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The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order at All Saints' Anglican Cathedral, Cairo, December 2023

Proposals could redefine Anglican identity

■ **Hannah Felsbourg**

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New proposals from a key Anglican Communion body could redefine what it means to be Anglican to address divisions over human sexuality.

The Nairobi-Cairo Proposals could also see Anglican leadership rotate between five global regions, moving leadership away from its traditional centre in Canterbury.

The proposals were developed by the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order to help address differences in the Anglican Communion.

IASCUFO member Bishop of Gippsland Richard Treloar said the changes were designed to help Anglicans continue to walk together to the highest degree possible despite deep disagreements.

He said the Anglican Church had always understood itself as provisional, not as an end in itself, and had always looked for the unity of the whole church for which Jesus prayed.

'Unity is both a gift and a call, something that God gives to us in Christ, and God gives us to each other in Christ,' Dr Treloar said.

'And yet it's something we also have to work towards and grow into and aspire to.' The Anglican Consultative Council Constitution currently requires member churches to be in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Dr Treloar said this had created difficulties for some Anglicans after the Church of England decided to provide liturgical resources for the blessing of same-sex couples recently.

[Continued on page 11](#)



Stronger Together



I can resonate with St Paul's zeal as a 'convert'. I prefer to think of him as having been called from the 'mother faith' of Judaism to the way of Christ. Certainly, he does not disown or diminish his Jewish heritage, nor the place of biblical Israel in the divine economy, as Romans chapters 9 – 11 make clear.

Nonetheless, in a rhetorical 'purple patch' when writing to the Philippians (3:4-8) the apostle makes a point of his Hebrew pedigree in order to resile from any license it may have afforded him for boasting in the flesh or for self-confidence, by contrast with an utter dependence on the grace of God in Christ, and indeed – properly understood – in *Torah*, Paul would argue.

By way of analogy with the 'other religion' – Australian Rules Football – I too am a 'convert': called from following the rugby union I played and watched from an early age until my early twenties when I moved to Victoria – a stone's throw from Princes Park.

My dear, late brother Peter took me to my first AFL game, and whilst I can't claim a 'Damascus Road' experience (season 1995, perhaps?) My allegiance to the Carlton Football Club was immediate, and has only deepened over the last 37 years, for more than 30 of which I have been a paid-up member.

Rachel and Nicholas were both signed up at birth, and – despite several 'false dawns' – are still waiting for sustained on-field success, let alone the thrill of a Premiership. They enjoy our trips to Melbourne once or twice a year to catch a game live and rode the wave of the 2023 finals series with me when the Blues played in a Preliminary Final for the first time since 2000.

One of my most treasured videos is of kick to kick with Rachel as a toddler on the MCG after the second siren; those were the days! In her room hangs

a framed CFC guernsey signed by Marc Murphy and Eddie Betts, and any visitor to Bishops Court will observe artwork and artefacts pertaining to both 'religions': icons and player bobbleheads, Bibles and beanies in just about equal measure.

Since when have we needed TV advertising campaigns, signs at check outs, and recorded messages with menu options reminding people to show respect and behave civilly?

Leanne, meanwhile, sticks doggedly to her beloved Dockers (that's a whole other story) who, coincidentally have not saluted since joining the AFL in 1994. A combined drought of 61 years! As the Blues' season ends, the children and I will watch Fremantle's September fortunes with interest, and a tinge of jealousy!

Yes, I have had my moments in front of the television this year, and over the years. I have been known to politely inquire of an umpire which particular game he (or she) happened to be watching? I have trudged home from many a match in disappointment or turned the telly off in frustration before the opposition's song strikes up. I have never left a game early, mind you, nor let the remote control beat the final siren.

Carlton coach Michael Voss – himself a champion of the game – was born in Traralgon and grew up in Orbost, where there is still a 'Voss Motors' – perhaps a family business? Since the Blues' form

slump and recurrent injury crisis, he has come under increasing pressure with respect to the win-loss ratio, compounded by the way the team fell out of contention late last year from a good position.

During a season that failed to live up to expectation, Carlton fans (and others) have vented their anger in various ways – all unacceptable: booing at the end of quarters, gesticulating as players come from the ground, spray-painting inflammatory comments on the walls of the Club's facilities, and even by way of threatening messages directed at 'Vossy'.

To his very great credit, having always lauded the passion of Carlton supporters, Voss used a mid-season press conference to call out such deplorable behaviour, and to remind all who identify as connected with the Club what a football club is all about; what and who it is for. Above all, he stressed a sense of belonging that transcended on-field performance.

I remember going to the last ever match for (men's) premierships points at Princes Park in the 2005 season. It was a sad and nostalgic day, and Melbourne overran us by four goals in the end. Back at the Social Club afterwards, getting to the bar took more physical pressure than the Blues had been able to exert out in the middle, and the outcome didn't really matter as much as that sense of belonging.

In an atmosphere of acceptance about where the Club was at (2005 would see only its second ever wooden spoon), with equal measures of mutual commiseration and encouragement ("stick with 'em, we'll be right"), we were surrounded by honour boards and photos of great moments from the past. As the drinks and the stories flowed, the current players came up from the rooms and the song rang out, despite the loss.



Twenty years later, the collective response to 'where the Club is at' feels very different. Yes, disappointment has accumulated as rebuilds have over-promised and 'premiership windows' have come and gone. But the lack of grace – literally 'dis-grace' – in the boiling over of frustration to the point where players and coaching staff felt unsafe in their workplace is an all too familiar example of a wider cultural shift writ small.

Since when have we needed TV advertising campaigns, signs at check outs, and recorded messages with menu options reminding people to show respect and behave civilly?

Those who followed this year's Bible Reading Challenge in June will be familiar with my reading of the Book of Esther's dark humour. Esther is 'survival literature' in a carnivalesque genre – a 'tall' story-world of great reversals, in which a Jewish orphan becomes Persian queen and saves her people from their enemies, who end up hoist on their own petard.

The church exists to proclaim the counter-intuitive belief that we are 'stronger together' when 'together' includes those with whom we may differ – culturally and theologically – notwithstanding all we have in common as Christians and as human beings.

A 'limit-case' text, Esther (and the festival of Purim it establishes) pushes the boundaries of possibility, asking how much the Diaspora community can bear, how far it must go in re-establishing its identity in exile? Perhaps it served, and serves, to provide a safe – even playful way – of imagining the unthinkable: what if God had abandoned us, and we had to fight for ourselves?



Bishop Richard and Rachel supporting their beloved Carlton Football Club

The comic aspects of the book are thus not incidental to the effect of the story on its hearers – not for the sake of light relief only. They are central to Esther's rhetorical impact. One of the ways a story like Esther meets the needs of its readers is by satirising, ridiculing, the power structures which subjugate them.

The great and terrible irony is, however, that the Jews in this story end up behaving like their Persian oppressors. Whether, in a world where there is so much disproportionate violence, we can condone such a form of therapy – however playful – is an open question.

So too the tribalism of AFL has hitherto served to circumscribe the footy field as a relatively safe place where we can – in a carnivalesque way – seek a turning of the tables on our enemies – our 'others'. Not perfectly by any means; we have seen ugliness on and off the field before now, and the AFL has had to grapple – for example – with structural racism and homophobia no less than the 'real world' in which it is set.

We get into trouble when we confuse our genres. Esther is a kind of 'theatre of the absurd': a well told story that raises important questions for its first and subsequent audiences, holds up a not-always-flattering mirror, and invites the imagination of a different future. All good stories are true; some of them actually happened.

The footy is another kind of theatre which bears out the enculturated nature of human identity and belonging: that sense of who our people are, what stories we share, what values they enshrine. But, of course, it's only a game ... isn't it?

When identity is formed adversarially – over and against, rather than alongside – survival and belonging become unhelpfully coupled: my tribe can only flourish if yours doesn't. This is the path to desperation, which leads to fragmentation, disunity, spray painting walls under the cover of darkness, and much, much worse.

Despite the tribalism it often displays, the church is not a collection of tribes; and notwithstanding a substantial body of evidence to the contrary, it is not a club. The church exists to proclaim the counter-intuitive belief that we are 'stronger together' when 'together' includes those with whom we may differ – culturally and theologically – notwithstanding all we have in common as Christians and as human beings.

In this light, I commend to you our cover story (continued on page 11) which teases out how the Nairobi-Cairo Proposals might assist the Anglican Communion of Churches to ride the bumps of our current challenges, so that our witness to a world in need of good news might be 'stronger together'.

+RM



Dance group and EfM members with Rev'd Joy Sandefur

■ Val Jones

We are in the 4th year of our EfM course (*Exploring faith Matters*). While we usually meet via Zoom, we also regularly meet in person to undertake a workshop and hear a guest speaker. Our last speaker was Gradwell Fredericks, who talked about what we as Christians must UN-learn in order to RE-learn about our faith.

On 23 July, one of our group's members – The Rev'd Kathy Dalton – organized a program for us in Morwell. We began with a Eucharist service, which Kathy conducted. Then we all walked down to the Aboriginal 'Gathering Place'. Wow! What an adventure. We were welcomed

by two lines of Aboriginal girls wearing possum skins and waving bunches of gum leaves. Kathy had organized two local dance groups – one female, one male – to perform for us in costume. Some dances had been handed down for generations – others were new. They represented a creation story, women's work, and animals. It was inspiring, especially to see the men/boys move so realistically like kangaroos, emus, and pelicans. Some of the dances were accompanied by a didgeridoo and clapping sticks. We were able to ask questions and explore the performance fully.

Following a scrumptious lunch – thanks, Kathy – we headed upstairs to hear our guest speaker – The Rev'd Joy Sandefur.

Joy worked for 25 years in the north of Australia, which included 17 years with Wycliffe Bible Translators, researching and developing the Kriol Bible and Prayer Book. 'Kriol' was developed from Pidgin after Pidgin was no longer spoken. The Aborigines in Northern Australia then adopted it as their first language. Today, more than 30,000 Aborigines in Northern Australia speak and use Kriol.

Later, Joy returned to the Northern Territory for seven years with the Bush Church Aid Society as a ministry support worker for Aboriginal churches and in various roles at Nungalinga College.

With her vast experience working with Aboriginal peoples, she was able to tell us about the first Aboriginal missionaries and ordained priests. She had an interesting take on missions, claiming that without them, some Aboriginal communities would not have survived.

Joy talked about the deep significance of smoking ceremonies and ritual cleansing. I experienced a smoking ceremony in an Inuit community in Canada and find it fascinating that so many different cultures use some form of it. It is universal and deeply spiritual.

We concluded with case studies of a dreaming and Kathy sharing with the group her ministry to her people.

It was a privilege to be involved in this day.

Val Jones is a member of the Gippsland EfM group.

NAIDOC Week Service, Lake Tyers

■ Jan Down

What a privilege it was to gather together at St John's, Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust, for a service in celebration of NAIDOC Week.

The congregation included members of the Lake Tyers Community, including Wayne Hood, Chair of the Trust, who gave a warm welcome to visitors.

There were half a dozen people from St Paul's Cathedral, while others came from churches around the Diocese.

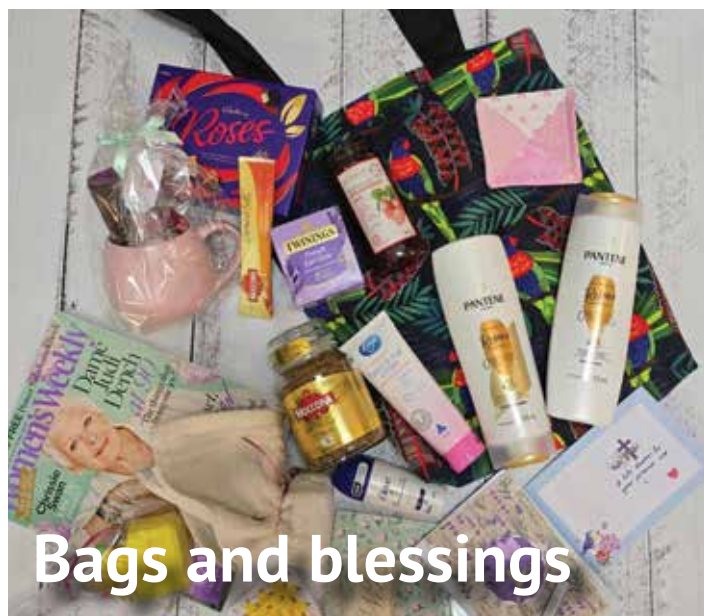
We were led in worship and thanksgiving by The Rev'd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy. Aunty Phyllis spoke on this year's theme for NAIDOC Week: The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy.



The Rev'd Canon Aunty Phyllis Andy and the congregation at St John's Lake Tyers

Fellowship continued over afternoon tea, generously provided by members of the community.

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



Bags and blessings

Handmade bags filled with kindness

■ Bev Piper

A simple conversation between parishioner Mark Bourke and Mayor of Glenelg Shire, Karen Stephens, raised an idea. Karen mentioned that the men in the drought-stricken Shire seem to manage hard situations with a 'barbecue and a beer'; however, it was their partners, who help run the farms and have family responsibilities, who are also struggling and are sometimes not mentioned in the conversations.

The result ... 40 beautiful handmade bags filled with kindness, encouragement,

and goodies. These bags were delivered to Casterton by Mark and his wife Amanda in June.

Casterton farmers have stated they have never endured such tough times in many years of farming. The paddocks may be green with the small amount of rain recently, but it's not enough to feed ewes that are about to lamb.

There were two gatherings in June in the Glenelg Shire

to help promote 'Community Health and Wellbeing' for drought-stricken communities. There was a barbecue and the women at these gatherings were presented with the bags that were made and filled by the women of St Mary's in Mirboo North.

The project that started with a conversation was taken on by the Mission Committee and supported by the whole church. A glorious sewing bee was held; donations, prayers, and intense shopping were undertaken by many parishioners.

The bags were created, filled, and blessed inside two weeks.

Some of the emails received were very humbling. A few extracts are below:

I wish to say a big thank you to all the lovely people who contributed and sent the Kindness (Goodie) bags to our community at Casterton. It was unexpected but gladly appreciated. The words in the cards and the treats gave me a warm feeling that people do care.

It is hard to find the words that describe what your goodies bag did for me and other women. So often the male farmers are first thought of during droughts, but it is the women/wives who have the added burden of emotionally supporting them. Of course, it is something we want to do, but then when strangers say 'we see you', through a goodies bag, it's a much lesser burden. Thank you!

I can't thank you both enough for your kindness in delivering the gifts from your wonderful town folk of Mirboo North.

The Mission Team met to discuss the 'Bag Project', and someone mentioned, 'When you cast your bread upon the waters, it comes back buttered.' How true this is.

The women of Casterton were blessed; however, we may have been blessed more.

Bev Piper is a Parish Council representative for St Mary's, Mirboo North.

■ Jan Down

St Paul's Cathedral congregation has donated at least 170 beanies to the Mission to Seafarers.

Some of the beanies were beautifully hand knitted by members of the congregation and some by friends in an aged care facility. Several people donated beanies they had bought, including a huge haul from op shops between Sale and Lakes Entrance.

The Mission to Seafarers gives out hundreds of beanies all year round, and they are very much appreciated by the sailors who travel the seas in all weathers.

The Mission reports: '90% of everything we use, from food and medication to cars and household furnishings, reaches us via the sea. Being a seafarer is tough. Crews can spend months away working long hours with little respite or contact with home. On top of the daily pressures, the threat of piracy, shipwreck and abandonment are ever present for the men and women who serve us at sea.'

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

Beanies for the sailors



Christine Morris

Michael and Jan Down, Steph Broughton and Nancy Schmack

Bass Coast Winter Shelter has commenced



■ Annie Taylor

The Bass Coast Winter Shelter committee is pleased to announce the commencement of our Winter Shelter Project, with the first night of operation on Wednesday, 23 July 2025.

This marks the first time this winter that people experiencing homelessness in our community will have access to overnight accommodation through the shelter. Organised by the Interchurch Council of Phillip Island, the Winter Shelter will operate from St John's Uniting Church, providing an evening meal, dormitory-style accommodation, and a safe place of care and connection.

The shelter will be open up to three nights each week during the final period of July and throughout August and September.

The decision to apply for an occupancy permit for St Philip's Anglican Church, Cowes, for the 2025 Winter Shelter will be reviewed in the coming weeks.

Reason to Celebrate

The Bass Coast Winter Shelter committee is proud of what has been achieved since its first meeting in mid-March this year. We've worked closely with a supportive community to develop a program for this year and many years to come. The program has deliberately been established as Bass Coast-wide, to draw on the resources of the entire shire and open up churches to guests from across the region.



Members of the Bass Coast Winter Shelter Committee 2025



Bringing the Bass Coast Winter Shelter to this point, after only four months of hard work and collaboration, is a milestone worth celebrating.

The shelter will be one of only eight shelters that are currently operating across Australia. The list of shelters can be found on Stable One's website. Stable One, a registered charity, has successfully operated the first Winter Shelter in the Yarra Valley since its inception in 2017. Stable One also provides support for other shelters to open across Australia.

Volunteers

The volunteer response from the community for the 2025 Bass Coast Winter Shelter has been incredible. There are 75 volunteers on our database, and 55 are ready to start, having completed their training. If you'd like to volunteer, email: wintersheltervol@gmail.com, and you'll be sent an application form.

Donations

The committee has been overwhelmed with the financial support the local community has contributed towards the shelter. A combination of donations and grants have come from individuals, community organisations, and local businesses. In addition to financial support, we appreciate the many individuals and community groups that have supported the shelter with other kind gifts.

A Collaboration Between Community Groups

The 2025 Bass Coast Winter Shelter is an initiative that evolved from the homelessness think tank forums run by Bass Coast Shire Council in 2023.

It is underpinned by the churches that form the Interchurch Council of Phillip Island, including the Uniting, Baptist, Anglican, Catholic, Surf Church, and Equip Church.

To deliver the Winter Shelter, the committee has worked closely with the Bass Coast Shire Council, Salvation Army Homelessness Services – Gippsland, Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre (PICAL), and Housing Matters Bass Coast (HMBC), which is auspiced by Wonthaggi Neighbourhood Centre (WNC).

For more information and any enquiries, visit the website: basscoastwintershelter.wordpress.com

Annie Taylor is a member of the St Philip's Cowes congregation.



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Westernport church leaders and the family

New life and old wisdom A view from Westernport

■ Sharron Lane

Earlier this month, we had the great pleasure of dedicating the newest and cutest member of our parish. It was a lovely, warm, and family-friendly service, with our newest member's grandfather giving a testimony and homily – five generations of Christian heritage. Amazing! Among our congregation, we also have a newly minted great-great-grandmother. Yes, her grandson has recently become a grandfather. So, we are reminded of the longevity of our faith and community. We welcomed a new life and celebrated the legacy and testimony of heritage. We are a small community in Westernport. Oh, but what a blessing to be growing from new life.

Change is not always easy, however. While babies are a very adorable way to grow, growth in any parish can be painful. We are currently in an interregnum. We are seeking the Lord's will, and there is struggle, loss, and pain. In my daily readings at the moment, I have found great solace and wisdom in the book of Ezra. The Israelites had just returned to Jerusalem after 70 years in captivity. What they found was devastating. After repeated and continuous warnings from numerous prophets, the people of both the kingdom of Israel and finally Judah were overrun and bore the consequences of their idolatry and disobedience. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed.

This was what the people faced upon their return.

But as always, there was hope for a new beginning. The Lord was with them. It was not easy. Everything needed to be restored and made new. In Ezra 3:11–13, we read of the foundation of the temple being laid. And while it was a time for serious celebration, the scripture notes something else – and it was important too:

And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord had been laid. But many of the priests and Levites and heads of families, old people who had seen the first house on its foundations, wept with a loud voice when they saw this house, though many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted so loudly that the sound was heard far away.

There was both weeping and shouts of joy. We need to

remember this when there is change and restoration. Even when it is most welcome and most needed, change can be painful and can remind many older people of the former things. This scripture is beautiful it prompts us not only to make room for all our responses to change, but also – when done correctly – these combine into a prayerful cry of both the new and the former. We bless the new life in our parish and respect and value the wisdom of our elders and the blessings of the former years. May the Lord continue to lead us as we seek His will for Westernport.

Sharron Lane is a Warden for the Westernport Episcopal District.

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Thanks for 150 years at St James

■ Gospel Ralte

St James Church at Buln Buln celebrated its 150th anniversary and reunion on Sunday 27 July. More than 70 people crammed into the small rural church. As well as many locals, several former members of the congregation who no longer live in the district made the effort to attend, some from as far afield as Queensland. Quite a few previous ministers and locum ministers who had served at St James over the years were there.

The celebration was led by current minister Rev'd Gospel Ralte, with Bishop

Richard as guest speaker. Richard, who is an engaging speaker, filled in some of the lesser-known history of the church, drawing connections with St James Day and a Bible passage from the Epistle of St James. Local parishioners gave readings, conducted prayers of thanks, led liturgy, and gave a short summary of the church's 150-year history.

The parish choir, *Wattle Bird Singers*, performed a delightful and original special number. Congregational singing lifted the roof in thanks and praise to God for His faithfulness.

Bishop Richard and the congregation celebrating 150 years at St James

After the service, everyone enjoyed fellowship with one another in the adjoining meeting room, sharing many stories over a delicious, country-style afternoon tea.

A history booklet of St James Church was provided to attendees.

Although small in numbers, the current congregation did an outstanding job in organising this event.

The Rev'd Gospel Ralte, Cooperating Churches Neerim South, Buln Buln & Noojee.



Marking the end of a faithful chapter

■ Les Ridge

On 2 August, a very heartfelt farewell was made to Jenny and Tony Wicking at Christ Church, Drouin.

The occasion was a Lay Reader seminar, and it was an appropriate venue to mark the end of an influential and vital ministry for Jenny and Tony.

Jenny and Tony Wicking with Bishop Richard

years, they have been able to call on the wisdom and experience of The Rev'ds Bruce Charles, Dr Dean Spalding, and Judith Lake.

When we heed God's call to serve Him, we know that whatever the nature of the challenge we undertake, we will be

As Lay Reader Chaplains, they have nurtured and encouraged women and men of every walk of life to continue the tradition that has its roots as far back as 1846.

For Jenny and Tony, their journey started in 2010, as Bishop John McIntyre ('Jonny Mac') appointed them to this particular chaplaincy. Over the intervening

greatly blessed. But it's unlikely that either Jenny or Tony had any inkling of just how greatly they would be blessed during their ministry.

The gradually blossoming relationship between those two became the romance of the Diocese. It was a source of much speculation – will they, won't they? However, it speaks well of the discretion and privacy of our diocese-wide fellowship that, when it came time for Tony to 'pop the question', Jenny was quite taken by surprise.

So, as a somewhat tearful conclusion to an excellent seminar, it fell to Lacy Biggs and Bishop Richard to mark the end of a most rewarding era.

As their time as Lay Reader Chaplains comes to an end, Jenny and Tony will certainly be greatly missed. Those of us who have been richly blessed by their love and affirmation over the past 15 years sincerely wish them God's every blessing in their well-earned retirement.

Les Ridge is a TGA representative for the Parish of Bass/Phillip Island and a TGA Committee member.

Reaching Gen Z with the hope of Jesus

■ Susan Liersch

HOPE25

The hope of Jesus is for all people in all times. There seems to be a disconnect between this biblical reality and what we are experiencing in our churches. A lot of our churches across the diocese cannot claim membership that covers every generation. Australian research into Generation Y (Millennials) and, more recently, Generation Z (Gen Z) reveals an accelerating decline in engagement with traditional spirituality and religion. Sadly, our churches are growing old rather than growing young! So how can we turn this trend around? In this article focused on Gen Z, I'll share some insights I have gathered along the way in my ministry to young people.

Gen Z are generally defined as those who are 13 to 30 years old, born between 1995 and 2012. Claire Madden, in her book *Hello Gen Z*, describes them as 'digital natives', having grown up immersed in digital technology. Some of the impacts of this digital integration have been 'screen addiction', declining mental health, diminished empathy skills, and a shortened attention span. Through social media and gaming platforms, Gen Z instantly connect globally. They have become global collaborators, creating the most global youth culture we have ever known. They were born into a

fast-moving, constantly changing world; they seemingly effortlessly migrate from one social media platform to another.

The world of Gen Z is one of sensory overload, where their five senses have all had the volume turned up, and they have grown

up expecting continual technological and lifestyle change. Ingrained in them is the constant need to be learning, to be across what is new, to be gaining transferable skills, and to adapt to new contexts. They are the target of marketing strategies that create pressure to act beyond their years whilst lacking emotional maturity. They were raised within a worldview that promotes relative truth – i.e. truth according to one's own personal experience and interpretation – and freedom to express themselves however they want.

World instability, wars, terrorism, climate catastrophes (blamed on this generation), pandemics, cost-of-living crises, and increasing wealth disparity have all challenged the belief that the world is progressing and all the big things have been fixed, causing Gen Z both anxiety and a feeling of guilt for even existing.

Pulling all this life experience together, the outcome for many Gen Zs has been the creation of a cynical mindset. They are cynical about claims of truth, acts of altruism, and institutions viewed as self-serving and failing to deliver. This puts the church in a tricky space, for we are an institution that preaches eternal truth and promotes a life of altruism.

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This seems like an insurmountable barrier for the church in reaching Gen Z with the hope of Jesus; however, we know with God nothing is impossible! The good news is that even though Gen Z shy away from religion, many are open to spirituality. Jonny Price (Church Resources Officer for UK Church Army) reports that in the UK, young people are looking for something transcendent, something mystical, something beyond the everyday. Young people, he says, are listening to supernatural prompts because they can't trust anything else. The same is true in Australia. Recently, ABC News reported that more Australian Gen Z men were looking to Christianity for meaning. Jonny suggests that the discipleship journey is reversing. Where generally in the past people explored faith, became Christians, then became part of the church, now people attend church to explore faith and then become Christians. Our worship services, he says, are becoming the shop window of the churches.

So what essential characteristics do our churches need to have to be places where Gen Z feel comfortable to explore faith and grow to become disciples?

In the book *Growing Young* by Powell, Mulder, and Griffin, six strategies for

churches wanting to grow young are identified:

- Unlock keychain leadership – Instead of centralized authority, empower others – especially young people. Paul modelled this by viewing Timothy as a potential missionary 'in his own right', rather than an object of the mission.
- Empathize with today's young people – Instead of judging or criticizing, step into the shoes of this generation and actively listen. Invite young people into a conversation by asking questions. I asked a group of teens the question, 'If Jesus was real, what difference would that make in your life?' This led to a very fruitful 30-minute conversation about faith, where they felt safe to ask questions that were on their hearts.
- Take Jesus' message seriously – Instead of asserting formulaic gospel claims, welcome young people into a Jesus-centred way of life.
- Fuel a warm community – Instead of focusing on 'cool' worship or programs, aim for warm peer and

intergenerational friendships. Many young people come from broken families. A healthy church family will be a place of healing for them.

- Prioritize young people (and families) everywhere – Instead of giving lip service to how much young people matter, look for creative ways to tangibly support, resource, and involve them in all facets of your congregation.
- Be the best neighbours – Instead of condemning the world outside your walls, enable young people to neighbour well locally and globally.

Josh, born in 1998, said, 'I think now that what we're facing, for a lot of people, is a loss of purpose and a lot of confusion.' As Christians, we know Jesus offers us purpose and clarity regarding the meaning of life. Let's ensure that we are ready to share that with the young people who cross the threshold of our churches, as well as those we interact with in our families and community.

The Rev'd Susan Liersch is the Youth and Young Families Minister for the Parish of Wonthaggi/Inverloch.

Distress at the situation in Gaza

■ Bec Hayman

We have all been distressed lately by the scenes coming out of Gaza of mass starvation as seemingly a political tool. In such situations it is challenging to know what the most effective humanitarian response is and yet as humans we feel compelled to respond in some way. On 6 August, Mr Gordon Rouse and myself, Rev'd Bec Hayman from the Cooperating Churches in Churchill, went to meet with Dr Iqbal Zafar, President of the Gippsland Australian Muslim Community Inc, together with several others from his community.

The aim of our meeting was several-fold. Firstly, we wanted to express our sorrow over the terrible events transpiring in Palestine. Secondly, we wanted to ask Dr Zafar and his friends if there were ways they thought it would be helpful for us as local Christians to respond to the crisis. Thirdly, we wanted to take steps to build relationships and remove any sense of 'us' and 'them', instead affirming our shared humanity as we seek to speak out against injustice.

One of the women mentioned how grateful she was that we had reached out to them and also spoke of the pain they were all feeling and how her own children were struggling to process their lives of comfort when children in Palestine had nothing. Others talked about their need to have people of other faiths, particularly Jews and Christians, speak up because they feel that, as Muslims, their voices are dismissed. Dr Zafar himself generously gave us his time, talking long after the others went back to work, sharing his grief and indeed anger at the injustices he sees. For me, I felt motivated to attend any public



Dr Iqbal Zafar; Mr Gordon Rouse; Rev'd Bec Hayman

celebrations the local Islamic community host to further build relationship and to ensure that I can give a coherent biblical response to the political movement of Zionism.

The Rev'd Bec Hayman is the Anglican Priest at the Cooperating Churches of Churchill/Boolarra/Yinnar.

Retreat to The Abbey

A place for renewal and reflection

■ Cath Connelly

Ever wondered what it's like to come to a retreat at The Abbey? Gabrielle Minchin is a member of our community who regularly attends retreats here. She describes her experiences for us:

I look forward to it for a few weeks before. When I get onto the ferry, I think, 'Now it begins.' I ask myself, 'What will I learn? What will be new? What changes will happen?' I make sure I arrive with lots of time to settle in.

I just love everything – the view, the sea, birds, walking, getting into the spirit of the place. I love meeting new people, and I am glad to see regular retreatants. I enjoy gathering for the pre-dinner drinks and nibbles. There is excitement because there are always new things. The Abbey is the place for growing, renewing, and nurturing.

I like to watch the sun rising over the lake, watching the beacons going off as the new day begins. I always watch what my dreams tell me. The dreams I have while on retreat at The Abbey are important. The week after any retreat is always special as I reflect on the experiences I had at The Abbey. The Abbey is a great blessing to me.

If you have always wanted to come to an organised retreat at The Abbey, but the topic you would like to explore has not yet been offered, let us know. We are always open to suggestions.

Whilst we provide scheduled retreats, The Abbey is the ideal place for individual retreats. We have cosy, self-catering rooms where you can nestle into the delight of solitary time amidst beautiful surroundings. This is your place; come find a home here.

May The Abbey be a 'great blessing' to you, as it is to Gabrielle.

Save the date



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

SEPTEMBER

- 11 Celtic Music session
- 18 *Hush Quiet Day* – Labyrinth Journey
Facilitator: Su Mills

OCTOBER

- 4 Blessing of the Pets
- 9 *Hush Quiet Day* – Triangle of Rhetoric: Ethos, Pathos and Logos
Facilitator: Kevin Broughton
- 9 Celtic Music session
- 10 – 12 Women's Storytelling Retreat
Facilitator: Lee Palumbo
- 24–25 Diocesan retreat
Grace and the Holy Spirit
Facilitator: Rev'd Kate Campbell
- 26–31 Meditation and Mindfulness in the Christian Tradition
Facilitator: Roland Ashby

NOVEMBER

- 1 Clothes swap day
- 13 *Hush Quiet Day* – Journey from the Centre
Facilitator: Cath Connelly
- 13 Celtic Music session
- 17–20 Benedict: Living Life in the Daily
Facilitator: John Stewart
- 28 Ecumenical Advent Conversation
St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Sale

Proposals could redefine Anglican identity

Continued from page 1

In a proposed revision of the 1930 Lambeth Conference description of Anglicanism the phrase 'in communion with the See of Canterbury' would be replaced by 'historic connection with the See of Canterbury'.

Dr Treloar said this was a proposal that would give Anglicans more room to disagree and continue to grow into unity.

The proposals also add the words 'seek to' when describing how member churches are to uphold the faith, acknowledging that Anglicans do not always agree on what that looks like.

The second major proposal would see the presidency of the Anglican Consultative Council rotate between its five regions: Asia, the Americas, Africa, Europe and Oceania.

The presidency of the ACC would rotate between these regions every six years, instead of being exercised permanently by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Dr Treloar said the basic assumption behind proposing a rotating presidency of the ACC was that the leadership of the Communion should look like the Communion.

He said the Instruments of Communion, which included the ACC, should reflect the global diversity of the Communion and its post-colonial context, not just its English origins.

The Communion could be represented by the President of the Anglican Consultative Council, Secretary General or Archbishop of Canterbury depending on circumstances.

Dr Treloar said the proposals were not intended to solve division over human sexuality.

Instead, they would make modest but potentially far-reaching changes in the Communion's self-understanding and organisation to help Anglicans persevere in difference while working through the presenting issues.

Dr Treloar said IASCUFO Commission had a diverse membership including two primates affiliated with the Global South Fellowship of Anglican Churches, and all members of the Commission endorsed the proposals.

He said the Australian bishops had engaged significantly with the proposals during their meeting earlier this year, as did the recent Deans' Conference.

IASCUFO published the Nairobi-Cairo Proposals on 6 December, 2024. They will be considered by the Anglican Consultative Council when it meets in Ireland in 2026.

More information is available at: <http://bit.ly/4mNTxWR>

Gippsland Grammar crew makes history on the world rowing stage

April Harrison, Scarlett Tavasci, Ella Gerrand and Lily Canfield compete at the Henley Royal Regatta

Four Gippsland Grammar students have made school history by reaching the quarter-finals of the world-renowned Henley Royal Regatta, the farthest any all-Gippsland crew has progressed at the elite event.

Current students April Harrison, Scarlett Tavasci and Lily Canfield joined Old Scholar Ella Gerrand (Class of 2024) to race for Melbourne's Mercantile Rowing Club, representing the only all-Gippsland crew in this year's Diamond Jubilee Challenge Cup at the annual Henley Royal Regatta on the River Thames.

The journey began at the Henley Women's Regatta, also on the River Thames, in June, where the crew stormed through to the quarter-finals, defeating a strong crew from Shrewsbury School before bowing out to local favourites Marlow Rowing Club. Their impressive results earned the girls direct entry into the Henley Royal Regatta, one of the world's most prestigious rowing competitions.

The girls opened their Henley campaign in early July in spectacular fashion, defeating Kew House School by two and a quarter lengths in their debut race. While the girls' Henley experience ended in the quarter-final – again to Marlow Rowing Club – their efforts mark a new benchmark for Gippsland Grammar crews on the world stage.

'Henley Royal Regatta is the absolute pinnacle of school and club racing in the world,' Gippsland Grammar Director of Rowing Nick Bartlett said. 'To be able to travel over and compete requires a huge investment of time, energy and passion, and the results achieved by the crew this year demonstrate how much they put into this endeavour.'

'As a school, we are always seeking to

identify opportunities that allow our students to shine on a local, national or world stage, and shining is certainly what these four did. This is another step on from the first crew to attend the event in 2022, and we hope to see more students follow in their footsteps in the future.'

For Year 11 student Scarlett Tavasci, Henley was a life-changing experience.

'Rowing at the Henley Royal Regatta in England was one of the best experiences of my life,' Scarlett said. 'So much training and time had been put into competing, and it was great to see it all pay off in such an unreal way.'

'It was amazing to race the best crews from all over the world, and we are so grateful for everyone that made this trip possible. We will definitely remember this for years to come and look back on it with pride.'

The four rowers each began their rowing journeys through Gippsland Grammar's Learn-2Row program in Year 7 and have become leading athletes in the school's high-performance rowing program. The crew trains 18 to 20 hours a week across gym, erg and water sessions and fuels their

performance with 'never-ending meals' and race-day energy gels.

Gippsland Grammar's rowing program continues to grow, with more than 100 students competing annually in regattas across Victoria, NSW and the ACT. Gippsland Grammar was the first school east of Melbourne to establish a rowing program in the 1960s and continues to be a strong presence in national and international competitions.

For this year's Henley competitors, their experiences have opened new doors – with international scholarships, friendships across Australia, and lifelong memories among the many outcomes.





Setting a confident path in a world of careers

Working collaboratively are Zainab, Alyssa, Oliver and Agatha at the Careers Conference Day in Morwell

In preparation for St Paul's Anglican Grammar School's first Year 11 Traralgon cohort next year, in 2026, the school has launched a refreshed and future-focused Careers Program to support Year 10 students as they prepare for VCE subject selection and life beyond school.

The program is already in full swing across the Warragul and Traralgon campuses, having commenced with Morrisby Testing – a personalised, data-driven tool that helps students identify their strengths and career interests. Students and their families

then met with St Paul's Head of Careers, Sarah Luck, in one-on-one interviews to assist in interpreting and understanding their individual Morrisby assessment.

To build on this foundation, the Careers Program continues with three dynamic full-day sessions. First, students attended a joint-campus series of inspiring workshops on career exploration, resilience, and personal development, delivered by both educators and external speakers at the Italian Australian Club in Morwell.

Next, students delved deeper into VCE subject offerings at their respective campuses with a day featuring presentations from faculty leaders, alongside a dynamic workshop by careers expert Tyson Day from Arrive & Thrive. For the third day, students will attend a 'Discover a World of Careers' seminar at Gumbuya World in August, exploring real-life roles within the theme park industry and hearing directly from professionals about their career journeys.

With a strong focus on self-discovery, practical knowledge, and real-world insights, St Paul's revised Careers Program is setting students on a clear, confident path toward a future full of opportunity.

Dianne Blood appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO)

For distinguished service to mechanical engineering through innovation and robotic design, and to diversity and inclusion.

■ Jude Benton

At age 91, Dianne is now retired from a lifetime of engineering and design work that recently saw her awarded an Order of Australia. This follows other accolades, such as the 2023 'Peter Nicol Russell Medal' – Australia's most prestigious award for a professional engineer across all chapters. Reflecting on a particularly remarkable life journey, Dianne shares stories of a career filled with seizing opportunities for creative problem-solving, beginning with her first engineering job at age 19. Despite having no formal qualifications, she became Australia's leading design engineer for fruit canneries – then a prolific and essential industry throughout the country.

Identified as someone with a true gift for problem-solving, organisations actively sought out Dianne's designs. This led to inventions such as robotic shearing systems and significant work on geomechanical centrifuges, which were internationally sought after.

Even after retirement, Dianne has remained deeply interested in engineering, robotics, and design. She has mentored younger engineers and contributed to ongoing robotics education. Her problem-solving talent is a gift of wisdom she has also shared generously with churches and volunteer organisations – including the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong, where we are privileged to have her as a parishioner.

Dianne's faith has provided a guiding ethic for her life and work, particularly her desire to solve problems and help the less fortunate. Her Christian faith was especially nurtured after retirement, when she met and married her late husband, Harold Boddy. He was an active member of the Anglican Men's Society in Melbourne, and together they joined the Society's annual holidays – which Dianne recalls as a true highlight of her life.



I asked Dianne what advice she would give to younger people wanting to get into engineering, her response is relevant to us all.

Always look for opportunities rather than financial return; without opportunity you won't progress. Have faith in yourself, and have courage.'

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



From past to present St Anne's Day celebrates lifelong connections

Jan Henry with St Anne's Head of Campus Jie Van Berkel and Campus Captains Elena Lazzaro and Connor McLeod

It was a day of connections, conversations and cherished memories at this year's St Anne's Day celebration at Gippsland Grammar's St Anne's Campus on 25 July.

This much-anticipated annual tradition welcomes back former students of St Anne's Church of England Girls' Grammar School – the name of the original girls' school which is now part of Gippsland Grammar – for a special Fellowship service alongside current students, followed by a luncheon hosted by Head of Campus Jie Van Berkel.

More than 25 Old Scholars attended this year's event, including former Deputy Principal and Old Scholar from the Class of 1980, Jan Henry, who gave the keynote address at the Fellowship. Ms Henry reflected warmly on her own time at the school and the lifelong bonds formed in the schoolyard.

'It's about the way we share, the way we care for each other and the way we support each other,' Ms Henry told the former and current students at the Fellowship in the campus's Lorna Sparrow Hall. 'That connection is what makes us all feel a sense of belonging, and it's what brings people like me, and so many others, back to the school today.'

Ms Henry also shared the story of meeting her best friend Jane at the school 50 years ago – a friendship that has spanned decades, international travel and countless shared moments.

'That friendship brings me deep

contentment, and it all started with a single connection right here at school,' Ms Henry said. 'My hope is that whether you've been part of this community for 50 years or just five months, you look for ways to keep building those connections and the legacy that is St Anne's.'

Gippsland Grammar was established by the second Bishop of Gippsland, the Right Reverend George Cranswick, in 1924 with just four students. Over the past 101 years, the school has incorporated five educational institutions, including the original Church of England Girls' School Sale,

evolving into the Gippsland Grammar of today, which caters for more than 1,100 students and employs 280 staff.

To coincide with this year's St Anne's Day, St Paul's Cathedral in Sale invited families from the St Anne's Campus and the wider Gippsland Grammar community to a special service on Sunday, 27 July. The service was attended by a number of Old Scholars who had also taken part in the St Anne's Day luncheon, including Jocelyn Brand (Class of 1961) from Paynesville, Anne Archbold (Class of 1968) from Bundalaguah, and Sally Friend (Class of 1967) and Marion Hector (Class of 1955), both from Sale. The Old Scholars joined Jie Van Berkel, Deputy Head of Campus and Campus Captain Elena Lazzaro to sing the St Anne's school song *Bless Our School* to the congregation.

St Paul's Cathedral and Gippsland Grammar share a long and close relationship, with the original school starting on the Cathedral site. Following the service, some of the former students joined current Campus Captain Elena Lazzaro for a photo in front of the Cathedral's stained-glass window that represents the Diocese's links to Gippsland Grammar. Installed in 1981, the window recognises that St Anne's and Gippsland Grammar commenced on the Cathedral site and features the school's crest.

Gippsland Grammar maintains strong connections with its former students and hosts an annual Decades Reunion. This year's reunion will be held on Saturday, 18 October the school's Garnsey Campus in Sale. Old Scholars from the cohorts of 1965 (60 years), 1975 (50 years), 1985 (40 years), 1995 (30 years), 2005 (20 years) and 2015 (10 years) are invited to attend.



Sale's St Paul's Cathedral celebrated St Anne's Day with a special service on Sunday 27 July. Pictured are former students Joy Brand, Jan Kewley, Sally Friend, Ann Archbold and Marion Hector with St Anne's Campus Captain Elena Lazzaro



Sarah on one of her many walks during the retreat

A place to breathe again

The gift of the Wombat Hill grants

■ Sarah Gover

In last September's edition of *TGA*, there was an article announcing grants to support parishes or individuals to attend a retreat of their choice. Named the *Wombat Hill Bequest*, in honour of the Betty and Michael Phillips Estate, these grants were established to further Betty and Michael's vision of providing Christian hospitality in the form of a comfortable spiritual place. They had a vision to provide a place that gave people the opportunity to rest, recover, and refocus on one's relationship with God, as well as the chance to discern how best to continue walking with the Lord upon re-entering the world after the retreat. But they died before they were able to fulfil their vision. The bequest was set up to fulfil their vision, giving individuals and groups in parishes the opportunity to have the privilege of a retreat experience.

After a year of working in the Traralgon Parish and settling into the Ministry Development program, the opportunity to take some time to rest, recover, and refocus sounded wonderful. So, I applied and was a successful recipient. It's been a while since I went on a retreat and I was unsure about going to one on my own, so I arranged to go with someone else from my parish.

We found a retreat for the week after Easter at Santa Casa in Queenscliff. The mission of the grant was to assist people in 'taking time out of their everyday lives to rest, recover, and focus on God.' This aligned with Santa Casa, and it seemed like a good fit.

Although I used to go on retreats when I was at university, life got in the way and I fell out of the practice. Since university, spiritual refreshment for me has been more about attending conferences or hearing great speakers. In retrospect, going on a full-week silent retreat for my first one in a while might have been a bit optimistic. I had brought a new pair of shoes with me on the retreat, and every day I would wear them. By the end, my feet were covered in sticking plasters at all the places they rubbed as my feet adjusted and built up resistance and tolerance to the new shoes.

It was a bit like that for me at the retreat. At first, there were things that rubbed a bit, and I went and spoke with the spiritual advisors who helped me adjust and build up a bit of resistance and tolerance as the retreat continued.

The retreat allowed me to take time out for quiet reflection, meditation, and contemplation, and to delve deeper into things the Holy Spirit highlighted needed attention.

In a world where there is a lot of discussion on mental health and self-care, I can now see that there is a place for retreats and spiritual care. I might be slow to the party, but I am beginning to understand the importance of taking advantage of the opportunities presented and prioritising quiet moments.

Thank you to Wombat Hill for making these grants available and these experiences possible. I plan to make retreats a more regular part of my annual schedule.

Sarah is a Lay Worker for the Parish of Traralgon.

BETTY AND MICHAEL PHILLIPS ESTATE

WOMBAT HILL

Grants

APPLICATIONS OPEN SEP 1 AND CLOSE SEP 30

Mental health and well-being in Christian ministry are paramount in order to carry out the heavy loads that many ordained and lay ministry agents encounter on a day-to-day basis.

Having somewhere to retreat to was essential in Jesus' ministry.

A bequest has been established in the memory of Betty & Michael Phillips.

Grants are for Gippsland residents, for Christians and are non-denominational.

Grants are available for recipients to go on restorative spiritual retreats.



The Betty and Michael Phillips Bequest

Facilitated by:

<https://www.communityfoundation.org.au/>

For more information contact:

Fred Wright 0412963310 or wombatbill@gmail.com





Hands at work, hearts in faith

■ Carol Monson

Mark at work on the doors

Not another working bee? Think again!

Most people sigh heavily when they hear or read these words – but ultimately, if you belong to an organisation, you inevitably end up going and working hard.

The value for Warragul Anglican Church in its numerous working bees lies not just in getting physical tasks completed, but also in the companionship, discussions, and reflections on one's role as a member of the church.

A member of the 8am congregation, Neville Wallace, reflected on the value of a working bee as also providing an opportunity to work and talk with people who usually attend the later Sunday morning service. Neville said his faith has kept him at Warragul for over thirty years; it is the place where his children have been baptised, friends and family have married and funerals have been conducted. It is where his community can be found.

Neville followed the recent Saturday morning working bee with an extensive list of jobs completed: brass polished, windows washed, plants trimmed, grass whopper-snipped and weeded, eaves at the front entrance painted, graffiti removed, hardware on doors and the fire hydrant box replaced, defibrillator mounted – and so the list, that exists for all churches, goes on.

Jobs aside, the work gave people a chance to reflect on why they continue to help out:

- Victoria loves the ability to serve and help grow the church to demonstrate care and love.
- Mark used his civil engineering skills to replace door-closing mechanisms, seeing the offering of his skills as part of building the church community.
- Jan brought a glow to the brass she was cleaning, seeing it as part of her lifelong commitment to Christianity.
- Inge, weeding along the edge of the public footpath, said the work and people involved made the building look like a very welcoming place.
- Joy, wielding a long broom to clean the eaves, feels it a privilege to still be able to help after a lifetime commitment to her faith.

Children especially love the working bees because it gives them a sense of place in their church community beyond attending services and SALT Club.

So next time the church announces another working bee, reflect on the role it plays in building community.

Carol Monson is the TGA representative for the Parish of Warragul.



Jan and the glowing brass



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



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

Would you like to be part of supporting these aims?
To find out more, contact the Registrar: (03) 5144 2044
registrar@gippslandanglicans.org.au

Building stronger communities through partnerships

■ Wendy Mawayo

The October Parish Partnership Grants round is almost here – opening 1 September and closing 6 October. This is a valuable opportunity for your parish to step outside its walls, meet your local community where they are, listen to their struggles, and work together to bring hope. And you don't have to do it alone.

Recently, I visited the Bass Coast Winter Shelter project – a safe overnight haven for people with nowhere else to go. It was partially funded through a Parish Partnership Grant. As Ruth Hanlon and Wendy Elvin (Uniting Church) shared stories of guests who had found warmth, safety, and kindness there, we were moved to tears. In those moments, it became clear that these grants aren't just about funding projects; they are about changing lives.

Let's dream big. Partner with other churches, community groups, schools – the list is endless. The Cowes project is proof that when a whole community works together, remarkable things happen. We don't have to work in silos – community work flourishes in partnership.

I encourage parishes to consider applying for this grant round. Together, we can meet needs, spark hope, and transform lives.

Program Highlight – Foster Care Week

Foster Care Week (8–14 September) is a time to honour those who open their hearts and homes to children who cannot live with their families. This year's theme – *Today's Carers, Tomorrow's Future* – is a powerful reminder that the love given today can shape the course of a child's life forever.

In Gippsland, Surinder Demetrios, Team Leader of Anglicare Victoria's Foster Care program, supports carers who provide safety, stability, and hope for children and sibling groups aged 0–18. Each placement offers more than shelter – it's the gift of belonging.

If you'd like to learn more or explore ways to support this program, contact me: wendy.mawoyo@anglicarevic.org.au.

Here's to community and partnerships!

Wendy Mawayo is a Community Development Support Coordinator, Parish Partnerships, for Anglicare Victoria – Gippsland.



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 and search 'bequests', or contact Rae Riley (03) 5144 2044.

Always consult a solicitor when preparing or amending your will.

Rental Stress – Legal Support



At Gippsland Community Legal Service, we offer free legal advice to people in a private tenancy experiencing rental stress across the state.

- Is your rent more than 30% of your income?
- Are you having legal trouble with your rental home?
- Are you behind in your rent and can't catch up?
- Are you paying your rent but struggling to afford other living expenses?
- Are you at risk of becoming homeless?

What is rental stress?

Rental Stress happens when a person's rent is unaffordable, making it hard for them to pay for other things they need.

Help is available for Victorians who are having trouble paying for rent and other living costs, not just people who live, work or study in Gippsland.

GCLS can help private renters who are experiencing rental stress by:

- Providing legal advice about your rental situation
- Referring you to Anglicare Victoria's Rental Stress financial counselling team, who can help you understand your financial situation, provide tips to help you manage your money and help you negotiate with creditors
- Referring you to other services such as housing and advocacy

Sometimes it's hard to know whether your problem is a financial or a legal issue, and it could be both. GCLS's lawyers and Anglicare Victoria's financial counsellors will be able to determine which service will be most helpful for you or work together to help you resolve the matter if required.

Please contact us on 1800 004 402, visit our [website](http://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au) or scan the QR Code for more information:



This program is funded by the Victorian State Government



The Gippsland Anglican



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Community sleepout raises awareness

■ Yvette Brand

Editor *The Warragul & Drouin Gazette*

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As the homelessness crisis continues to deepen, community awareness, empathy, and action need to increase. We hope a Community Sleepout will be the first step. *The Gazette* has worked with a number of passionate community leaders to bring this initiative to life. A Community Sleepout will be held at Lardner Park on Friday, 3 October. We want to bring community members together to raise awareness and start the conversation about homelessness in our community.

Why? Because the housing crisis is real – and it's here in the Baw Baw Shire.

A recent report presented to council showed more than 130 people are currently experiencing homelessness, around 770 households are facing housing stress, and 1,000 households are on a social housing waitlist.

It was the actions of Cr Ben Lucas that brought the report to council – his aim being to link services, start conversations, and consider homelessness when developing council advocacy priorities.

For our editorial team, the report was not simply another council story. Cr Lucas inspired us to talk more deeply and discuss how we could give this the exposure it needed.

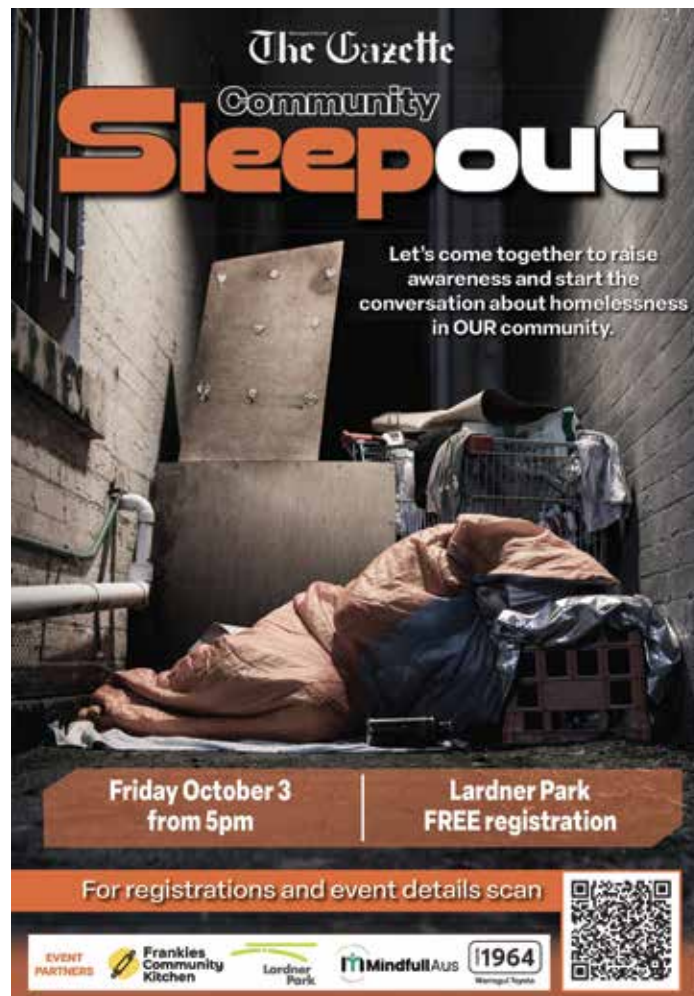
As journalists, we can present facts, and we can write emotional stories of hardship. But to drive home those messages and have real impact, we wanted to bring our community together to face the harsh reality; to consider a powerful message; and, most importantly, to recognise what we can do to achieve outcomes.

Our team has been overwhelmed by the response and enthusiasm of our event partners. After a discussion with Cr Lucas, the idea gained momentum and support beyond what we expected.

We are proud to have the support of our event partners: Lardner Park, Mindfull Aus, and Frankies Community Kitchen, who will provide a soup kitchen for participants on the Friday night.

We also greatly appreciate the Warragul Lions Club coming on board to provide breakfast, and Alimentos Catering for much-needed coffee on Saturday morning.

The sleepout program will include guest speakers on Friday night and a panel discussion on Saturday morning before everyone departs. Quantum Support Services, Baw Baw Food Relief, and Longwarry Lions Food Relief have also committed to the event.



The Community Sleepout is about raising awareness of homelessness, because it is a much deeper issue than someone sleeping on a park bench. The face of homelessness also includes women and children who leave violent relationships, or young people couch surfing at friends' houses because of family breakdown.

And with the cost-of-living crisis, support services and food relief agencies are telling us there are many families living dangerously close to homelessness.

We live in a wonderful, caring community – so it's important we tell these stories, raise awareness, create empathy, and hopefully achieve some positive outcomes.

The Gazette will feature a series of articles in the weeks leading up to the Community Sleepout. We hope these stories prompt people to think more deeply about homelessness and support the sleepout.

Barry and Annette Lett Funeral Directors

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From the Editor



Loving our neighbour The call to serve locally

This edition of *TGA* has organically landed on a central theme of homelessness and highlights the vital role of compassion - particularly through practical acts of care within our local communities.

*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way
you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

Galatians 6:2

In every town and parish, there are people struggling silently. Many are facing food insecurity, uncertain where their next meal will come from. Others are without stable housing, battling the cold, the loneliness, and the isolation of homelessness. These are not distant issues; they are present in our own streets and neighbourhoods. And as members of God's Church, we are uniquely positioned to respond – not out of obligation, but out of love.

Offering help does not always require grand gestures. It may be volunteering at a local food bank, knitting a beanie or two, preparing meals, offering a warm drink and conversation, or simply acknowledging someone who may feel invisible. Small acts of kindness can transform lives. Equally important is our role in advocating for justice and supporting efforts that address the root causes of poverty and homelessness, such as the work being done at the Bass Coast Winter Shelter (page 6) or the upcoming Winter Sleepout at Lardner Park (page 18).

When we serve others, we encounter Christ Himself, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' (Matthew 25:40). In helping others our church communities become not only places of worship but beacons of hope, mercy, and love in the heart of the community.

I'd love to encourage you to find one tangible way to serve those in need in the coming weeks – whether it's through giving, creating, volunteering, or simply showing up with compassion – so that together, we can share Christ's love with those who need it most.

Krista Mountford

Forest's reply to Jeremiah August 2025

Dear Jeremiah,

It is good to hear from you and to hear your perspective on the need for critical change in 2025.

I weep with you at the scenario you describe, where First Nations voices' have been ignored and ignorance of our interconnectedness to all things appears to be the dominant mindset. Reflecting on this, I am aware of the incredible resilience of First Nations peoples who were able to hold on to their knowledge of Country through the centuries and continue to do so. Here in the year 2325 our Circle of Elders, a wisdom collective of First Nations peoples, are fully integrated in consultations about our common life in this place. For their insights, knowledge and generosity in sharing, we as a community are most grateful.

Jeremiah, maybe the distance of time has given some perspective to your concerns that, rather than leading the way on environmental issues, Christians are belatedly playing catchup on these matters. My research has found that Christians were at the forefront of the emergence of the conservation movement, that in the 19th century Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley and Octavia Hill were instrumental in getting these issues into the public arena. I also discovered that Christians were behind the establishment of Oxfam, the Fairtrade label, ARCC (Australian Religious Response to Climate Change) and GreenFaith International to name just a few of the places where Christian faith has been the impetus for social action.

As I share your letter amongst members of our community, one question keeps arising that we would love your response to. Jeremiah, what do you think is the major barrier in your day that prevents communities as a whole working towards the change that would have made our life in 2325 so much easier?

In anticipation of hearing back from you,

Forest

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



Magpies, meat pies and pants

■ Daniel Lowe

As I walk through the school grounds during lunchtime, I am struck by the fascinating mosaic of conversations around me. Teen slang abounds, sometimes incomprehensible, sometimes bafflingly loud. From group chants to furtive whispers, from bursts of

laughter to shouts of frustrations, our communication is varied and sometimes challenging to make sense of. It's a reminder that communication, while universal, can be complex and nuanced, especially across different age groups and even more so amongst a mix of ethnicities, religions, and backgrounds. In a diverse school community, these linguistic and cultural differences can sometimes be magnified.

Conversations can become tangled webs of misunderstanding, with words and gestures often lost in translation.

Language is a powerful tool. If I yell out 'Aussie, Aussie, Aussie' to a crowd of Australians they will all know what to do and the reply will come back, 'Oi, Oi, Oi!'

The 'Aussie, Aussie, Aussie' cry can be heard at sporting stadiums, on school camps and in all sorts of large gatherings around the country. It feels uniquely Australian!

And yet it isn't! Its origins are actually English. Well before the Aussies started their chant, the English were using their own version – 'Oggy, Oggy, Oggy!' And what is an Oggy I hear you ask? It's a Cornish pie. The story has it that tin-miners' wives shouted 'Oggy! Oggy! Oggy!' down mine shafts either to alert them that their pasties were ready, or to warn them that their pasties were about to be dropped down to them. The miners would then reply 'Oi, Oi, Oi' to let them know it was all clear to lower them in. Eventually the cry was picked up by

English sports fans and at some point, Australia claimed its own version.

But what if you aren't familiar with the Australian version? I feel for the poor old Cornish tourist who finds themselves at an Australian sporting venue, hearing the vaguely familiar chant and wondering when the meat pies were going to start being thrown!

And if they happen to be visiting in Spring, why not terrorize them even more and take them out magpie spotting! The Eurasian magpie which they would be familiar with is thought to rank among the world's most intelligent creatures. These Magpies have shown the ability to make and use tools, imitate human speech, grieve, play games, and work in teams. They are particularly well known for their songs and were once popular as cagebirds. They are also not at all aggressive. Australian magpies on the other hand are a completely different species to magpies in the rest of the world – they only got the name because of their coloring – and they are scary! A poorly informed British tourist out walking during swooping season is going to be in for quite the shock!

And if terrorizing them with magpies and meat pies isn't enough, make sure you tell them that the weather gets quite warm here, so they are better off wearing shorts and not pants. That may sound like sensible advice to you but in England, 'pants' refers to 'underwear' so they might interpret your suggestion a little differently to what you expected.



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Language is powerful but it is also very dependent on context. Sometimes things that seem harmless or obvious to us may come across very differently to others. We live within a diverse community of people who hold many different faiths and worldviews, who come from a broad range of cultural backgrounds, who have different life experiences, different home lives, different interests, and responsibilities.

We need to be mindful that what seems funny to one person may be hurtful to another; what seems obvious to one group may be perplexing to another; what feels unifying to some may feel alienating to others. Does that mean we just don't speak? Of course not. But it does mean that when we do speak, our intent should always be to uplift, encourage or include others. And to do this we need to take a moment to consider how our speech and manner might come across to those who hear us.

Matthew records these words of Jesus:

It's your heart, not the dictionary, that gives meaning to your words. A good person produces good deeds and words season after season. An evil person is a blight on the orchard. Let me tell you something: Every one of these careless words is going to come back to haunt you. There will be a time of Reckoning.

It's your heart, not the dictionary, that gives meaning to your words. A good person produces good deeds and words season after season. An evil person is a blight on the orchard. Let me tell you something: Every one of these careless words is going to come back to haunt you. There will be a time of Reckoning. Words are powerful; take them seriously. Words can be your salvation. Words can also be our damnation.

Matthew 12:33-34 The Message

Words are powerful; take them seriously. Words can be your salvation. Words can also be your damnation.
(Matthew 12:33-34 *The Message*)

We won't always get our communication right, but intent is important. If our priority is to speak to others with respect and integrity, then we are off to a pretty good start. Throw in a little compassion and understanding and we can probably avoid all sorts of unnecessary conflict. We can and should celebrate diversity as a source of strength and richness. We recognize that our differences make us unique, but it's our shared humanity that binds us together. So, let's embrace the challenge of communication across cultures and generations, knowing that in doing so, we can foster deeper connections and a greater sense of belonging for all.

The last thing we want to do is leave someone feeling like a terrified British tourist, terrorized by magpies, paranoid that someone is about to throw a meat pie at them and wondering if they have really made the best choice of clothing for the situation!

The Rev'd Canon Daniel Lowe is Senior Chaplain at St Paul's Grammar School.

<https://thelowedown.blog/>



Enigma Help and hope for life in a confusing world

Pete Adlem

Tasmania, Ingram 2024

■ Richard Prideaux

Enigma is a very practical and easy to read account of living in 2024 with an uneasy world. Peter Adlem writes about all the big questions of life from a Christian point of view with poise, insight, clarity and thoughtful ideas.

Enigma is based on a very helpful study of Ecclesiastes which for me made more sense than anything else I have read on this demanding book from the Old Testament. Adlem notes that Ecclesiastes consists of 'The Teacher' and the 'book reviewer' who provides an introduction and a useful summary of the book in the final chapter (12:9-14). Along the way Adlem takes up the helpful challenge of analysing the key ideas Ecclesiastes. These components include the apparent meaninglessness of humankind in the world, the weariness of the demands of living, the emptiness of many human activities, the sheer blood, sweat and tears



of living, the unpredictableness of life, the fact that life seems at times unfair, how fleeting life is, cruelty in human life, and the apparent enigmatic issues in life.

Adlem follows this section with the simple pleasures in Ecclesiastes: the importance of human friendship, the need to be brave in faith, the acceptance of sadness at times in life, the importance of adapting to the seasons of life, the acceptance of one's lot in life, the reverence of God, the need for prayer, the need to make wise choices in life, skills for facing life's enigmas, finding hope in life, understanding the mystery of God and purpose in life, the awareness of sin, the mystery of suffering, the mystery of death, and finally the mystery of mysteries.

This is a clever and helpful book which would be very useful as a weekly study but would also make a strong impact if read in one sitting. Five stars!

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



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Where is real hope for humanity and all creation?
What is the root cause of the sustainability crisis, and how can Christians respond?
What might help us to act in hope?

ACTinG offers a creative workshop in three locations:

- Warragul Anglican Church:
Tuesday 16 September, 1 – 4 pm
- St Nicholas Lakes Entrance:
Thursday 16 October, 1 – 4 pm
- St Paul's Anglican Cathedral, Sale:
Saturday 8 November, 1 – 4 pm

Please RSVP for catering purposes
and to find out more:

acting@gippslandanglicans.org.au



Women's Storytelling Weekend Retreat

October 10th – 12th, 2025

Facilitator: Lee Palumbo: I am passionate about women's storytelling gatherings, and the transformation I have seen not only for those who share their stories, but for those who hear them. Storytelling is part of our ancient traditions and our everyday. Stories help us to understand ourselves and each other, and the human experience. Stories can bring healing and transformation when aired in a safe and supportive environment. Whether your story is light or dark, painful or playful, hilarious or profoundly moving, we want to hear it. This may be your first time, but no experience is needed, after all, it is your story, true and from the heart. The art of listening in a supportive environment is vital to storytelling and we will be here to do just that, to hold space for one another.



Join us for this weekend of connection, storytelling, reflection and good food, in the beautiful natural environment at The Abbey. There will be an open invitation for you to tell your story in ten minutes based on a theme, the three main themes, one per session, this spring weekend will be; Change, Water and Faith.

I am a mother and a grandmother and live, study and work in the township of Sunbury on the land of the Wurundjeri people, on the outskirts of Naarm (now known as Melbourne.) My work background is in community development, social enterprise, and small business, and I am currently studying spiritual direction. I have been involved in storytelling sessions over the past seven years, during that time I have been a keen participant and co-facilitator in a monthly women's storytelling gathering, and in a women's book club.

Residential Single Accommodation including all meals and program - \$495
Residential Shared Accommodation including all meals and program - \$345pp
Non-Residential full weekend including all meals and program - \$230
5pm Friday to after lunch Sunday. **Please RSVP by September 3rd.**

Bookings: Trybooking <https://www.trybooking.com/CXGGK> or phone us at The Abbey on (03) 5156 6580. info@theabbey.org.au



Meditation & Mindfulness in the Christian Tradition

Six-day retreat – October 26th – 31st

Tap into a deep spring of love, joy, peace and compassion at the centre of our being. Jesus called it Living Water, with which we will never thirst. During this week, cultivate a transforming, healing awareness of the Divine presence, and learn how to meditate:

- on Scripture and other sacred texts;
- by using a prayer word or mantra;
- through mindfulness of the breath and body;
- on icons and other art works;
- by using visualization.

This retreat will be largely experiential. It will introduce and draw on the ancient wisdom of several traditions of contemplative prayer, including *Lectio Divina*, *Visio Divina*, imaginative contemplation, mantra meditation and centering prayer. No previous experience is necessary. As learning to be silent is a vital part of cultivating awareness of the Divine presence, both within and around us, the retreat will be largely conducted in silence, although there will be opportunities each day for conversation, both with a spiritual director, and at night, over dinner. Breakfast and lunch will be held in silence.



Roland Ashby is a spiritual director and contributing editor of *Living Water*, a blog he founded to promote contemplative wisdom in the Christian tradition (www.thelivingwater.com.au). He is also the Coordinator of the World Community for Christian Meditation in Victoria, and Co-Director of the Deep Spring Centre for Contemplation and Action (www.deepspringcontemplationcentre.net). Roland leads groups in Christian meditation and *Lectio Divina*, and teaches Meditation

and Mindfulness in the Christian tradition at Heart of Life, a centre for spiritual and pastoral formation in Croydon, Victoria.

Residential Single Accommodation including all meals and program – \$640
Residential Shared Accommodation including all meals and program – \$395pp
Non-Residential including all meals and program – \$270
Sunday 5.00pm – Friday after lunch. **Please RSVP by October 19th.**

Bookings: Trybooking <https://www.trybooking.com/CXGYI> or phone us at The Abbey on (03) 5156 6580. info@theabbey.org.au 1-25 First Parade. Raymond Island Victoria.



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
For more info contact daniel@warragul Anglican.org.au

St Paul's Anglican Cathedral Sale invites you to a very special

Piano Concert on their new grand piano

Sunday 28th September 2025 2-4pm

St Paul's 149 Cunninghame St Sale



Pianist Zachary Dunbar

will be playing classical works by Debussy, Liszt & Chopin as well as Mozart & Beethoven Sonatas.

Zachary (Principal Fellow, University of Melbourne) trained as an award-winning concert pianist at Yale and the Royal College of Music as a Fulbright scholar.

He's also a writer and director

He has generously donated his time for this concert.

Tickets: \$35 Concession \$20-30

Primary Children \$10

Family tickets available

RSVP for catering. Pay cash or card on the day

Tickets includes afternoon tea

<https://events.humanitix.com/piano-concert-btxnvjjs>

All funds raised will be in aid of ASRC



ASRC Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

EVENTS

For events at The Abbey, see page 9

SEPTEMBER 1 – OCTOBER 4

Season of Creation

21

(St Matthew) – Vocations Sunday

OCTOBER

6–9

Clergy Retreat, Pallotti College

18

(St Luke) – Ordination Service,
11am, St Paul's Cathedral, Sale

The Measure of Our Hands

By Krista Mountford

When someone stumbles, lost and low,
And life is more than they can know,
We're called to walk a softer way -
To lift, to listen, and to stay.
A cup of water, loaf of bread,
A place to rest a weary head -
In love like this, both small and true,
We serve our God in all we do.
Not just in prayers or Sunday songs,
But standing where the hurt belongs.
For Christ is near when mercy stands -
His work is done through willing hands.



Billy Pasco on Unsplash

The ^{Gippsland} Anglican

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