

# The Gippsland Anglican

Volume 112, Number 7, August 2015

Published in Gippsland Diocese since 1904

## NAIDOC 2015 – “We all stand on sacred ground”



Photo: June Treadwell

After the NAIDOC service at Lake Tyers, Front row from left: Madge Hood, Decan and Joe Hood  
Back row from left: the Rev Phyllis Andy, Archeacon Edie Ashley, Kaylene Walker and Lizzy Hood

### Eddie Ashley & Jan Down

About 40 people from various parts of Gippsland gathered for a NAIDOC service at St John's, Lake Tyers Trust, on Sunday 5 July, to celebrate, worship and thank God for the culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

NAIDOC stands for the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee – the committee originally responsible for organising the national activities during the week. The acronym then became the

name of the week itself.

The service opened with Mr Nicky Moffat walking into the church playing the Didgeridoo – a call to worship. The Rev Kathy Dalton gave the Welcome to Country and the Rev Phyllis Andy acknowledged the elders and paid respect to the land.

During the service, Mr Moffat played the didgeridoo and sang. Ms Madge Hood read the Bible reading from Genesis 12: 1–2.

Ms Andy, who led the service, reflected on the synergy between the stories of Christian dream time and Aboriginal dream time.

She spoke of the Biblical

stories of the creation of Adam and Eve, and the Aboriginal dreaming story of the creation of the Gunai Kurnai people, through Borun the pelican and Tuk, the musk duck.

According to the story, Borun came a long way, down from the hills, carrying a bark canoe on his head. He heard a tapping and wondered where it was coming from. When he put the canoe down in the river, he found Tuk inside.

Of the growing of nations, Ms Andy referred to Genesis chapter 12, where God calls Abram from his country to the land that God had for him – the place of God's blessing – and promises to make a great nation from him. Similarly,

from the first Gunai Kurnai people five major clans were created.

In thinking of the Sacred Ground theme for NAIDOC week, Ms Andy referred to the biblical tradition of the Old Testament where Moses stood on sacred ground; so too the Gunai Kurnai people have their sacred ground.

Ms Andy affirmed that God is the creator of all people and nations. From our different backgrounds and traditions we all stand together on sacred ground.

Ms Dalton read a Prayer of Thanksgiving for Australia, “God of holy dreaming...”

Bishop Kay Goldsworthy thanked Phyllis for her welcome to Lake Tyers Trust, reflected on the time of being together as one people and gave the final blessing, beginning with: “God of this ancient land, you have given us an inheritance into one family, give us grace to walk together in the unity of Jesus Christ...”



### Kidsplus High Tea at Maffra

Lauren Kitwood,  
GFS Kidsplus+ Chairperson,  
with son Branigan and new  
baby daughter Maelah – and  
Maffra's giant jig saw screen.  
See Kidsplus+ news, page 4  
Photo: Sarah Gover

**Index**

From the Bishop	2
Community meal with a family feel	3
Anglicare / Parish Partnerships reviewed	3
Around the parishes	4-7
Tree planting on Raymond Island	4
Pastor Stephen Riek visits refugee camps	5
Alpha Marriage Course	6
Order of St Luke Training Day	7
From the schools	8
Rich Lanham: For young disciples	9
Steve Clarke: Unity or uniformity ?	10
Editorial: Holistic mission	10
Tony Wicking: Let's have more Lay Readers	11
Letter to the Editor	11
Earth Care Card	11
Faith at work: Ron Bell	12
Diocesan Calendar	12

As a child, growing up in our neighbourhood meant learning from the sayings and the doings of the adults around us. And the list of sayings was long! From family, neighbours, the blokes in the garage next door, and the librarian in charge of books we were allowed to read.

I learnt many things from this wonderful mix of personalities and characters. Things like the fact that expletives uttered under the bonnet of a Holden FJ should not be repeated by children, through to family sayings like "blood is thicker than water".

The language of childhood reminiscences is one thing. The language of faith embodied in God's living Word, Jesus Christ, can be another. And for us as God's children there is always more maturing, more growing to be done.

The language and actions of the sacrament of Baptism remind us of this as we gather with those who have recently come to faith in Jesus, and those who bring young children confident in the mercy and new life given through his death and resurrection.

The prayer over the water calls to mind the Spirit brooding over God's creation to bring forth light and life; the pushing back of the waters of the Red Sea, and safe passage across the river Jordan to a new life in a land of promise; as well as Jesus' own baptism. Not so easy "the deep waters of death" –



## Water is thicker than blood

words which point us to the great Easter mystery out of which we are born anew in Christ.

Of course, these aren't only words – they are action as well, actions of Jesus, and of his heavenly Father. These are acts of love, acts by which a whole new community of activists is born, and to which we surrender ourselves by receiving the wonderful, cleansing, drenching love which is new life in Christ.

There is never a baptism which takes place which

doesn't concern us. Each baptism celebrates the birth of a new member of the resurrection community, the church of God, the body of Christ.

Blood and water are as thick as each other, and each is needed for the Body of Christ to be alive and active in the world. Indeed, water is thicker than blood! We are sisters and brothers of Christ's Body living out God's promise of love in Jesus. We live, we embody, not the *idea* of Jesus, or the

*doctrine* of Christ, but our *relationship* with him.

As Australian theologian Ben Meyers writes, "In Jesus, God shows us God. That is the whole secret of the Christian faith. Jesus is not God's explanation, not God's argument, not God's hypothesis. He is God's simple self-giving act. He is God's smile beaming at us from the depths of eternity. He is God telling us, 'Here I am – for you'. In Jesus, God shows us God. And that one showing is worth a thousand tellings."

The Third Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion is "To respond to human need by loving service". The story of Gippsland Anglicans living out our relationship with Christ as we respond to human need is the language of faith in action. It is the language of Christ's love. It is the way we show that God's love has taken root in our own hearts and minds.

Perhaps it means giving to Anglicare's winter appeal; or knitting blankets for people who are cold; or preparing meals for people who are hungry; or contributing to the well-being of those who are to seek refuge in this country; or speaking out against the abuse of the vulnerable; or caring better for God's creation. Perhaps our actions in the deep cold of winter can bring the warmth of God's love to "one of the least of these" in whom Christ draws near.

*+Kau*

**The Gippsland Anglican**

Member of Australasian Religious Press Association  
Member of Community Newspapers Association of Victoria  
Registered by Australia Post  
Print Post Number 34352/00018

The Gippsland Anglican is the official newspaper of and is published by The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland, 453 Raymond Street, Sale, Victoria, 3850.  
www.gippsanglican.org.au

Editor: Jan Down  
Tel: 0407 614 661  
Email: editor@gippsanglican.org.au  
Contributions are due by 15th of the month prior to publication

Layout by Devine Design  
Printed by Fairfax Media, 30-32 Grandlee Drive, Wendouree, Victoria, 3355.

The editor reserves the right of final choice and format of material included in each issue. The Gippsland Anglican and the editor cannot necessarily verify any material used in this publication. Views contained in submitted material are those of contributors.

**Advertising Rates**  
Please contact the editor for all advertising submissions, costing and enquiries, including about inserts in the newspaper. A full advertising schedule can be sent out upon request.

**SAVE AND SERVE**

1. Deposit funds with the Anglican Development Fund (A.D.F.) for the Diocese of Gippsland.
2. Enjoy competitive rates of interest on your deposit. Current interest rates for deposits with the A.D.F. are:  
**2.75% At Call**  
**3.75% Term Deposits to \$20,000**  
**4.00% Term Deposits \$20,000 +**
3. We'll make your money work in low risk investment opportunities, ploughing the profits back into the Diocese to serve the Mission of the Church here in Gippsland.
4. Sit back content in the knowledge your deposit is generating favourable interest rates while benefiting the Anglican Church in Gippsland, all at the same time!
5. We can transfer funds from your ADF Account to your bank account or issue a cheque for a specific person or company.
6. Consider also that there are **No Fees** or Charges to operate your Account with the A.D.F. It's all part of our free and friendly service.

**So, here is your opportunity to learn the art of Saving and Serving at the same time.** Give us a call on (03) 5144 2044 or write to The Registrar at PO Box 928, Sale, 3850, or you can drop in to the Diocesan Registry at 453 Raymond Street, Sale for an Application Form to open an account with the ADF.

**Note:** Neither the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland nor the Anglican Development Fund – Gippsland is prudentially supervised by APRA. Contributions to the Fund do not obtain the benefit of depositor protection provisions of the Banking Act 1959.



OFFICE OF THE **Director of Professional Standards**

**The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland does not tolerate abuse, misconduct and harm in its Christian community.**

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

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

# Community meal with a family feel

How one church is living out the third Mark of Mission: "to respond to human need by loving service".

**Jan Down**

At 5.30 pm every Monday night at St George's Wonthaggi, about 130 people – including 30–50 children – sit down to a two course meal cooked by volunteers.

The Rector, the Rev Graeme Peters, says the church decided to have the meal in the evening so that families could come together. "The emphasis is on forming community", he says. "We have a sit-down meal with china and glass, not throw-away cups and plates." The aim is also to provide good nutrition, especially for children in families facing hardship.

The evening begins with grace, and there is a short reflection during the meal – what Mr Peters calls "a teaser", lasting only two or three minutes. If there is a birthday, this will also be celebrated. Afterwards, the children go and play in the playground, built in 2013 partly in response to the need for the children to have somewhere safe to play on these nights.

There are three teams of cooks and 70 volunteers involved. Wendy McBernie, from the church at Inverloch, coordinates the program. A third to a half of the volunteers are church people.

Talking about motivation for the Community Meal, Mr Peters mentioned the compassion of Jesus in feeding the crowds, and other biblical passages such as James 2: 14-15, which asks what good it is if you say to someone in need "Go in peace, be warmed and fed", if you do not meet their needs. Mr Peters added "Faith

needs to be accompanied by actions". He explained that there is a significant need in the local area, for "not just soup, but community".

There is a history behind the high level of needs at Wonthaggi. The town began in 1910, when black coal was being mined nearby. In the 1960s, the government closed down the mine and moved across to brown coal in the Latrobe Valley. The town survived, as it was on the coast and accommodation was cheap, but it then became one of the poorest towns in the state.

**"We have a sit-down meal with china and glass..."**

When the Desalination Plant was being constructed a few years ago, 4000 workers poured into the town, pushing up rents and forcing many people into hardship. People who were already living on welfare struggled to pay their rent.

The idea for the Community Meal arose at the end of 2010. The church was aware of the need for something to be done and applied to the Anglicare / Parish Partnerships Program. Mr Peters says "Sarah Gover was a great help". The Partnerships Program provided a grant of \$1500 to supply a new hot water service, and Sarah also put them in contact with Food Bank Victoria, as well as other bodies that could assist with food donations. Initially this led to a regular pick-up from Aldi supermarket and Bakers Delight, of good food that would otherwise have been thrown out. The first meal was held early in 2011.

Later, Second Bite became involved, and there are now pick-ups from Coles three times a week. So much food is donated that on a



*Jill Price and Margaret Hunter preparing some desserts*

Wednesday morning, people come to the church to collect the surplus and enjoy a cuppa and chat at the same time.

Another grant was provided later for an upgrade of the electrical system of the church, as with the cooking and dishwashing, the program was using significantly more power.

While most of the fruit, vegetables and bread are donated, the church still spends about \$150 per week on

meat, flour and other food for the meal, and there are power bills to pay. Altogether, the Community Meal costs about \$10,000 per year to run, which is covered by the proceeds from the church Op Shop.

The church also receives donations from local schools, Rotary and Lions Clubs, and other community groups. The staff from the Desalination Plan even gave a donation. Mr Peters says "God has provided".

## Anglicare / Parish Partnerships Program reviewed

Bishop Kay Goldsworthy, Archdeacon Philip Muston, Jane Anderson (Area Manager for Anglicare Gippsland) and Peter Thompson (Parish Partnerships Coordinator for Victoria) recently met to review the Anglicare / Parish Partnerships Program which has been operating in Gippsland for the last ten years.

The review of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Gippsland Anglican Diocese and Anglicare helped to bring this effective program up to date and in line with corresponding documents in other dioceses around Victoria.

Sarah Gover, Coordinator of the program for the past seven years, has recently announced her resignation, as her family is moving to Queensland.

Acknowledging Sarah and the successful program, Bishop Kay said "the Anglicare Parish Partnership program is a wonderful example of Church and Agency working alongside each other in trust and goodwill, each contributing from our resources to help people, especially those doing it tough, to move from just getting by to really thriving. It has been timely to review our MoU and while we will miss Sarah's incredible energy and ability to help people move from ideas to action, we are in a good place for the next

stage of supporting projects to become sustainable".

The Parish Partnerships program provides seeding grants to assist parishes to set up projects in their local communities. Typically these grants are for amounts of \$3000 – \$5000. Sarah Gover said that recent projects included *mainly music* programs at Fish Creek (see photos page 4) and Lakes Entrance; a playground at the new Community Centre at Trafalgar; toilets for the Youth Camp and funding for the Youth Program at Neerim South.

Several years ago, the Parish Partnerships provided a grant for the Wonthaggi Community Meal, to pay for a hot water service. Sarah explained that the PP Program often provided funding for the less exciting things like toilets or hot water services, for which it can be difficult to find funding elsewhere.

Sarah has supported parishes by giving guidance and direction, and suggesting other sources of funding, resources and information. Sometimes she will connect one parish with another. She said, "Usually money is the small part of the problem".

The Committee meets bi-monthly at the Anglicare office in Morwell. The next round of applications for grants will open on 1 September, with decisions on Friday 9 October.



*The Rev Graeme Peters with three cooking team leaders (L to R Wendy McBurnie, Margaret Hunter, Bert Bain, with his wife Yvonne)*

## Moe / Newborough takes up challenge

Mary Nicholls



The Rev Sathi Anthony

The Rev Sathi Anthony, parish Priest of both Moe and Newborough, is leading us through challenging yet exciting times as we work in partnership ministry in our community.

St Aidan's team first picked up Sathi's challenge to serve the community in new ways, and together, we joined the community's Biggest Morning Tea Program.

St Aidan's fellowship area was filled to capacity and well over \$700 was raised for the Cancer Foundation. The following Sunday's Worship and Eucharist at St Luke's Moe, was advertised with special intention to remember and pray for the departed, and other individuals or carers and families who are grieving or suffering because of cancer. The service was well appreciated by both regular parishioners and welcomed visitors.

### Fashion Parade

In July Moe Anglican Parish Guild hosted another successful Casserole Luncheon and Fashion Parade courtesy of "Cliché" Fashions. These have become an annual event with parishioners and community members dining well prior

to a leisurely and successful shopping experience. We have appreciated the use of the Albert Street Primary School's multi-purpose room for this event.

Another planned event others across the diocese may well be interested in, is our first Moe Antique Curiosity and Collectables Fair booked for Saturday October 10th at Albert Street Primary School.

Dealers and Stall holders are invited to make enquiries for stall bookings through the Parish office 5127 1119 or phone Mary on 5127 2929. Antique Appraisal expert, Steven Axe, will be available on this occasion to assess personal items at a cost of \$5.00 an item (excluding coins and jewellery).

## Fish Creek *mainly music*

Bronwyn Wakely – Corner Inlet



Mad-Hat Day at Fish Creek Union Church mainly music on the last day of term. There are weekly sessions for pre-schoolers and their mums/dads/grandparents, 9-10 am every Wednesday during school terms. Come and check it out soon.

## Singing to God in the 21st century

A practical seminar for all who are keen to improve our music in worship will be held at St Mary's Trafalgar on Saturday 5th

September from 10.30 am to 3.30 pm.

The facilitator will be Fay Magee. Enquiries: the Rev Sue Jacka: 0409 757 170.

## GFS KIDSPLUS+ High Tea

GFS Kidsplus+ Gippsland appreciated the hospitality of St John's Maffra enabling us to host a fundraising High Tea in July.

Our aim was to showcase the wider ministry of GFS across the world in the 23 member countries and areas of need. The proceeds of the day will be donated towards special projects such as the World Project, still supporting the restoration in Japan after the 2011 Tsunami and nuclear disaster.

Here in Japan, three years later families have not been able to return home. The Girls Friendly Society is providing sewing machines and training in cottage industry for the otherwise unemployed and importantly is providing family safe fellowship and children's activities to those isolated by homelessness and sadly ostracised in their new communities as strangers, yet snubbed by their own families who had refused to flee the nuclear devastated home land at Nagasaki.

We were delighted that Bishop Kay was able to attend the afternoon. As guest speaker, Bishop Kay told of her long and broad experience with GFS. She highlighted the opportunities such groups give to a young person's formation, mentioning her childhood-to-teen GFS membership and then gentle transition and opportunity to

exercise leadership with the group.

We older participants appreciated the assistance provided, particularly by three of our current Moe GFS teenage members, Nyachou and Noaka Gawar and Helen Bayes. They worked enthusiastically in preparation, clearing and of course the serving of the much enjoyed afternoon tea. Thank you to all from the Valley, and Sale district who attended.

### Equipment Trailer

Many of our affiliated parishes are making use of the Diocesan Kidsplus+ equipment trailer (see list on our website). We do invite parishes to offer resources that may be available for others to use. Please let us know if we can promote such items through our list. Thank you Sarah Gover and Maffra for offering their wonderful Jig Saw Screen for this purpose.

### Kidsplus+ Camp

Children's and Youth leaders, please note that the 2016 Kidsplus+ camp for 6 to 18 year olds is booked for March 4 – 6 at Forest Lodge Yarram. It is not too early to be informing families and parishes so that program planning, budgeting and fundraising can proceed. Expected cost approximately \$100.00. Prospective leaders are always welcomed. Plan to bring some of your group members with you.

## Tree planting on Raymond Island

After a recent Abbey working bee, Archdeacon Edie Ashley said, "We had a great time over two days, good spirit and fun together... and all our plants are in the ground!"



Margaret Beckett from Heyfield, preparing the tree guards



Ian Little from Paynesville digging some 600 holes ready for others to plant



600 plants in the ground!

## How far does a ball of wool go?

Val Saunders & Pam Schembri – Bunyip



Six blankets completed for distribution by Drouin Anglican Op Shop

Buying the wool and knitting a square started it all for a lady called Neve Bon. Then another square and another, so that, when their number reached 200 she thought it was time to “move them along”! A friend in Bunyip said she knew some ladies at St Thomas’ Bunyip who would use them.

So... a lot of treble crochet and edging later (incidentally coinciding with the formation of our new crochet group) these six blankets emerged.

Where to next? The Drouin Anglican Op Shop is distributing them via its Outreach Program into the local community.

So, from one square that started it all, we have people in the community who now know others care about their warmth and welfare this winter.

Thank you to all who have contributed in this endeavour. Their efforts have been much appreciated.

*Latrobe Valley Funeral Services*

- ☐ Qualified, experienced and caring staff
- ☐ Modern chapels
- ☐ Refreshments and catering facilities available
- ☐ Secure, guaranteed, pre-paid and pre-arranged funeral plans
- ☐ Over 70 years of service to the Latrobe Valley

MOE 5126 1111  
MORWELL 5134 4937  
TRARALGON 5174 2258

Owned and operated by Paul and Katrina McInnes  
Proud member of the Australian Funeral Directors Association and the Australian and British Institutes of Embroidering



**PAUL McINNES**  
Director



**JOHN GALBRAITH**  
Consultant



**MARK RIDDLE**  
Consultant



**DAVID HASTIE**  
Consultant

## Pastor Stephen Riek visits refugee camps in Ethiopia

Carolyn Raymond – Morwell

Pastor Stephen Riek and his family are much loved members of our church family at St Mary’s in Morwell. Pastor Stephen leads the Sunday afternoon service for the local Sudanese community.

In February we farewelled Pastor Stephen as he left to visit the refugee camps in Ethiopia where he had lived for 17 years before coming to Australia as a refugee. These refugee camps were set up for those fleeing the violence in South Sudan.

Pastor Stephen has been in our prayers while he has been away, and he has now shared his experiences with us.

He travelled to Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, and from there to Gambella, the headquarters of the UN, from where the refugee camps are run. He then travelled around the camps, the churches all welcoming him with great joy and ceremony. Several times

as he came to worship he would have to cut a ribbon to formally open the church. He was given flowers and often the local priest would wash his feet in welcome.

There are many churches in each of the three large refugee camps; one camp has 19 churches. The church buildings have been built of local materials.

It is difficult to provide training for the priests, so the priests and deacons were very pleased Pastor Stephen had come. Only men are ordained priests and only women are ordained as Deacons.

Life is very limited in the camps. The future is uncertain. Pastor Stephen provided what he could in the way of material help for the churches, including a generator so one church would have power. Congregations here had sent some money with him for the churches. He also continued to support his family and friends and gave help to those with disabilities.



Pastor Stephen Riek preaching in a refugee camp in Ethiopia

We welcome Pastor Stephen home, knowing his concern for the churches, his family and his friends will remain with him.

### Charles Spencer – correction to last month

In the article “Celebrating the Ministry of Charles Spencer” in the July edition of TGA, it was stated that Charles Spencer had resigned as a Lay Reader. This is not correct. The good news for St Mary’s Morwell is that he has not resigned. We look forward to his continued ministry.

It was implied that Charles was only recently made a Lay Canon. This also is not correct. He has been a Lay Canon for many years. I apologise for this misinformation. Carolyn Raymond

## 125th Anniversary Hymn Competition

St Paul’s Cathedral in Melbourne is running a Celebratory Pauline Hymn Competition, with hymns to be focused on St Paul’s life,

theology and / or teachings. Entries close 18 September 2015. For full guidelines: [stpaulscathedral.org.au](http://stpaulscathedral.org.au)

# Alpha Marriage Course

Warragul

Nine couples are taking part in the Alpha Marriage Course for married couples at Warragul Anglican Church.

This is the third run-through of the popular marriage enrichment course for the parish, with interest growing from people outside the parish community.

The program consists of candle-lit dinners for couples over seven weeks. Between courses there is video input from Alpha presenters Nicky and Sila Lee, and the opportunity for couples to talk together about aspects of their relationship.

There is no group-work in the course. All discussion is between the couples. The aim is to encourage couples in communication, mutual support, conflict resolution etc.

The total cost of the course for each couple is \$150, which include seven two-course meals.

'It's quite a big effort to set up the course in terms of cooking and presenting the meals and the video input,' said the parish's Rector, Philip Muston. 'But by the third run-through we are starting to get

into a pattern'.

The first two run-throughs were led by parishioners Annette and Richard Connolly, with Sheryl Hastings in charge of the kitchen.

This time Philip and Cathrine Muston, who took part in the first course, are doing the presenting.

"Most of the couples who've done the course so far have found it a useful form of 'in-service training' for their marriages," said Philip.

'To set aside an evening seven weeks running in a relaxed setting gives couples scope to catch up with each other in a way that the busy-ness of life often precludes otherwise," he said.

"If couples have young children and can't afford the baby-sitting costs, the parish tries to arrange free baby-sitting through fellow parishioners."

The Alpha Marriage Course is available from Christian bookstores or on-line at a price any parish could afford. It comes as a package with videos, instructions, leader's manual and participants' work books.

# Missionaries and music come to Maffra

The Rev Laurie Baker



The Eliezer family, photo taken in 2012

On Saturday June 13, we welcomed Inpa and Vana Eliezer back on a weekend visit to St John's. Inpa and Vana are missionaries with CMS in Cambodia and have been on home assignment. They have been in Cambodia for over eighteen years and have visited Maffra each time they have been home in Australia. While here they were hosted by Judy Lunt.

We met informally on Saturday night in the parish centre for dessert and coffee to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. On Sunday they spoke of their work at

our 8am and 9.30 services and then after lunch at the Boisdale service. They talked about the changes in the time they have been there, saying there is still work to do. They feel their time is coming to an end but hope when that time comes much will have been accomplished.

St. John's also enjoyed a wonderful Sunday afternoon on 21 June. Twenty-five musicians from East Gippsland Symphonia Orchestra played a great variety of music for nearly two hours. The oldest musician was nearly 80 and the youngest 11 years old.

# Re-emerging crafts in Gahini

Sarah Gover

A team of Gippsland Grammar School teachers has just returned from Rwanda bringing two suitcases filled with hand-made bags from the Gahini Mothers Union for the Gippsland Mothers Union to sell.

Twenty-one years ago much more than just lives were lost in the genocide – knowledge of traditional craft also disappeared.

In the years following, all energy went into survival. It is only now that craft is re-emerging. As people's lives settle, they are starting to teach the young generation some of the old crafts.

The Gahini Mothers Union has been teaching young mums to sew, helping them to produce these bags and hoping that we in Gippsland will be able to sell them, sending the money back to Gahini so they can improve the education options for their children.



Jeanette Ringin, from Newborough, with some of the bags from Gahini Mothers Union

Bags can be purchased at upcoming MU events or from Jan Misiurka – email [muauscpsd@iprimus.com.au](mailto:muauscpsd@iprimus.com.au) or phone 0475 067 145.

## Handley & Anderson

FUNERAL DIRECTORS  
Servicing South Gippsland & Phillip Island

*Scott & Sharon Anderson*

*With care & dignity we serve  
South Gippsland and Phillip Island*

**Main Office:**  
**WONTHAGGI/INVERLOCH (03) 5672 1074**  
 176-178 Graham Street, Wonthaggi, 3995  
 Fax: (03) 5672 1747  
 email: [randm33@bigpond.net.au](mailto:randm33@bigpond.net.au)

**PHILLIP ISLAND (03) 5952 5171**  
 15 Warley Avenue, Cowes, 3922 (by appointment only)

*Pre-paid & pre-arranged funeral plans available.*

**CARING & PERSONAL 24 HOUR SERVICE**  
[www.handleyandandersonfunerals.com.au](http://www.handleyandandersonfunerals.com.au)

MEMBER OF AUSTRALIAN FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

# Order of St Luke Training Day at Traralgon



The Latrobe Valley Chapter of the Order of St Luke the Physician will be hosts for a training day on healing prayer ministry at St James' Anglican Church, Traralgon on Saturday August 22nd.

The day will be led by the Rev Lloyd George, Victorian State Chaplain for the Order. The day will include fellowship and worship with teaching and discussion. The theme for the morning will be the practice of healing prayer in worship, and the afternoon will focus on the holy communion as a sacrament of healing.

The OSL is an international and ecumenical organisation dedicated to the encouragement and support of healing ministry in all churches and it has now been active in Gippsland for over thirty years.

The Latrobe Valley Chapter meets monthly at St James' Church and organises healing services from time to time. The chaplain to the

chapter is the Rev Marilyn Obersby and the secretary is Barbara Hutton.

In Gippsland the OSL also operates "Allansfield", a retreat house at Rhyll on Phillip Island. This is available to small groups and to individuals. Enquiries or bookings may be made by contacting the host Trudy Sharman on (03) 5956 9333.

It is an established tradition for the OSL to hold a gathering on or around St Luke's Day in each year. This year of 2015 is the twenty-fifth year of operation for "Allansfield", so a celebration will be held on Saturday October 10th, which will include the dedication of a new indoor chapel.

The training day on August 22nd will begin at 10am and conclude around 3pm. All interested persons are welcome to participate. For any enquires about the day, or about OSL in general, please contact Lloyd George by calling 0427 460 485.

# Abbey Feast 2015

Robert Fordham

The third annual Abbey Feast will be held on Saturday 29th August commencing at 12 noon.

The chefs preparing a five course gourmet meal are Bishop Kay and her husband Jeri who have previously worked together in the restaurant business.

Each of the courses will be accompanied by fine wine.

The charge for what is certain to be a memorable meal is \$55 per person.

Funds raised from this event are for the work of The Abbey in its service to the diocese and outreach to the wider community.

All supporters of The abbey are encouraged to arrange a table at the Feast from their parish.

For further information and bookings contact Anna at The Abbey, 5156 6580 or info@theabbey.org.au



## Jeff the Chef

Shelley Cooper – Traralgon



Canon Jeff the chef with our Bishop during our recent Community lunch at which Bishop Kay was the special guest of honour.

### Director of Music/Organist St Paul's Canterbury, Melbourne

The Organist/Director of Music is valued at St Pauls.

Vacant from June, 2015

We are an inclusive Anglican parish in the liberal catholic tradition with a unique intergenerational parish choir. Applicants should be experienced and passionate about a diverse range of music, as well as being able to encourage and relate well with children.

The position includes choir rehearsals, one Sunday service, availability for weddings and funerals.

Expressions of interest to the Parish Priest, Rev'd Susanne Chambers

Email: vicar@stpaulscanterbury.org.au or parish office: 0398300729 mobile: 0405 758 776

### ABC Radio National's Religion Programs

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

#### Religion and Ethics Report

Wednesday 5:30 pm – repeated: Thursday 5:30 am  
www.abc.net.au/radionational/program/religionandethics-report

#### Encounter

Saturday 5:00 pm – repeated: Wednesday 1:00 pm  
www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/encounter

#### The Spirit of Things

Sunday 6:00 pm – repeated Tuesday 1:00 pm  
www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/spiritofthings

#### Rhythm Divine (music program)

Sunday 6:00 am – repeated: Monday 1:00 am  
www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/rhythmdivine

### DIOCESAN RETREAT

*A time for Spiritual Renewal*

Friday evening 23 October to Saturday afternoon 24 October at The Abbey, Raymond Island.

Retreat Conductor Bishop Kay Goldsworthy

For bookings or further information contact Anna at The Abbey, 5156 6580 or info@theabbey.org.au

## Stephen Baggs Funeral Directors

Talk to us about our at-need, pre-paid or pre-arranged funeral services.

613 MAIN STREET BAIRNSDALE  
Call 24 hours on 5153 2150 or visit us at [www.stephenbaggs.com.au](http://www.stephenbaggs.com.au)

# What's your Everest?

Former Gippsland Grammar student Tyson Popplestone, who is preparing to climb the world's most famous summit, Mount Everest, visited his old stomping ground to challenge and inspire students this week.

"Dream big, and with a little planning and a little bravery, you can step out of your comfort zone to truly see what you are capable of", the 28 year-old said, as he admitted being back at Gippsland Grammar was also like being in a dream.

Remembering many faces and with fond memories of his education, Tyson declared visiting his old school and addressing today's students was a chance for him to give something back to a school that gave him so much.

Now a youth pastor and inspirational speaker, Tyson talked to students about overcoming adversity and finding hope. He challenged and inspired each student asking them, "What is your Everest?" and encouraged

students to take action to achieve their goals.

He said that so often people had dreams and desires that were just a list, never taken to the next level, and never made a reality.

"My list wasn't designed as a 'must do' list, but as a 'want to do' list. It was created with the intention to keep me on my toes, and dream big in areas I may not otherwise have found the time to do."

As a former middle-distance runner, Tyson is excited about training and challenging his body to tackle Mount Everest, which stands 8848m above sea level.

He will travel to Nepal in November for a practice expedition before attempting Everest, beginning in March and finishing in May next year.

"It's the ultimate challenge for me."

The former Traralgon resident who graduated from Gippsland Grammar in 2005, hopes his dream will inspire others to reach their potential.



Gippsland Grammar Old Scholar Tyson Popplestone inspiring students at his old school on Wednesday.

## ABBEEY FEAST 2015

**CHEFS EXTRAORDINAIRE BISHOP KAY and JERI**

12 Noon, Saturday 29 August

Five course meal with wines – \$55 per person

For bookings or further information contact Anna at The Abbey,  
5156 6580 or [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au)

## Rose hair ties for a cause



St Paul's Year 7 students Sage Hyde, Phoebe O'Connor and Emily Jaques with the ribbon roses they have been making and selling all term.

A group of Year 7 St Paul's Anglican Grammar students has been busy all term spending their lunchtimes creating and selling gorgeous ribbon roses to other students around the School to wear in their hair.

Sage Hyde, Phoebe O'Connor and Emily Jaques are on a mission to raise money for the people in Vanuatu who had their

homes devastated by Cyclone Pam on 15 March this year and so far the girls have raised around \$170 for the cause.

The girls have been creating the ribbon roses in School colours, but will soon expand to include house colours so that other students can buy and wear them to support their team in House activities.

### See your ad here!

- reasonable rates
- friendly service

For more information:  
email: [editor@gippsanglican.org.au](mailto:editor@gippsanglican.org.au)  
or phone 0407 614 661



Broadcasting Christian Music  
24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Uplifting, encouraging and empowering  
...that's our aim

204 Raymond Street, Sale, Vic., 3850  
Telephone: 03 5143 0355  
Fax: 03 5143 0388  
Feedback: 03 5143 0357  
[www.lifefm.com.au](http://www.lifefm.com.au)

Life changing radio..... 103.9

# Loving service – a natural instinct for Christians

Rich Lanham

**Mark 10:45**  
**“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”**

This month we focus on the 3rd Mark of Mission: “To respond to human need by loving service.” This is one of the most recognisable roles that the church has in the wider community. Christian churches in Australia provide aid, education, health care, aged care, accommodation and relief services all around the country.

Our communities would suffer greatly and governments would be overwhelmed by the cost of trying to provide these services, if the Christian church ceased to provide them.

But that is not likely to happen. Christians provide these services and create these helping organisations because it is a natural outworking of our living faith in Jesus. As we have discussed previously, being a Christian is about believing in Jesus’ Good News, receiving his gift of new life and looking to his example of the life we are called to live. It is a life of commitment to God and the Gospel of Christ and a life that desires to see others saved and restored to God by this Gospel.

Providing loving service to others seems to me to be one of the most natural instincts we can have as we desire to love others as Jesus loves them.

Serving others is one of the best ways we can show Jesus’ love to others. We live in a time where many people feel that words are cheap and so often we hear people criticize Christians for being hypocritical. Serving others helps us to put our words into action. James 2 says, “Faith without

works is dead”. Martin Luther said that just as you can’t separate light and heat from fire, you can’t separate faith and works.

So it’s important to put our faith into action. As we develop in ourselves the same compassion that Jesus has, and as we love others as he calls on us to, we will find ourselves compelled to love and serve others in his name.

As you seek ways to do this, you will find your faith tested and strengthened; you need to trust the Lord to lead you and depend on Him for your resources. Sometimes providing what people need seems impossible, but that is when we find ourselves depending on God and not on our own resources or resourcefulness.

You see, providing the loving service will help communicate God’s love to people, but as you serve and trust God your faith is strengthened also, and your story of following Jesus grows.

We grow to be more like Jesus as we choose to love and live more like him.

Jesus was completely dependent on God the Father; we need to be completely dependent in the same way. Putting yourself out there to serve others exposes you to the condition of our world and the desperation and



Young people unloading the truck at 123 Cunninghame St, with the \$4000 dollars worth of plywood that was donated for the project

suffering people experience. We need the strength Jesus gives us through the Holy Spirit to keep going and keep serving. So we need to depend on God’s strength and not our own.

Jesus met people’s need because he wanted them to know that he was God’s Son. We need to love them in the same complete way; not simply stopping at providing a meal, but also providing friendship, acceptance, care and relationship. On top of all this though, we need to remember that what people really need and what we have been called to do is to introduce them to the love of Jesus, the person of Christ. They need to hear the Gospel as well as seeing us live it out.

So loving service is our natural expression of Jesus’

**“loving service is our natural expression of Jesus’ Spirit in us”**

**CMS Gippsland Dinner**  
*“I have the best job in the world”*

CMS State Director Wei-Han Kuan and missionaries Andrew and Claire Livingstone as well as Paul Barker all believe they have “the best job in the world!”

Join us to find out why over a 2 course meal.

29 August 2015 starting at 6:30pm  
 Warragul Uniting Church, 210 Sutton Street, Warragul

Tickets \$33 online at [www.cms.org.au/vic/gippslanddinner](http://www.cms.org.au/vic/gippslanddinner) or ring the CMS office on 03 9894 4722

[www.cms.org.au/vic](http://www.cms.org.au/vic) | [facebook.com/CMSVictoria](https://facebook.com/CMSVictoria) | [vic@cms.org.au](mailto:vic@cms.org.au)

Spirit in us, enabling us to love others in the same way he does. Loving service enables us to move from words to actions, taking us outside our comfort zone and challenging us to depend on God for the strength and resources we need to love his people.

For me in Sale, this is why we are developing 123. We have no budget so we need to trust God for the items and equipment we need. And God is providing in a mighty way. We will gather with people and through

food, hospitality, sharing and teaching, we hope to connect, nourish, educate and equip. And through our relationships, friendships and journeying together, we will share with people about the love of God and the Good News of Jesus, in the hope that they will believe in him, call on him and choose to follow his example of life and love.

*The Rev Rich Lanham is the Diocesan Youth and Families Officer.*

**SEMMENS FUNERALS**  
 SERVICING GIPPSLAND  
 Col, Pat & Brad Semmens

Maffra 5147 1954  
 Sale 5144 1954  
 Heyfield 5148 3354

[www.semmensfunerals.com.au](http://www.semmensfunerals.com.au)  
 24 Hour Service

Our Family Caring For Your Family Since 1979  
 Member Of The Australian Funeral Directors Association

**Be a part of supporting the Aboriginal Ministry Fund**

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

Be a part of achieving these aims.

Contact the Diocese of Gippsland  
 453 Raymond Street, Sale, Victoria  
 PO Box 928, Sale, 3853  
 Telephone 03 5144 2044  
 Fax 03 5144 7183  
 Email [registrar@gippsanglican.org.au](mailto:registrar@gippsanglican.org.au)

# Unity or uniformity? A reflection on Psalm 133

Steve Clarke

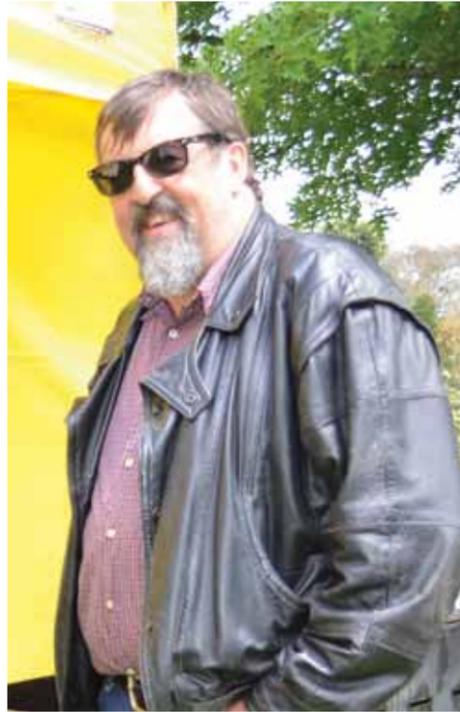
Psalm 133 is a short, powerful tribute to the possibilities of genuine human community, even in the midst of differences, difficulties and conflict. It is one of a number of Songs of Ascent associated with worship in ancient Israel, probably during pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

These travellers singing on the road knew first hand the deep divisions among themselves and between their people and others. Yet together in worship they sang about a vision of unity. "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!"

We Christians similarly sing hymns that proclaim our common bond as members of the body of Christ. Yet we, too, know the reality of deep divisions among us and across our societies. Have you noticed that substantive, reasoned discussion and debate often give way to strident, heated exchanges?

The polarisation we experience is real. Ironically, so is our longing to live in community with one another, just as Psalm 133 proclaims. Most of us yearn to redeem the brokenness we experience as individuals, families, communities, nations, and as churches. Most of us long for the fulfilment of the biblical vision of shalom where all women and men, all children and youth, will have their fullness of humanity restored.

Conflict, disagreement and differences are normal in life! Most of us learn a lot and even experience great



The Very Rev Steve Clarke  
Photo: Christine Morris

growth and revelation about our faith when we encounter conflict. Conflict can be profoundly productive and can be engaged constructively. For example, Acts 15 tells of substantial conflict on a crucial matter among members of the early church. The text characterises the conflict as "no small dissension and debate". Church leaders called a meeting to consider the issue at hand, listened carefully to each other and to God, and found a powerful, productive way forward.

But the reverse can also happen. Conflict can be horrifically destructive, too often tearing individuals, communities, nations and churches apart. The key is to engage conflict well, to make it productive and to use it for building up the

body of Christ and the well-being of humanity.

The kind of unity described in Psalm 133 – a community of faithful followers on a journey with God to a beloved home – never obliterates differences, disagreement, and conflicts. Unity among believers does not require uniformity, which would not only be boring but also a denial of the rich variety of God's good creation among humans and their communities.

The kind of unity described in Psalm 133 does require, however, that we engage each other and our conflicts over differences to make them productive rather than destructive. Such unity requires that we see conflict as an opportunity to deepen our faith rather than destroy our adversaries, whether they are across the world or across the table in a local church meeting.

When we within the body of Christ choose to listen deeply, we will discover new ways of hearing about each other's encounter of and witness to Christ. Moreover, we will likely learn more about the wonders and mysteries of our own faith when we listen, really listen to others, even those with whom we will never fully agree. Then we will know more fully the unity to which God calls us – a unity so large, a love so expansive, and a mutual encounter so riveting, just like that of Jesus and the Canaanite woman, that we find new ways of healing ourselves and our communities.

### A prayer for unity

God, help us listen deeply. Help us listen in love to those whom we encounter in our families, among our friends, among our adversaries, and all those sent to teach us, whether we know it or not, how to engage conflict productively. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

The Very Reverend Steve Clarke is Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

EDITORIAL

## Holistic mission

St Francis of Assisi, if he saw a poor man with a cloak less warm than his, would instantly make an exchange. He could not pass up an opportunity to help someone in need.

Francis was imitating his Master of course. The gospels are full of stories of Jesus' compassion. He healed the sick, fed the hungry crowds and offered love and acceptance to "sinners" – those labelled by others as sinful, and who were therefore outcasts in their society.

We, like Francis, "respond to human need by loving service", as the third Mark of Mission expresses it.

This is one of the five Anglican Marks of Mission, and needs to be seen as such. It is not enough on its own. A chaplain in an Anglican school (in another state years ago) was once heard to lament, "They want me to give the students cut flowers", because he was expected to teach Christian values – such as helping those in need – without sharing the Good News of restored relationship with God through Jesus. He saw this as offering only cut flowers; having no roots, they would not last long.

If in our churches we make sure we are proclaiming the Good News; teaching and nurturing new believers; meeting human need with loving service; working for a socially just society; and caring for God's creation with love and respect, then our mission will be fully-rounded, and will merit the respect of those outside the church – at least some of the time.

It will reflect the way God values human beings, body and soul, and all the other things, both animate and inanimate, in God's good creation.



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

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

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

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

Telephone Brian Norris on 03 5144 2044, or go to [www.gippsanglican.org.au](http://www.gippsanglican.org.au) and search 'bequests'.



**Barry & Annette Lett**  
**FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

We offer care, compassion and service with dignity, for the people of Gippsland  
Caring and personal 24-hour service  
Chapel facilities available.

**67 Macarthur Street, Sale**  
**Phone 5143 1232**  
[www.lettsfunerals.com.au](http://www.lettsfunerals.com.au)

Member Australian Funeral Directors Association

# Let's have more Lay Readers

**Tony Wicking**

There was a motion at our recent Synod that has caused me some reflection. It concerned moving Synod dates to avoid Sundays so that clergy can be in their parishes. I can sympathise with the mover of the motion. It is important that clergy be in the parish for pastoral reasons. I too do not like missing Sundays if it can be avoided. The motion, though, concerns me for a number of reasons.

First is that it promotes the idea (particularly among clergy?) that the clergy are indispensable. Yes, I like to think we are important and needed but I am not sure that this means we need to be in the parish every Sunday. What happens when we are on holidays? Does it mean that we come back on Sundays to lead worship? It seems we are happy to hand over the reins on these days. Another Sunday ought to be no problem. I wonder what happens if the Rector were to fall sick on the Saturday and be unable to take the Sunday service?

Second is that when we adopt the above view we limit the role of the laity. We are a church that encourages the ministry of lay members of the congregation. One of these ministry roles is that of Lay Reader. I am aware that other ministries are undertaken by members of the parish but this can often be taken for granted and be unnoticed. What better way to visibly show the importance of lay ministry than to trust them to lead worship in our absence?

In a diocese where there are many out-centres and clergy have difficulty meeting the various demands for worship at all the centres then the ministry of Lay Readers is to be able lead worship in the absence of the Rector and to

preach the word. We clergy ought to be encouraging appropriate lay people to take up this important ministry. It is positive for promoting lay ministry as well as easing the pressure on us to be at every service.

For those who do not know, there is a process whereby Lay Readers are licensed. First, prospective Lay Readers need to be identified within the parish and approved by the Parish Council. Their names are then forwarded to the diocese for the various legal and safety procedures to be completed. Once these have been done they are interviewed by one of the Lay Reader Chaplains: the Rev Jenny Ramage or myself.

If this process is successful then their names are put forward to the bishop for approval and licensing. Once they have been licensed they

*“What better way to visibly show the importance of lay ministry than to trust them to lead worship in our absence?”*

are then required to attend one training day a year. Each licence is valid for three years. They are renewed every three years in line with the Synod cycle. Renewal does not require re-doing the above procedure. It is automatic so long as the Rector and bishop are in agreement that the licence is renewed.

My third concern is the demand we would place upon our lay people by changing the days for Synod. If Synod is not held on a Sunday then it seems logical that the “other” day would be a week day. In this case we would require laity to take time off work to attend. Laity already give up a lot of time to assist in parish ministry. It seems to me that we ought not to place more burdens on them. We clergy are required to work Sundays already, so a Sunday Synod is no extra burden.

Fourthly, we are a church that espouses episcopal obedience.



Lay Readers outside St Paul's Cathedral

When we are summoned by the bishop to Synod we are required to attend. When we do not, what does this say about the oath we take to be obedient to the bishop?

For these reasons I encourage all parishes and clergy to consider the important role of Lay Readers and seek to actively encourage

appropriate lay people to consider this ministry. When the appropriate people are licensed to this ministry then we enhance and empower the whole church in a very positive way.

*The Rev. Tony Wicking is Lay Reader Chaplain and Rector in the parish of Bairnsdale.*

## mEYE Photo Competition opens

Macular Disease Foundation Australia is calling for entries into the fifth annual mEYE World Photographic Competition and is asking Australians to submit a photograph that captures the theme: See My World.

The competition runs until 8 September 2015. For more information and to enter, visit [www.meyephotocomp.com.au/](http://www.meyephotocomp.com.au/).



*Dr Kerry Boytell, of Mosman NSW, won the Grand Finalist and Healthcare Category prize for the mEYE World Photographic Exhibition 2014 with this photo of a snow leopard in the wild.*

## We were wrong

In the July issue of TGA, the letter to the Editor from Gordon Dowthwaite stated that the infant mortality rate in Rwanda in 2013 was 61.2%.

This should have been 61.2, which is 61.2 infant deaths per 1000 live births. This was the editor's error, not the writer's.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Your correspondent (“Who’s Listening?”, July 2015), while possibly making a partially valid point about so-called “Lifestyle choices” in Australia, unfortunately seems not prepared to believe that there is a multitude of reasons which may lead a woman (or couple) to the very difficult and painful decision to have a pregnancy terminated.

I have known an instance when the deep grief following an abortion was a factor in a friend coming to

Christ – thank God, in a place where the Church’s doors had not been slammed in judgement.

Far from avoiding “uncomfortable” issues, the Synod seems, commendably, to have tackled some of the Big Ones facing us; and that seems to reflect action in the diocese. Way to go, Gippsland!

*Pam Vercoe,  
Bundaberg, Queensland*

## Letters to the editor are welcome

– preferably less than 200 words.

Please write to [editor@gippsanglican.org.au](mailto:editor@gippsanglican.org.au)

by 15th of month prior to publication.

## EARTH CARE CARD

– Tips for churches and households –

### # 11 Clean simply, forget the wipes

Forget the “disposable” wet wipes – or at least don’t flush them down the toilet. Wet wipes are causing havoc in sewerage systems as they do not break down like toilet paper. See the ABC story at: [tinyurl.com/pnjye5a/](http://tinyurl.com/pnjye5a/) for mobiles or find at [abc.net.au](http://abc.net.au).

Wipes are creating unnecessary waste, as well as using up resources and costing millions of dollars to clean up.

For nappy changes, just use a face washer run under the tap and rung out. These can be machine washed, sun dried and re-used thousands of times. Think before you throw something “away”, because there is no such place.

Alternatives for earth-friendly cleaning around the house include using vinegar or lemon juice as a disinfectant, bi-carb soda for an abrasive cleaner, or simple soap and water for many cleaning tasks. Save money at the supermarket and avoid polluting the earth at the same time.



# Ron Bell

## Jan Down

As Ron Bell tells the story, a customer came into his wife Judith's florist shop and invited Ron to join the Lions Club – and Judith said yes.

Ron says joining Lions back in 1990 “got me mixing with people and giving back to the community what I'd taken from them in my bad days” when he was a practising alcoholic.

Ron was recently given a Rotary “Shine On” award for people with a disability who contribute to their community.

Ron contracted polio when he was 10 years old, and again when he was 12. He came out of hospital when he was 14 with straight iron calipers on his legs that made many activities difficult or impossible, such as riding a bike or swimming. He could not go to the cinemas because the calipers did not bend.

For nearly five decades, Ron has served the community. He worked at Ashdene Boys' Home for 25 years, caring for 10–15 year-old boys from troubled backgrounds who were in the care of the state. He and Judith ran a women in crisis centre from their home, taking in women and children suffering from domestic violence. They also fostered 98 pre-adoption babies.

But Ron was not always this kind of man. He says now “Believing in God has made a difference to my approach to everything”.

Ron was very surprised to be offered the job at Ashdene Boys' Home. At the interview he was asked whether he smoked or drank and he told them that he was “a sober alcoholic”, thinking that would be the end of any chance to work there. But he was given the job; his own background was helpful to the boys, as they knew that he understood where they had come from.

As a boy growing up in Korumburra, Ron felt unloved and unwanted by his parents, while at school he was always in trouble and being bullied. He was sexually abused for the first time when he was nine years old by a man who asked him home to listen to music. He was abused again by a male nurse when he was in hospital with polio when he was twelve.

When he came home from hospital after the first polio episode at age ten, he started



Photo courtesy  
Latrobe Valley Express

selling newspapers and found he could sell more in the hotel. This is how he started drinking – he would drink the leftovers, which made him feel good at the time.

At fourteen, when Ron came out of hospital with his legs in calipers, other children would call him “spastic, moron, cripple”, knocking him over and laughing when he couldn't get up again. His drinking and smoking escalated and he left school. Later he learned

to walk without calipers for a time, and eventually, through the Lions Club raising the funds, was able to have some computerised calipers that gave him more freedom of movement.

Ron says that he was always looking for God, but he wanted “a flash of light”, and this was not his experience. He was attending the Box Hill Methodist church for a time, and even joined the choir, although he did not believe in God. He says “I can remember singing out the side of my mouth so they couldn't smell the alcohol”.

He had many jobs, but lost them all because of his drinking, and reached the point of living on the streets in Melbourne, sleeping rough, begging for cigarettes and money, cheating and conning people to survive.

Eventually Ron met and married Judith. At the time, he was working as a house painter. He says “I think I coned my wife into believing that I was a Christian and a good fellow, but I certainly was not”. Eventually they lost their home because of

his drinking. One day Ron was chasing his wife up the road with a blackberry sickle, wanting to kill her. He says “It had to be God that sent our doctor down the hill at the right time. I shudder to think what might have happened if he hadn't stopped”. The doctor took Ron inside and told him he was an alcoholic and asked if he wanted to do something about it. Ron agreed to go to Hillcrest Hospital in Adelaide where he entered a 12 step program and “came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity”. He turned his will and his life over to the care of God.

When he came home, he decided to learn how to love his wife and children. It was Judith who saw the advertisement in the paper for a child care officer at Ashdene, and insisted he apply for the position.

Ron worked in the Home for 25 years, but suffered a mental breakdown after his appointment as Superintendent was successfully appealed. He was admitted to a Melbourne clinic where he was given 38 shock treatments. Ron finished work in 1985, the year that Judith opened her florist shop. He then helped with the deliveries.

He joined the Bennetswood Lions Club in 1990 and has been a member of Lions ever since. One project he was involved with was to raise funds to build a 30 room house for the parents of neo-natal babies at the Mercy and Austin hospitals. Ron, Judith and others pushed a baby's crib on wheels from Albury to Heidelberg – via Echuca, Rochester, Bendigo, Castlemaine, Daylesford, Ballarat, Geelong and Werribee. Ron was on crutches then, and he and Judith walked roughly 2 km on, 2 km off. They slept in church halls along the way.

Judith and Ron moved to a 5 acre property at Jeeralang Junction about 15 months ago. Ron says that at nearby Churchill they “walked into a wonderful church and Lions Club”. Now aged 77, Ron says “I don't care if I live a week or a month – I'm going to thoroughly enjoy every minute I've got left. Through everything in my life, I've been God-blessed.” In his work with Lions, Ron has enjoyed “giving to others, and the fellowship as part of a world-wide organisation”.

When he looks back over his life, Ron says “God's been there all the time. I just didn't know it”.

## Diocesan calendar

First Saturday of each month: all welcome to walk the labyrinth at the end of Back Beach Road at San Remo, Phillip Island, from 10.30 am

### August

- 4–9 WinterFEST: a week of workshops at The Abbey, Raymond Island – for details phone 5156 0511 or email [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au)
- 8 9:30 am – 3:30 pm Lay Reader Training Day at Korumburra
- 9 1.30 pm Kidsplus+ Network meeting ( all Leaders of children's and youth ministries welcome) at 4 Daniel Crt Traralgon. Enquiries 5174 8445
- 10 11 am Mothers Union Mary Summer Day Celebrations at Christ Church, Drouin with the Rev Sue Woodcock
- 14 7.30 pm Induction of the Rev David Head as Rector at St Mary's, Morwell
- 15 9.30–3.30 pm Anam Cara Quiet Day, St James', Grey St Traralgon
- 22 9.30 am – 4 pm Safe Church Workshop at the Baptist Church, Pakenham
- 22 10 am – 3 pm Order of St Luke Training Day on healing ministry, St James', Traralgon see also page 7

### September

- 8 10 am Mothers Union AGM at Traralgon
- 10, 11, 12 10:00 am to – 4:00 pm Daffodil Festival, St Peter's Anglican Church, Leongatha
- 12 9.30 am – 4 pm Safe Church Awareness Workshop, at the Anglican Church, Traralgon

### October

- 10 10.30 am Order of St Luke Rally at “Allansfield”, Rhyll, Phillip Island: Celebrating 25 years and Dedication of Indoor Chapel
- 11 8.30am – 1.00pm Clifton Waters Village Annual Fair, Clifton Waters Village, Bairnsdale
- 31 11 am GFS Kidsplus+ Network Annual Thanksgiving Service and Lunch at Traralgon

For all SCA Workshops: BYO lunch. Pre-register on the website ([buw.com.au](http://buw.com.au)) or through Danielle Matthews at the Diocesan Registry Office: phone 5144 2044

## 2015 DAFFODIL FESTIVAL ST PETER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH LEONGATHA

Thursday 10, Friday 11  
Saturday 12 September  
10 am – 4 pm

Displays:  
Flowers in Praise & Garden Snapshots  
Calendar for Sale - Proceeds to Anglicare

Refreshments:  
Morning & Afternoon Teas & Light Lunches