distributing *TGA* now costs us \$8,500 per edition (\$93k p.a.), after advertising revenue and subscriptions. Synod asked Bishop-in-Council to look into that, and to generate a Communications Strategy for how we might best connect 'internally', as Gippsland Anglicans, and 'externally' as those who have good news to share in the public square. No better recent example of that, perhaps, than ABC Gippsland's report on the Parish of Avon: <https://bit.ly/4eqvZX8>

The Working Group formed has taken stock of existing communication pathways. It recommends reducing the number of editions of *TGA* from eleven to six per year, and reinvesting some of the savings in a dedicated Communications Officer (0.7), to diversify and coordinate our communications platforms.

Veterans of Synod will know that I am a staunch advocate for our flagship print publication. That said, we believe *TGA* can continue to fulfil its purpose in a bi-monthly cycle. Far from being the 'thin end of the wedge', this recommendation seeks to ensure that our proper investment in the connecting ministry of communications enables us to reach as many people as possible, as effectively as possible.



### Creative

The love of Christ urges us on to listen for Holy Spirit, who leads us into the truth that is the living Christ; truth that is always ahead of us, as our risen and ascended Lord goes ahead us.

That means taking some godly risks, holding lightly to existing structures, and having a good theology of failure. Ministry in our diverse and often challenging settings demands that new things be tried and trialled, knowing full well that some will need to fall to the ground.

With Jude Benton's move from Croajingolong, Bevil Lunson's retirement after 20 years of innovative service in Orbost, and plans for a service in August to celebrate Thelma Langshaw's remarkable ministry in Omeo, the far east of the Diocese starts to look a little sparse in terms of ordained leadership.

What a gift, then, to have not only a new Deacon at Mallacoota in Ken Spackman, but an itinerant permanent Deacon in Sue Newcombe who, as Associate Regional Dean of the Eastern Region, working with Lyndon Phillips, is able to respond to emerging needs in these and other ministry centres.

In that same spirit we pay tribute to all of our clergy who minister as locums, both longer and shorter term. The Locum Ministry Working Group's report is helping us find new ways to honour and support that cohort, including through regular gatherings for worship and fellowship.

The Diocesan Staff team – our Archdeacons and Regional Deans, the Dean and Registrar – is closely engaged in addressing some of these pastoral leadership challenges, and provides valuable strategic and missional advice to the Trusts Corporation on property issues. Warm and robust collegiality around executive and governance tables, with those stipended and volunteers alike, makes it easier to be creative in spirit, and we are grateful to all who give so generously of their time and expertise.

Plans are maturing for the redevelopment of aging facilities at The Abbey, including the iconic A-frame which is exactly the same age as me, and starting to look and feel like it! As one of a very few remaining Anglican retreat houses, The Abbey serves a vital role as a centre for hospitality, spirituality, and the environment, open to all.

We must invest in this asset, as in other points of difference that express a church with soft edges, and porous boundaries; a culture of radical inclusion, an economy of grace.

### In closing

We might say at this middle Session of our 41st Synod that key indices at the local level remain strong. This year's National Church Life Survey will give us some solid data on that.

Anecdotally, I see gentle numerical growth, demographic diversity, strong community engagement, and deepening discipleship. May this give us the courage and confidence to keep going on paths both familiar and new, urged on by the love of Christ – committed, connecting, creative – towards 125 years of service to the region, and beyond.

The full text of +Richard's Address will be on the diocesan website from 16 May. Further reporting on Synod we be in June's edition of *TGA*.



# Vision via faith

L-R: Bishop Richard, BCA Vic Adrian Lane, Marinus with Samuel, Hannah with Elianna, Rev'd Ruth Hanlon and BCA National Director Rev'd Canon Greg Harris

## ■ Les Ridge

On the night of Wednesday 15 April, an event took place that marked a significant step of faith and vision for the parish of Bass-Phillip Island. The Parish Hall in Cowes rapidly filled with as many 'out-of-towners' as parishioners, because this was the commissioning service of Marinus and Hannah van Meerten.

During 2025, members of the Parish Council met at the Allansfield Retreat Centre in Rhyll for a time of reflection and planning. During the retreat, the facilitator, Peter McPherson, posed the question: 'If money were no object, what would you most want the parish to do?' The rapid consensus was to employ a second ministry team member. For many, that 'what if' moment remained in the 'too hard basket', along with the notion of ever paying off the parish loan. But not so for our Treasurer, Richard Gijbsbers. Rather than putting a stop to seemingly irresponsible wishful thinking, Richard revealed that he had already looked at the budget implications and had identified the potential sticking points.

Possessing 20/20 hindsight is a wonderful thing. It enables us to look back over the various seemingly unconnected identities and events that popped up in the following months and ultimately led to an invitation being extended to Marinus and Hannah. As an example of God's loving hand at work, consider the significance

of Hannah's father being Peter McPherson who prompted us to step out in faith in the first place. More evidence of God's hand in all of this is BCA's involvement. It is Bush Church Aid that will be providing a significant proportion of the van Meerten's support.

So, with a healthy contingent of St John's Cranbourne supporters, Bishop John Harrower (past Bishop of Tasmania), many other disparate clergy and friends, plus folk from St Paul's Bass, St Augustine's San Remo and St Philip's Cowes, it was time for Parish Rector, the Rev'd Ruth Hanlon, to welcome everyone and commence the proceedings with some rousing hymns.

Before Bishop Richard could commission the van Meertens, it was necessary for them to become members of the BCA field team. This crucial step was carried out by BCA National Director Rev'd Canon Greg Harris. In this way, Marinus and Hannah became BCA field staff members attached to St Augustine's, San Remo. It was then the turn of Bishop Richard to commission Marinus and Hannah and in doing so, established Marinus as a Minister in training under the supervision of Rev'd Ruth.

As with any ceremony or action involving commitment to service in God's kingdom, prayer needs to be front and centre. And so, at this juncture Archdeacon Graham Knott

led us in a time of prayer that focussed attention on our continued reliance on God's grace and good favour in all that lay before us.

With certificates presented, handshakes and hugs exchanged, a conclusion of the administrative part of the service was reached. It was now time for attention to be drawn away from things of this world through a sermon, and Greg Harris delivered a message that encapsulated the will of God for us, and in particular, the van Meertens. It could be summed up in just three words: *Not me... HIM*. So simple and yet so powerful and memorable. So often we are tempted to think that our circumstances are all about us. But Greg reminded us that in reality, no matter what we do, it is ultimately all about God.

The final formality was far from formal, as it was a time of welcome to the van Merten family. The Regional Dean, Rev'd Dr Fran Grimes, welcomed Marinus and Hannah into our deanery and Diocese. Members of St Augustine's, Jenny Dawson and Grace Ipple, then made them even more welcome with heart-felt words and a basket of goodies that spoke for itself.

More rousing singing then followed to round out what was a most satisfying and inspiring service.

Obligatory refreshments and fellowship followed, and many old relationships were rekindled as folk exclaimed, 'I haven't seen you in ages!'

There remains just one more thing that has to do with stepping out in faith. It occurred at a Parish Council meeting earlier this year. We had reached the Treasurer's report on the agenda and Richard arrived at the issue of just how we were going to budget for a second ministry team member. Instead of the expected belt-tightening message, I watched Richard pause and make a visible effort to maintain his composure. He then told us that he had looked seriously at the parish balance sheet with appropriate outgoing numbers plugged in and to his amazement it was clearly evident that a variety of financial events and provisions had made it workable. But as Richard listed each individual item that gave him the green light, the hand of God in all of it became so clear to him and tears of joy rendered him speechless for a few seconds. It was at that moment that any doubts I might have been



A large congregation attended the van Meertens commissioning service

harbouring about going ahead just evaporated. It was truly the will of God that the van Meertens take up the challenge to reach out to the influx of young families in San Remo

for His glory. *Not me... HIM!*

Les Ridge is the TGA Representative at Bass/Phillip Island.

## Vale Father Jim



Vale Father Jim Reeves

### ■ Sue Fordham

If you could design the ideal funeral, then this one would be it. Blissful weather, a still, blue-skied, warm autumn day and a church packed with people who not only understood the liturgy but joined in with familiarity and fervour.

Such was the funeral of Fr Jim Reeves, held at the church of St Peter by the Lake on 23 April; St George's day as it happens.

It was a family affair in every sense: his wife, children and grandchildren

present and playing active roles in the service, his church family present en masse and his clergy family there in numbers too. Bishop Richard made introductory remarks and led the Commendation prayer. Bishop Jeffrey Driver led the prayers preceding the Commendation.

The requiem Eucharist to commemorate his life was joyful, solemn in parts and life-affirmingly funny in the homily and tributes.

Bishop Richard described Jim as 'a good and faithful servant of the church' and a 'priest to his bootlaces'.

The homily delivered by Fr Dennis Webster, who also officiated, began as a tribute from the St Peter's church family that Jim had made his home and then described the essential character trait by which Jim is widely known; his cantankerousness, stubbornness and wit.

'He loved being cantankerous. When a colleague asked him, "Aren't you dead yet?", Jim replied quick as a flash, "After you."'

Fr Dennis said of Jim, 'His life was one of lifting others with the cup of salvation. Now, in God's presence, he is drinking from that cup himself.'

A friend and fellow priest, Fr Jeffrey Berger outlined Fr Jim's astonishing service that ranged over the Dioceses of Wangaratta, North Queensland, Brisbane and Gippsland. He described Fr Jim in the words of psalm 110,

'You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek', a calling from which there was no retirement, no release, no let up.

'He was my good friend and I loved him. Having said that though, you and I both know that he was a curmudgeonly old bugger, strong willed and stubborn to the end. As Jim stands before the Lord, I believe Jesus would have said to him, "Well done, my good and faithful servant; and welcome".'

Jim's widow, Del, presented a masterful family recollection sprinkled with instances of Fr Jim's acerbic wit. When asked by his then Bishop what he had given up for Lent, Fr Jim replied. 'Bishop, I've given up Church.'

Jim had a heart attack during his placement in the parish of Nagambie. His doctor suggested that he either retire or change the nature of his work. Jim thought for a bit then replied, 'I think I might take on heart surgery then.'

That was Fr Jim. Even after retirement, like most priests, he just kept on going.

Fittingly, as the funeral party and coffin processed to the waiting hearse and we sung *Magnificat*, we were joined by the carolling family of St Peter's magpies.

Sue Fordham is the TGA Representative at Paynesville.

# Coming together for renewal and blessing

Blessing of the Chrism: recalling both Christ's anointing and the Spirit breathed upon the disciples at Easter

## ■ Krista Mountford

Clergy and lay representatives from across the Diocese gathered at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale, on Tuesday 31 March for the Chrism Eucharist, including the Renewal of Vows and Blessing of Oils. Held during Holy Week, this significant service brought people together in a shared act of repentance, renewal, and preparation for the Triduum and Easter.

The liturgy opened with a call to worship and confession, 'God shows great love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.' The themes of sacrifice and redemption continued throughout the service, particularly in the readings and hymns reflecting on the cross and Christ's suffering.

At the heart of the Eucharist was the

renewal of vocational commitments and ordination vows. Clergy reaffirmed their calling to ministry, while Lay Readers also recommitted to their role in leading worship and proclaiming Scripture. The congregation joined in renewing their baptismal promises, declaring: 'I turn to Christ... I will, by God's grace, strive to live as a disciple of Christ.' This shared reaffirmation highlighted the common calling of all the baptised to lives of service.

A central focus of the service was the blessing of the holy oils. The Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and the Oil of Chrism were each presented and prayed over. The prayers spoke of healing, strengthening, and consecration, asking that

those anointed 'be made whole in body, mind and spirit' and share in Christ's victory over sin and death.

The service concluded with Holy Communion and a commissioning to go out in Christ's name. As the final blessing declared, Christ is 'a sure ground for faith, a firm support for hope, and the assurance of sin forgiven.'

The Chrism Eucharist remains a powerful reminder that, as 'servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries,' the Church is called to renewal, unity, and faithful witness in the world.

Krista Mountford is the TGA Editor and Diocesan Development Officer.

## Maundy Thursday at St Paul's

### ■ Christine Morris

Where large hands washed tiny feet, then tiny hands washed large feet! And some just had their hands washed. But what does maundy mean? Although associated with 'the ceremony of washing the feet of the poor, especially commemorating Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet on Maundy Thursday', it means more... Recorded around 1250–1300, the word maundy comes from the Old French *mande*, in turn from the Latin *mandatum*, which means 'mandate or command.'

As you may have guessed, this Latin word is the source of the English mandate. The specific mandate or command at hand refers to the words Jesus is believed to have spoken after washing the feet of his disciples during the Last Supper. In the New King James Version of the Gospel of John, 13:34 Jesus said: 'A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.' New commandment, in the Latin of the Vulgate, is *novum mandatum*.



Tiny hands washing large feet on Maundy Thursday

# Blessings at Bunyip Market



## ■ Ken Parker

The photo above of me with the Easter Bunny comes with a story that began quite some time ago.

Since I arrived in Bunyip eight years ago I have been committed to supporting the monthly Bunyip Community Market. At one stage it looked like the market would close down. There was a bleak mid-winter day when there were only about a dozen stalls and morale was low. Then something happened and it began to turn around. About two, maybe three years ago, Sheree, who was a stallholder, decided that she would try and build up the market. A deft handler of social media, she has worked a miracle and now there are close to 150 stalls each month. It must be the busiest market in West Gippsland!

I asked Sheree to come to our parish's Harvest Festival in March to tell us about the market miracle. She came, along with Cherie, who is the recently appointed market coordinator and we loved the story she told. As they were leaving church, they asked me if I would like to come and bless the stallholders at the March market. Having said that I would, I began to wonder how on earth I'd manage it. For a start that day was Palm Sunday and then there was the matter of getting around to close on 150 stalls.

Well, I rang Sheree and asked her to accompany me as I did the rounds, to which she responded, 'I can't come with you. I need to look after my own stall.' So I rang Cherie, who replied, 'I'll be busy on the day dressing up as the Easter Bunny.'

Easter smiles all around with Ken and the Easter Bunny

And so, somehow it came about that the priest and the Easter Bunny spent the morning together on Palm Sunday blessing the stallholders. We were a good team – Cherie was a great bunny who entranced the crowd, young and old. She paved the way for me and gave me courage. Some folks were a bit suspicious of the priest but everyone loved the Easter Bunny. I was overwhelmed by people's responses, some of which were deeply moving. Though I didn't manage to get to church that day, I felt truly blessed by my Palm Sunday at the Bunyip Market.

The Rev'd Ken Parker is Associate Priest at St Thomas' Bunyip.

# Risen life and new life celebrated on Easter morning

## ■ Ruth Hanlon

It was a very special and glorious Easter morning on Phillip Island. As the sun rose, we celebrated the risen Lord at the Inter-church dawn service on the Cowes foreshore. Following the service, it was into the water to baptise Liam; a crowd gathered to watch and shouted and clapped as he came up from the water. A real celebration of new life in Christ!

Liam then joined James at our overflowing 10am service in the Parish Hall, where James was baptised. Both young men shared their decision to be baptised, seeking to leave behind old ways of life and negative habits, desiring new life in Christ, choosing to follow Him and walk in His ways. Those already baptised were encouraged to renew their vows. What a glorious Easter morn, thank you Jesus!



The Rev'd Ruth Hanlon is the Rector of Bass/Phillip Island.

Liam (Jae Seok Lee) arising from the water triumphant in new life



# From Lent to light Easter at Corner Inlet

Easter Sunday 6:30am sunrise service at Hoddle overlooking Corner Inlet

## ■ John Waterhouse

The parish of Corner Inlet experienced a very busy and fruitful Lenten season in 2026, especially through the events of Holy Week culminating in Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, as we remembered and reflected upon the original earth-shattering events of the first Easter around 30AD. Most of the local events were ecumenical, mainly involving Christ Church Anglican Church in Foster, Foster UCA and Fish Creek Union Church, so there were many opportunities for local Christians to gather and worship together through the season.

Our Rector, Rev'd Canon Dr Fran Grimes, set the scene this Lent with a book of Lenten studies which she herself had prepared, titled 'Uncharted Territory', and two study groups in Foster and Sandy Point used her reflections and discussion points to prepare for Holy Week.

The Palm Sunday service included a walk with palm branches from Christ Church to Foster UCA and an ecumenical service led by Rev'd's Fran Grimes and Jim Barr, plus a special ecumenical brass trio assisting with the singing of the hymns and other praise items.

The Maundy Thursday service was an intimate affair at Christ Church with attendees seated around a table remembering Jesus' Last Supper, followed by a foot-washing ceremony for all present led by the rector and other volunteers, after which the altar was cleared in readiness for Good Friday.

The Good Friday march of witness through the Foster township to Pearl Park was participated in by Christians from all the local churches in the Corner Inlet Parish, with several stops at significant local places where the

story of the crucifixion was shared in word and song.

Easter Sunday started bright and early for some as over 50 local Christians gathered at Hoddle overlooking Corner Inlet at 6:30am to witness the sunrise and to rejoice at the news that 'Christ is risen!' A team of musicians led us all in enthusiastic praise as we were bathed in light, and Rev'd Jim Barr gave a moving sermon on the Resurrection.

The final event for Easter, the traditional 10am Sunday service at Christ Church Foster, found a full church as many holiday makers, including many children, joined the locals and their family members to celebrate and give thanks for God's mercy and ongoing blessings in our lives because of Easter.

We warmly thank Fran and her worship team, as well as the other local Christian pastors, especially the UCA Rev'd Jim Barr, and the musicians from the 'Connections' AOG church for all their dedicated work and thorough preparations. Their hard work enabled the local Christian community of Corner Inlet to deepen our faith and our understanding of the first Easter, especially as it still touches our lives today and offers hope to everyone, over the course of the 2026 season of Lent as we head into Eastertide.



Palm Sunday service at the Foster Uniting Church with The Rev'd's Jim Barr and Frances Grimes leading worship as well as the brass trio

John Waterhouse is the Communications Officer for the parish of Corner Inlet.

# What a difference a day makes

## ■ Marion Dewar

Two ideas came together to provide an opportunity for Lenten reflection and a sung service in the parish of Leongatha.

The Rector, The Ven Graham Knott, had thought of a sermon series for Lent while organist Marion Dewar had considered a succession of Evensong services during Lent.

The result was a *Special Sermon Series* with Evensong at 4pm in St Peter's Leongatha on the six Sundays during Lent and the first three days of Holy Week.

Evensong was from the *First Order of Evening Prayer in A Prayer Book for Australia* with the set Evening Prayer readings from *An Australian Lectionary 2026*. The *Ferial Responses* were sung as was the Psalm and the Evening Canticles – *The Song of Mary (Magnificat)* and *The Song of Simeon (Nunc Dimittis)*.

The words and chants for the psalms were based on the Anstey Psalter 2026 Lent Trial versions provided by Matthew P. Anstey and Richard Black from South Australia. Three hymns were sung – the Opening Hymn - *Hail, Gladdening Light, of His Pure Glory Poured* (TiS 191), the Office Hymn – *O Kind Creator, Bow Thine Ear* [The New English Hymnal (1986)] and the Closing Hymn, which was different for each service. All the closing hymns were from *Together in Song* and included *Sing, My Tongue, The Saviour's Glory; O Loving Wisdom of Our God; Father, Whose Everlasting Love; My Song is Love Unknown; Glory Be to Jesus; O My Saviour, Lifted; Lord Jesus, Think On Me; Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me;*

and *The Royal Banners Forward Go*.

The sermons were based on the topic title of *'What a Difference a Day Makes'* and explored the last 24 hours before Jesus' crucifixion.

Each of the nine sermons was about 30 minutes in length and looked at the events leading up to the crucifixion from a variety of standpoints. We followed Jesus to the upper room, across the city and then to Gethsemane. We followed the disciples preparing for the Passover meal, taking part in the Passover meal, listening to Jesus, walking with Jesus and sleeping in Gethsemane. We listened in to the master of the house and servants of the house where the Passover meal was held. We went to the temple and ventured near the House of Caiaphas, the home of the high priest. We learnt about the Jewish religious observances and customs of the day. We stood at the gate of Herod's Palace and gazed at the Antonia Fortress. We mused with the centurion on duty. Most of all, we heard

from the Scriptures and from Jesus' own words as transcribed in the Gospels:

... Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me... I am the way... Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you... I am the true vine... As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you... This is my command: Love each other... Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you... Ask and you will receive... But take heart! I have overcome the world.

*'What a Difference That Day Made'*

Marion Dewar is a Diocesan Lay Reader at Leongatha.

The Ven Graham Knott special sermon series



GIPPSLAND ANGLICANS

## Youth Ministry Catchup

A regular time to pray and share youth ministry hopes, plans, ideas and resources. All welcome.

First Tuesday each month, 7:30pm at: [tinyurl.com/GIPPSYOUTH](http://tinyurl.com/GIPPSYOUTH)  
For more info contact [daniel@warragul Anglican.org.au](mailto:daniel@warragul Anglican.org.au)



## Gippsland Camino 2026

### ■ Sharron Lane

*'When the going gets tough...'*

When reflecting back on my article following last year's inaugural Camino, the first thing that struck me was the contrasts to this year's one. Last year we had unseasonably beautiful weather. This year, within minutes of the groups commencing their walk from Nyora, the heavens opened. It bucketed down. Luckily, they were prepared and were very pleased to stop in the picturesque town of Loch for a warm drink, rest, warmth by an open fire for some, and most importantly, shelter.

Day One of this Camino was pretty much all uphill. Someone commented that the hill leading up to Bena was a shocker. I sat there in my car with our first aider and flashed my lights and tooted at the first pilgrims to make it to that summit. There is so much in these physical examples of the pilgrim's walk that can remind us of our own life. Sometimes the sun doesn't shine and it's tough. It has been tougher on our facilitators too this year. Two of our party were on leave for very important reasons, one only for part of the Camino, but it left a hole in the whole team.

One of the beautiful highlights this year was the welcome we received at the end and the beginning. Last year we began at the large and well-resourced Traralgon Uniting Church (including a grand piano, which I got to play) and ended at the Cathedral.

This year we started at the small Nyora Baptist Church. The community, with a congregation of six, welcomed our pilgrims with open arms and facilitated the commencement service and camping overnight at its premises. We were surprised this year, as the vast majority of our pilgrims made it to the small church, and the hymns were sung with gusto.

We finished as we started, with a small but really welcoming congregation at St David's Anglican Church in Meeniyan, who furnished our pilgrims with a choice of slices and cakes the Queen would have been proud of! We give a vote of thanks to the Bishop for his homily and to Graham Knott, the Vicar General in whose parish we finished, for their presence and prayers. At the commencement service, we let everyone know that the Bishop would be joining us on part of the walk on Saturday. I offered a block of chocolate to the first person who spotted him. Some were so entertained by this they were looking for him on Friday!

As ever, watching the changing groups within groups and solo pilgrims is always interesting as a road marshal. Some start together and then end alone or with others. This too is a fabulous metaphor. We all travel at our own pace and have those who walk beside us, sometimes only for a season, then they are gone.

Saturday, from Korumburra to Leongatha, was a shorter walk, but for many, after the trials and length of the first day, they arrived at the final check-off point in Leongatha, where we needed to get them across the road, and they were glad to be able to stop. We all need to stop and rest sometimes too. A big thank-you to the churches in Leongatha who opened their doors to our pilgrims who had the energy to extend their day with a tour.

On the final day, the weather peaked. It did this at the most opportune time because, according to the pilgrims, the scenery and wildlife were at their best. As always, there was time for a casual stop for a great coffee and cake in Koonwarra. This was a 'dawdling day' for those of us preparing the Meeniyan church for an onsite picnic lunch, foot washing, and moisturising session before our final service at 2pm. They seemed to take forever. But again, there we all were as we were in the beginning, singing hymns with gusto and grateful for another successful end to our journey.

Thank you and blessings to all those who lent a hand. As the pilgrims often say to us, we couldn't have done this without you. God bless. See you in 2027!

---

Dr Sharron Lane is a Warden for the Westernport Episcopal District.

# Walking the Gippsland Camino 2026

■ Cathy Turnbull

We spent the last three days walking the Gippsland Camino. We were a small group from the Anglican Parish of Kilmore in central Victoria (Wangaratta Diocese). It was an amazing time together of prayer, reflection, community, joy, thankfulness and yes pain and endurance.

The scenery along the trail was beautiful, from the rolling hills of South Gippsland farmland to tall gums and fern gullies. Rail cuttings had exposed huge boulders and small ferns grew along the steep sides. Some cuttings were lined with pine trees, and the pine needles carpeted the ground deadening sound and creating a place of meditative peace and a sense of the silent presence of the divine.

Fellow pilgrims provided great company along the way and interesting conversations and shared experiences of walking. Friendly chats were in abundance with local folk, both human and canine, for whom the rail trail is their backyard.

Café stops in at least two towns along the way were most welcome and the opportunity to visit or walk around churches both near the trail and at our destination points added to the pilgrim experience.

The greeting we received at the end of day three was most welcome and the foot massage at St David's Meeniyan, the end point of our pilgrimage, much appreciated. Thank you to all who organised such a great pilgrimage event and it was great to have such a lovely ecumenical mix of churches involved and folk walking the pilgrimage.

It was physically demanding for many of us and pain became part of



L-R: Pilgrim Carla with Rev'd Cathy Turnbull, Bishop Richard and Rev'd Janet Wallis



the journey, but it was an amazing spiritual experience and one I will be keen to do again... once my poor feet have recovered!

Rev'd Cathy Turnbull is Assistant Priest at the Anglican Parish of Kilmore.

## A pilgrim's reflection

■ Andrew Mountford

Setting out on this Camino, truth be told I didn't have an agenda – spiritually, mentally, or physically – beyond the simple fact that I enjoy being outdoors and I'm intrigued by how much distance we can cover under our own steam. There is something primitive and grounding about the experience: the rhythm of my feet crunching on the gravel path, mile after mile, like a steady old steam train chugging along; it's easy to get lost in thought as the scenery changes.

Despite this, God has a way of sifting through debris in our minds (and cluttered thoughts?) and reaching us. Sometimes, a gentle reminder of His presence is all we need – whether in the beauty of birdsong, the way a tree still grows despite its strange location, or the way rain finds its way back to the river, guided by a silent force we cannot see. I'm left with a distinct sense of 'I'm still here... I never left.'

Upon reflection, what I initially thought would be a way to disconnect from it all has become a catalyst for reconnection.



## ‘Hope for the Hopeless’ partnership established

Ron Osborne – Food Rescue Manager

### ■ Graeme Liersch

Many of our readers may be aware that the Anglican Parish of Wonthaggi/Inverloch has been running a Food Rescue Program for a number of years. This program involves collecting surplus food from supermarkets four days per week and distributing it to those who are doing it tough on Wednesday and Friday mornings.

The food provided includes bread, savoury and sweet food, fruit and vegetables. In addition to these, non-perishable foods, sanitary items, cleaning products and food vouchers are also made available.

To run a program such as this costs in excess of \$150,000 per year, of which roughly \$84,000 to \$100,000 comes in the form of in-kind donations from the supermarkets. This then means that the rest of the program is funded by individual donations and funds directly from the parish.

When the parish operated a

successful Op Shop, these extra funds would come from the funds raised there, but since the shop closed due to the property being sold, we’ve sought to find funds from other means.

In 2024, I was made aware of State Government grants being available for food rescue programs and as such attended their webinars and applied for a grant.

That year we were asking for approximately \$35,000 and sadly were unsuccessful. However, God had other ideas and as a result a donation came into the parish of \$35,000 from a lady totally unconnected to the parish, for the food rescue program. Our prayers were answered.

In 2025 I hurriedly put together another grant application to the State Government for a grant of \$40,000 not expecting to be successful.

‘O ye of little faith!’

Yes, to my surprise we were successful and received an allocation of \$35,000.

Now came the challenging part.

As the parish is an unincorporated body, it meant that we couldn’t enter into an agreement directly with the State Government and as such we needed to obtain the grant by entering an auspice with an incorporated body.

At this point Anglicare Victoria entered the picture through the former Anglicare Community Development Support & Parish Partnerships coordinator, Wendy Mawoyo. With Wendy’s help we were able to start the ball rolling to set up the first auspice with Anglicare for our venture.

This has been groundbreaking work that has taken some time to put in place, but having said that, it now means there is a process in place for other parishes to enter similar agreements.

With the auspice in place, it means that Anglicare receives the funds on our behalf, passes them on to us, and they report back to the state Government. The parish in turn reports to Anglicare on the fund’s expenditure.

My thanks to Wendy and Michelle (Anglicare) and to Bishop Richard and Rae Riley (Registrar) for helping guide us through setting up the auspice.

I also recommend, to parishes who are seeking to set up a similar food rescue program, to look into the DFFH (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing) grants and to approach Anglicare to be your auspice. The work has been done and the precedence set, thus the process should easily fall into place.

With the current increase in the cost of living, particularly due to increased fuel costs and rising rents, this new partnership is helping to bring ‘Hope to the Hopeless’ in the district. As it is, we have seen a significant increase in those attending the food rescue program two mornings per week over the past month.

Finally, but by no means the least, I thank God for making this possible and for answering our prayers to be able to continue this vital welfare work in our community.

Praise the Lord!

The Rev’d Graeme Liersch is the Rector at Wonthaggi/Inverloch.



## From the Abbey May 2026

### ■ Cath Connelly

As the wheel of the year turns to May, I find myself reflecting on the tradition of Maypole dancing and its relevance to our vision here at The Abbey. The Maypole tradition originates from pre-Christian Germanic and Celtic Europe and is still danced throughout these countries every 1 May. The heart of the dance is the twisting of ribbons around a central pole, forming an intricate interwoven pattern. This tradition of Maypole dancing has always been in my family – there is a photo of my sister, Liz, at the age of five, dressed in white and dancing around the pole as part of our childhood living in England.

Why do I think of The Abbey in this connection? Both because, living in this landscape where the elements are so present we are very aware of the turning of the seasons and because of our ever-unfolding interweaving of strands coming together to create a cohesive vision here at The Abbey. If we were dancing the ribbons, we would have ribbons of community, hospitality, environmental care, retreats, quiet days, First Nations engagement, Eucharists, recreation, shared meals, guests, volunteers, staff, fauna, flora, peace, reflective space and immersion in nature. What a beautiful dance we are weaving. People come here because we are seeking a deeper connection with God.

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[info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au)

### MAY

- 8 – 10 Weekend retreat  
*St Gobnair and her place of Resurrection*  
Facilitators: Cath Connelly  
and Alison Powell
- 14 *Hush Quiet Day*  
The fourth, the fifth, a minor fall,  
the major lift:  
The search for the cord of three  
Facilitator: Rev'd Dennis Webster
- 16 Cooking Class with Jackie – Learning  
the Art of Cooking a Luxurious Meal  
Chef: Jackie O'Connell
- 19 Chat and Chew 12:30pm  
come and share a simple lunch together
- 23 Cooking Class With Jackie – Learning  
the Art of Preparing a Basic Roast Meal  
Chef: Jackie O'Connell
- 30 Sit & Sew

### JUNE

- 11 *Hush Quiet Day*  
Hebrew Scriptures and Creation Care  
Facilitator: Bishop Richard Treloar
- 19 – 21 Weekend retreat  
*Stepping into Elderhood*  
Facilitator: Janet Munro

Details of all these events can be found on our  
website [www.theabbey.org.au](http://www.theabbey.org.au)



## *Giving a gift that lasts*

### Bequests to Anglican Diocese of Gippsland

The Gippsland Diocese has been blessed with the generosity of Anglicans and others in support of its mission. One form of support you can offer is a bequest in your will – to the Diocese, your own parish or for a particular purpose.

To find out more, visit: [www.gippslandanglicans.org.au](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au)  
and search 'bequests', or contact Rae Riley (03) 5144 2044.  
*Always consult a solicitor when preparing or amending your will.*

## St Paul's Drouin – growing from strength to strength



Friendships formed at St Paul's Drouin Campus with Evolet Wiggett and Blaire Davey

The community at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School's Drouin Campus continues to grow, expanding beyond its planned Year 4 offering to welcome an additional class at Year 5 level.

The new Year 5 students were warmly welcomed by the school's Foundation students, who commenced their own journey when the school

opened with Prep to Year 3 classes at the start of 2025. They were very excited to show their new friends around, including the brand-new building – a space they have already come to call their own.

The new light-filled facility features six purpose-built classrooms and specialist learning spaces for Art,

Library, and STEM. Shared community areas for Library, cooking and the Buddy Program are intentionally designed to bring students together, fostering collaboration, teamwork and a strong sense of belonging across year levels. As students learn alongside and from one another, they build confidence, responsibility, and connection.

Another exciting addition to the campus is the additional new under-cover hardcourt, providing students with an all-weather space for outdoor play, Sport and PE lessons, and co-curricular activities. The new green at the front of the school is also proving popular, with students gathering to enjoy shared games and friendships in the sunshine together.

This milestone marks a significant step forward in St Paul's long-term vision to create a vibrant, modern learning environment that grows alongside the Drouin community in connection, opportunity, wellbeing and shared experience, with the school offering Year 6 by 2027.

## Learning to 'leave it better' together

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School student, Thang-guw, was recently invited to deliver a short speech on the theme of 'leaving it better' at the Ecumenical Schools Australia (ESA) Leaver Award Day in Melbourne, sharing her reflections with fellow student leaders and educators from ESA member schools.

The award honours the legacy of The Rev'd John Leaver, a key figure in the founding of Ecumenical Schools Australia, who was recognised with the Order of Australia in 2000 for his contributions to education and the wider community.

Each year, the Rev'd John Leaver Award recognises a Year 11 student from every ESA member school who reflects the qualities that Reverend Leaver championed: compassion, resilience in the face of challenges, the ability to build meaningful connections across generations and an open-minded spirit that brings together people of different faiths and backgrounds.

Thang-guw, now in Year 12, was named the 2025 St Paul's recipient of the award late last year, an honour

that reflects both personal dedication and the values fostered within the St Paul's community.

As part of the ESA Leaver Award Day, students also took part in leadership activities and discussions, sharing ideas and experiences with peers and educators from across the ESA network. These opportunities strengthen connections between

schools and inspire students to lead with compassion and purpose, creating a ripple effect that positively influences their own school communities.

Ecumenical Schools Australia is a network of independent, co-educational schools united by a shared commitment to continually enhancing the education and opportunities provided to their students.



Thang-guw (far right) meeting Mrs Wendy Leaver, Reverend John's widow (middle), and accompanied by St Paul's student, Rebecca (left)

# Young Gippsland musician achieves prestigious national diploma



Gippsland Grammar Year 11 student Oscar Wilkins receiving the Associate Diploma in Music, Australia (AMusA) by the Australian Music Examinations Board

Gippsland Grammar Year 11 student Oscar Wilkins has achieved a significant milestone in his musical journey, recently being awarded the Associate Diploma in Music, Australia (AMusA) by the Australian Music Examinations Board.

The AMusA diploma is a highly respected qualification within the international music community and recognises a level of musical understanding and performance well beyond the requirements of Grade 8. The demanding examination is conducted at the AMEB's head offices in Hawthorn and involves a 25–35 minute recital program, followed by an extensive oral examination with senior examiners covering musical terminology, structure, historical context and interpretation.

Traralgon-based Oscar, who has been playing the piano since the age of five, spent almost three years preparing for the diploma while balancing his academic studies at Gippsland Grammar and a busy co-curricular schedule that includes rowing and football.

'It was a long-term goal to achieve my diploma and I'm really happy that

all my hard work and time has paid off,' Oscar said.

As well as preparing the demanding repertoire required for the diploma, candidates must also pass Grade 5 theory to be eligible to graduate, demonstrating a deep understanding of the structure, style and historical background of the works they perform.

Oscar's mother, Narelle Wilkins, said the family was immensely proud of his achievement.

'Mark (Oscar's dad) and I are extremely proud of Oscar's achievements, particularly because of the massive amount of time and

commitment required to achieve this while still being involved in so many other activities.'

Oscar studies piano with renowned teacher Judy Hall OAM, who at 103 years of age continues to inspire generations of young musicians. He was also supported by Gippsland Grammar music teacher Carmel Slater, who assisted with both theory and performance preparation.

Gippsland Grammar's Director of Music Kevin Cameron said Oscar made a significant contribution to the life of the School through his musical talents.

'Oscar contributes much to Gippsland Grammar as our School Pianist, performing at functions, assemblies, chapel services and in recitals,' Mr Cameron said.

His hard work and commitment have been rewarded with the recent conferral of the Associate of Music, Australia diploma. This is an outstanding achievement, and the Music Centre offers Oscar our warm congratulations.

Oscar performed in the AMEB Rising Stars concert at the Melbourne Recital Centre on 14 April and is currently preparing for his VCE Music Units 3 and 4 Repertoire examination later this year. He has also recently begun learning the organ through a scholarship at Sale Cathedral, studying under Rev'd Keren Terpstra, as he continues to explore new musical opportunities.

'I will probably just keep learning more music and see where it takes me,' Oscar said.



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## SCAMPS is back!

L-R: SCAMPS Facilitator Kate Spalding with Claire, Page and Nate in the backyard of St Mary's, beside the new JAFFAS vegetable gardens

### ■ Dean Spalding

After a year's 'recess' the Parish of Trafalgar has successfully reintroduced its pre-schooler program, SCAMPS (Story Craft And Music for Pre-Schoolers) with a core of ten participant children. SCAMPS was conceived by Kate Spalding and Pauline Doedens in Monbulk for Mountain District Christian School in the early 2000s to raise awareness of the school and provide some preschool experience on the site of the school to feed into its Prep year. SCAMPS has also run at the Drouin Anglican Church from 2016 – 2019.

In Term One, SCAMPS ran for five weeks commencing on 27 February – this term it will run the full ten weeks of term.

One catalyst for the 're-start' was a past SCAMPS parent, Stephanie Comfort, who at the Trafalgar Market in February ran into the Rector of the parish, Dean Spalding. Stephanie expressed her sadness that SCAMPS was no longer running as her second child was old enough to benefit from the program. Stephanie proposed using her social media skills to find a group of ten interested families – using 'Traf Chat' and mothers' groups on Facebook Stephanie wanted to raise awareness of the benefits of the SCAMPS program and to elicit



interest. Encouraged by Dean to give it a go Stephanie had ten families register their interest in less than a week!

SCAMPS is a highly relational program – parents or caregivers accompany the children in a fun educational journey which incorporates elements of pre-literacy and pre-numeracy, peer and intergenerational-socialisation through the media of story, music, movement, craft and hospitality. There's a reassuringly predictable pattern of routine. The program aims at 'Prep readiness' and a gentle discipleship in Christian values like gratitude – the end song gives thanks to God for music, singing, food and growing. Seasonally, the stories pick up the narratives of Easter and Christmas. In appearance and format, the first half of the SCAMPS morning looks a little like a 'live' episode of ABC's *Playschool* in being delivered by two presenters, who narratively guide children through the program.

SCAMPS is foundational to the parish's growing commitment to integrated discipleship 'From Birth to 25'. The next stage of that integrated discipleship is JAFFAS, a discipleship program for primary-school-aged children. It is hoped that Trafalgar's JAFFAS program will feature in the next edition of *TGA!* (A sneak preview: Last term, the Trafalgar JAFFAS started a vegetable garden in the 'backyard' of St Mary's Anglican Church, Trafalgar; and in the next edition of *TGA!*, it is hoped that there will be an account of some of the harvest!)

SCAMPS runs in the St Mary's Hall (40 Contingent Street, Trafalgar) from 9:30 – 11am on Fridays in school term. Enquiries can be directed to Kate on 0421 216 825.

The Rev'd Dr Dean Spalding is the Rector of Trafalgar.



Families enjoying their SCAMPS experience



## Reaching families regionally

### ■ Sue Jacka

At Morwell, like many parishes, we want to reach out to families so they hear the good news of Jesus. We face many obstacles though as families come and go. The difficulty of buying a home means that many families move to different towns much more frequently now. Connections that we have worked to develop become trickier to maintain. So many other activities that kids want to do now happen on Sunday mornings. Parents often must work on weekends. This means that the critical mass of younger people in Sunday worship is difficult to achieve regularly.

After the successful family camp at The Abbey in January organised by Rev'd Sarah Gover, the families there affirmed their interest and need to meet regularly. They came predominantly from the Traralgon and Morwell parishes with a few from elsewhere. Sarah has been organising a monthly regional family service across the Latrobe region. We started with a well attended service and early tea in March in Morwell and then another at the end of April in Traralgon. The next is planned for May in Churchill.

Each service is based on a theme and has a variety of modern music, a Bible reading, interactive discussion and activities and some prayer. Active participation is encouraged and both kids and parents have enjoyed these times together. It is followed by a simple bring and share tea which means that families will bring something they know their kids will eat!

From a Rector's perspective it is helpful to have Rev'd Sarah's diocesan role so that she can scoop up the families who relate to the different parishes across our region. She can build up relationships with both children and adults which can continue even if families move town. She is freed from traditional parish boundaries which would make this much more complex. Sarah also brings a wealth of experience and connections to this task.

When parishes have few families, it is a very positive thing to work together across parishes to share the love and hope that we find in Jesus with our younger members.

---

The Venerable Sue Jacka is the Rector of Morwell.

Lots of fun at a recent holiday program at St Mary's



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# Jesus v. doom

Buy secondhand goods from one of our many Anglican op shops, like these from Drouin Anglican Church Op Shop and Warehouse

## ■ Jan Down

The good news:

*Christ has come,  
Christ has lived,  
Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.*



These are two relatively simple ways among many to care for people and planet now and prepare for the One

How does this relate to the bad news of nature unravelling, democracy eroding, bombs exploding and economies failing?

As The Rev'd Bec Hayman wrote in TGA March <https://tinyurl.com/mwy3wc97> (page 19), if Christ is coming to establish God's kingdom (realm / governance) on Earth, there is a point to cleaning up our mess. Doom is not the end of the story, so let's be ready for a new beginning, a renewed creation.

But what can we do?

Here are two ideas: we can live simply and go local. (These are two of the new aims of ACTinG, which you can see on our About Us page: <https://tinyurl.com/37u875pm/>)

Living simply addresses the over-consumption that leads to waste, pollution, climate change, and pressure on resources. Buying less stuff would have to be one of the easiest ways to reduce our global footprint. Another way to live more simply is to look for second-hand, or repair the item, before replacing it with something new. (But yes, I know, living simply can get complicated!)

A local economy creates resilience – eg to supply chain disruptions due to natural disasters or conflict – as well as reducing emissions from transporting goods. In a local economy, most food is grown locally and most basic goods like clothes are manufactured locally. That's a big change, but we can start small and advocate for more.

who is to come. Let's flick doom and live the good news!

You might also be interested to know that on 11 June Bishop Richard will present 'Hebrew Bible and Care for Creation' at The Abbey, from 10am – 3pm. RSVP by 7 June. Bookings at: [www.trybooking.com/DHEBU](http://www.trybooking.com/DHEBU) or phone The Abbey on (03) 5156 6580.

If you would like to receive the monthly ACTinG bulletins please email: [acting@gippslandanglicans.org.au](mailto:acting@gippslandanglicans.org.au) or sign up via the QR code:



Jan Down is Chair of ACTinG (Acting for Creation Together in Gippsland) and a TGA representative for Sale.

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# Murriyang

Stan Grant

p/b S&S Bundyi, 2025

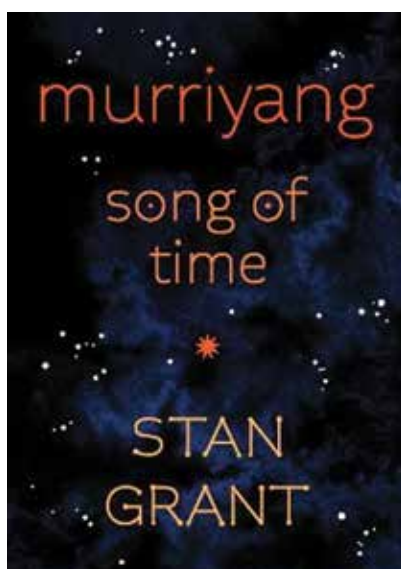
■ Krista Mountford

*Murriyang: Song of Time* by Stan Grant is a quiet kind of book. It doesn't argue loudly or try to prove a point. Instead, it sits with you. It feels more like a prayer than a statement, more like a reflection than a debate.

At times we move through Grant's memories, when he writes about his father and family. We move through parts regarding faith, as he keeps returning to questions about God. And there are moments shaped by the reality of life in Australia, especially after the Voice referendum. However, the book doesn't neatly fit into genres such as a memoir, politics, or theology. It moves freely between them.

One of the key ideas running through *Murriyang* is 'Yindyamarra', a Wiradjuri word that speaks of gentleness – of respect, patience, and quietness. Grant comes back to this concept again and again. In a world full of noise and strong opinions, he brings us a different idea: the idea that there is strength in being still, in listening and in showing care.

Silence is an important theme in this book. Grant writes about how sometimes words can stop working – whether in public life, in relationships, or even in faith. And yet, he still senses that God is present in that quiet. It's a reminder



that faith isn't always about having clear answers. Sometimes it's about staying still and trying to listen, even when we don't understand.

I found Grant's reflections on his father some of the most moving parts in this book. He writes about a kind of love that isn't always spoken, but a love that is shaped by hardship and history. Through these memories, he explores how pain and love can exist side by side, and how the past continues to shape the present.

Time is another thread that runs through the book. Grant draws on Wiradjuri ways of understanding time – not just as something that moves forward, but something that holds past, present, and future together. This concept is extremely important in the frenzied world we currently live in.

Faith is there throughout, but it's not presented in a formal or academic way. Grant speaks about being a Christian, but also deeply grounded in his Wiradjuri identity. For him, these are not in conflict. Instead, they seem to meet in the same place – in a sense of the sacred, in connection to land, and in the story of Jesus.

Forgiveness is one of the more challenging parts of the book. Grant doesn't treat it lightly but acknowledges how difficult it is, especially in the face of injustice and hurt. He reiterates though that forgiveness is something necessary, even when there are times it can feel out of reach.

There are also moments where he reflects directly on the referendum which I found interesting. Grant suggests that much of the conversation stayed at the level of politics and law, and that he feels something deeper was missed – love and recognising one another. It's a simple idea, but it carries weight.

Even with its heavy themes, *Murriyang* is a beautiful book. The writing is gentle and thoughtful. This isn't a book to rush through. It's one to read slowly, maybe in a quiet place, and to sit with afterwards. It doesn't tie everything up neatly but instead leaves space – to think, to pray, and to reflect on what it might mean to live with more patience, more honesty, and more love.

---

Krista Mountford is the TGA Editor and Diocesan Development Officer.



WOMEN'S WRITING NETWORK



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31 July - 1 August 2026

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Ridley College

Full Retreat (2 Days): \$50 (\$40 Student)

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# Don't underestimate the power of place

■ Sharron Lane

I write this piece not on behalf of Westernport but because of it. I am reflecting on the recent spate of awful vandalism and graffiti which we have endured over the Christmas break.

We are a small group of believers managing two sites, St George's Corinella and St John's Lang Lang. The Lang Lang site is a big site, with its rectory, old wooden church dating from 1874 and newer brick building built in 1959. This has been a labour of love and pain. It has been hard but poignant.

What the community reminded me, in the aftermath of it all, is that place matters. There are many in Lang Lang who despite not attending church have literally been stopping us in the street to not only commiserate but ask how they can help. Graham Knott described them as people of peace, who do not come to church but care for church. We have seen them now, constantly and consistently, from the plumber to the security expert. Help is offered. Concerns are raised. The local bank kindly provided a donation for repairs and generally the town has been not just benign to our small group who meet on Sundays, but positively supportive.

So place matters, it seems. Although they do not come to church regularly, Lang Lang values a church having space in its town. It has seen the recent sale of its old Presbyterian Church, (more recently part of the Uniting Church), sold to become a two-bedroom unit. These public spaces moving into private hands are a loss to any town, and this is sadly what is happening as people cease attending church regularly on a Sunday.

We know from experience that Lang Lang funerals are incredibly well attended, as we witnessed when we ministered over one which flowed out beyond the church. People had to stand outside our stained-glass windows and listen early in 2025. We know too that previous people, including the local historical group, have made efforts to help save the old church, which incidentally is the oldest building in Lang Lang. As such it has its own historical value beyond being a sanctified space.

So why does place matter when people don't seem willing to commit to frequenting sites? Place is a physical environment which holds important personal and communal memories for people. I have experienced this in my own life. Growing up I had a series of visits back to the UK where my parents were from, and most of my large extended family lived. I came to love the UK. Quaint, historic and quite unlike the harsh Australian landscape. In my memory, the best times of my childhood were spent there. As such the UK held for me a strange feeling of longing and connection and often, when needed in moments of distress, appeared in my dreams when I would find myself back in the UK in gentle sunlight. Even on my most recent visit several years ago the longing to set foot on the ground was still visceral, and I found myself still excited on arrival. Such is the power of place.



Despite the damage to the window at Lang Lang, the central design remains beautifully intact

## 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.

If you have any concerns, for yourself or someone you know, please contact our Professional Standards Office for a confidential discussion.



Telephone: (03) 9416 1008 or 1800 135 246  
 Email: [contact@kooyoora.org.au](mailto:contact@kooyoora.org.au)  
[julie@kooyoora.org.au](mailto:julie@kooyoora.org.au)  
 PO Box 329, Canterbury VIC 3126



In a prior role with Care Leavers, I have seen a much sadder reality for the need for place. Many children who experienced out of home care had very disrupted childhoods. This creates great trauma. Their lives were fragmented, distressing, and probably confusing as well. Some, like our Indigenous brothers and sisters who experienced terrible levels of abuse in the Retta Dixon Home in the Northern Territory, and despite its destruction by Cyclone Tracy, still lobbied to gain, not just access to, but ownership of the places where such atrocities occurred. Those who have not walked with our Care Leavers or members of the Stolen Generations may wonder why.

What I can say from numerous conversations I have had is that place is where their memories remain, both good and bad. They had no one to hold the stories of their childhood like parents or extended family normally would, nor did they retain the archive of their childhood. I remember a sad case of trying to find a pair of shoes for a Care Leaver who had seen them on a visit to one of our sites several years earlier. Sadly, as the custodian of the archives, I had to let them know that someone had obviously thrown them out, seeing no value in an old pair of shoes. For the Care Leaver such small items were like gold as after leaving care most retained no personal childhood items. Like all of us, Care Leavers are desperate to narrate their childhood stories, and place becomes an even more powerful tool of memory when it is at times all that remains.

This brings me back to Lang Lang. We were left, not just with mindless graffiti, but confronting messages in the old church. It is unclear whether the person who wrote the messages somehow suffered at the hands of earlier church members at Lang Lang themselves, or they knew of others. The Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse exposed much of the darkness and misdeeds which have been present in our churches. Maybe his was a general comment to our failings, and fail we have. So, place for him became a place of protest. I like to think he was praying – telling the Lord all the bad things that have been done in His name. I like to think the Lord spoke to him and said I know, and I don't like it either. We are trying to reach out to this young man. As custodians of the space and knowing our beautiful and loving

God we want to reach out to say we hear you and, in the best way we can, to provide options for further engagement and support.

One of our stain glass windows was damaged by the vandals over the Australia Day long weekend, but amazingly the central design feature remained intact. These windows were originally installed in the old church in 1950 by the Rev'd CHD Pilkington. They were modified and placed in the newer building when it was completed in 1959. The windows give us a further connection into the community as the sacrifices of Stanley Arthur Jackson and Douglas Kenyan Jackson, from local families, are commemorated on a plaque connected with them.

Like many other churches, we hold not only sacred memory but war service and family memory.

The nephew of these men visited our church during a service late last year to see the windows and take pictures. This is why the Parish Council has made the decision to open the church and to present a display for all those connected to the church who fought in the First and Second World War. This is part of our place in the community as the War Memorial is just across the road and we have several hundred people from Lang Lang who come out for our dawn service. We seek to be part of the community and to take our place, by saying a prayer in the service and offering our place as part of the day's remembrances.

In closing I want to commend the leadership

of our diocese and Bishop Richard who work so hard to hold on to our spaces and buildings for the communities in which we are located. As I have reported, we have seen the concern of our community and felt their care for the church as we take practical steps towards repairing the buildings. We feel loved by the town. As small as we are, we have a place here.

Let this be an encouragement to us all. Never underestimate the power of simply being there. Placing a stake in the ground and saying we're here. Even the early church was known in Acts by their locations. Let's remember the value of holding sacred spaces. The Lord is with us. Always.

Dr Sharron Lane is a Warden for the Westernport Episcopal District.

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From  
the  
Editor



## A journey shared

Recently I had the opportunity to experience the Gippsland Camino – not as a pilgrim walking the journey, but through my husband Andrew taking part in the three-day experience.

Over those three days, I made three separate trips to support his travels. From dropping him off at the gorgeous little Nyora Baptist Church, home to just six parishioners, for the Blessing of the Pilgrims; to delivering our dog Bella (so she could join him for the final day's walk) to the large Uniting Church in Leongatha on the Saturday; and finally attending the

closing gathering at the newly re-roofed St David's Anglican Church in Meeniyan. Each destination offered a glimpse into a different parish, with different buildings and congregation sizes... however, what surprised and delighted me each time was how welcoming each space felt.

Chatting with some of the pilgrims about their journey, they all spoke of how supported and cared for they felt at each stop. Whether it was a warm 'church' space to sleep in for the night, a cup of hot coffee after walking through Friday's downpour, or a delicious scone or slice of cake – each gesture filled both their bellies and their hearts, helping them continue on the long journey.

Churches coming together in collaboration – sharing, supporting, and showing up. In a world that can often feel fragmented or rushed, events like the Gippsland Camino have the ability to slow us down and draw us together.

When we collaborate – whether for local outreach, an event, or in times of disaster – something shifts. The focus moves beyond 'our church' to something broader and greater: the Church. It reflects the body of Christ as it was always intended – many parts, working as one.

As part of my Diocesan Development role, I'm able to assist parishes in forming events, marketing, finding funding or grants, and collaborating on projects that bring our communities together.

I encourage you to consider not just 'What can we do?' but 'What might we do together?' Be open to partnership, creativity, and stepping beyond what feels familiar.

Let's work together and see what we can make happen.

Contact me at:  
KristaM@gippslandanglicans.org.au

**Krista Mountford**

# GIPPSLAND ANGLICANS

COMMITTED - CONNECTING - CREATIVE

TOWARDS 125 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE REGION

'THE LOVE OF CHRIST URGES US ON' (2 COR 5:14)



In 2027 our Diocese will celebrate 125 years of ministry and service in Gippsland.

This milestone offers a wonderful opportunity for every parish and ministry centre to reflect on, celebrate, and tell stories of our share in God's mission to the world.

**Start the conversation in your parish today!**

**Contact the Venerable Sue Jacka with your ideas! Email: [suejacka@outlook.com](mailto:suejacka@outlook.com)**



We invite all parishes to begin thinking about:

**HOSTING A LOCAL CELEBRATION OR SPECIAL EVENT**

**SHARING STORIES FROM YOUR PARISH'S HISTORY**

**GATHERING PHOTOS, MEMORIES, AND SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS**

**RECORDING REFLECTIONS FROM LONG-STANDING MEMBERS**

A diocesan calendar of events will be developed for 2027, as well as stories being published in different media forms.

## Is there more to life than this?

Alpha is a safe space to explore life, purpose and the Christian faith, ask questions, and share your point of view. Alpha is free and everyone is welcome.

Anglican Parishes of Sale and Avon  
Friday nights @ 6.45pm starting 17 April.  
No cost, dinner provided.

Register at <https://www.trybooking.com/DKZJD>

Or via Dave - 0401035379



To learn more about Alpha, visit  
[alpha.org.au](http://alpha.org.au)



## Schedule & locations:

Session 1: Friday 17 April - Stratford

Session 2: Friday 24 April - Sale

Session 3: Friday 1 May - Sale

Session 4: Friday 8 May - Stratford

Session 5: Friday 22 May - Sale

Session 6: Sunday 24 May - Sale

Session 7: Friday 29 May - Sale

Session 8: Friday 5 June - Stratford



To learn more about Alpha, visit  
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## The Gippsland Anglican



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## EVENTS

Friday 15 - 17 May: Synod

### What's on at the Cathedral

Return to your Cathedral, a beating heart for God in Gippsland, for any of these wonderful events and services.

Friday 15 May: 7:30pm Synod Eucharist - Preacher  
The Most Rev'd Dr Ric Thorpe,  
Archbishop of Melbourne and  
Metropolitan of Victoria - all welcome

Sunday 24 May: 5pm Evensong



## 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](mailto:becca_mike@yahoo.com)

O Christ,  
whose feet still bear the dust  
of roads and journeys,  
and the marks of our humanity;  
you call us out of doors,  
onto the path once more.  
Give us courage to follow  
empty-handed into the place  
of your desiring.  
Guide us as your pilgrim people,  
whose journeying speaks  
good news to others on the way.  
And walk with us  
today and every day,  
for with you beside us  
enough has been given.  
Amen.



## The <sup>Gippsland</sup> Anglican

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