

The Gippsland Anglican

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123 – launch!

Jan Down

123 was the place to be in Sale on Thursday 5 May. A colourful three dimensional 123 sign lit up the window of the converted electrical repair shop in Cunninghame Street as guests approached the building for the launch of 123, the new youth space and café – what the Rev'd Rich Lanham is calling a "fresh expression" of church and a "missional social enterprise".

Young people in bright avocado green aprons orbited the room offering refreshments, while two young baristas, Kyle Nauta and Jack Lanham, were kept busy at the coffee machine in the front entrance.

Rich and Julie Lanham work as a ministry team on the project, so it was very disappointing for both of them that Julie was unable to be at the launch due to illness. She was to have managed the catering for the evening, but the gap was filled by Duart Catering from Maffra.

The long hard work of a team of volunteers, including Lauchy Marshall the builder, was in evidence inside the building, with new timber lining around the lower section of the walls, plaster boards above, and a fresh coat of paint. But other work is less obvious – such as the electrical wiring completed at no cost by electrician Mick Mara.

During the evening Mick's young daughter Aimee proudly presented Rich with the electrical safety certificate for the building and also spoke briefly about how volunteering at 123 became something she wanted to do herself.

Two talented young musicians, guitarist Eric Campbell and singer Lateesha Matthews, entertained guests, contributing high quality music to the evening.

Rich then gave a speech of welcome and thanks to the many people who have supported and worked on the project. He spoke about his hopes for 123, that it might become a "third space" for young people – a place which is not school/work or home, but "the place you go to chill, to relax". He envisions a space where young people can feel welcome and be part of something meaningful. "We live in a post-Christian culture, but people are looking for something", Rich said, adding that he wants 123 to be "a place for people to find peace. I want everyone to know God already loves you as much as he possibly can".

Some of the plans Rich mentioned for 123 are a breakfast program, a pop up café and a weekly church service. The facility will offer young people experience and training in hospitality skills.



Photo: Christine Morris

Before blessing the new venture, Bp Kay described a "fresh expression of church" as something "with long roots and deep meaning for a new generation", adding her understanding that "churches that work for me might be places of alienation for others". She said "Life for many young people isn't as simple as 123... so this offers a place for people to connect, explore tough questions and find out who they've been created to be".

The model for 123 is to work in partnership with schools, social clubs, sporting clubs, churches, health professionals, businesses and other community groups and many of these were represented on the evening. Wellington Shire mayor, Cr Darren McCubbin said he was there "because

of Rich and what he does with young people... He has amazing credibility in what he does, and it's a blessing to have him here".

Cr Emilie Davine remembered Rich's original presentation to Council of his proposal for 123. She said it was "a total breath of fresh air". Jan Cropley, from the Anglican church at Stratford expressed what many others might equally have said: "Where Rich is, there's laughter, joy, teenagers, and above all else, Jesus. He never speaks without acknowledging Jesus".

Rich has recently taken up an appointment as Chaplain at Gippsland Grammar School, and although this means he will be very busy, Rich says that the 123 project will be integrated into his work at the school.

First session 38th Synod 13 – 15 May

Synod side-steps on marriage



Synod's handling of a controversial motion on the definition of marriage will allow time for further debate. The decision shows the Gippsland Anglican diocese as one earnestly wrestling with the question of same-sex marriage, in light of the proposed plebiscite on the issue next year.

The original motion on marriage, brought to Synod by the Rev'd Graham Toohill of Leongatha, was worded:

That this Synod affirms the current legal definition

of marriage as uniting a man and woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life, as described in the Marriage Amendment Act, 2004.

The Rev'd Greg Magee (Bass/Phillip Island) proposed an amendment, significantly replacing the word "affirms" with "acknowledges". The new wording, as follows, was passed after vigorous debate:

That this Synod acknowledges that the Marriage Amendment Act

2004 defines marriage as the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.

The motion requires no action by Bishop in Council. There were strongly held views on both sides of the respectfully conducted debate, reflecting the theological division on same-sex marriage across the world-wide Anglican Communion, but without the vitriol that has sometimes been seen in other places.

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Muesli or porridge with yoghurt or *milk*, tea or coffee with *milk*, a baby's bottle or child's glass of fresh *milk* - breakfast staples in many Gippsland homes. Since moving here 16 months ago the simple weekly act of buying butter or yoghurt or milk brings to mind not just those who will eat at our table, but the dairy farmers whose work ensures these necessities are on the supermarket shelf every week.

But it's not just about food in shops. There are also those who sell produce at their farm gates, where conversations about farming and family and life, about hopes and dreams both small and big, can take place. There is the family who moved from the city, and now have a thriving free-range egg business, the young woman with whom I chat about her dreams as I choose between parsnips and eggplant, the parishioner whose marmalade comes from fruit grown in their kitchen garden, and who has been sharing preserves for many years.

Farming life often seems to be on a fairly precarious edge. Issues affecting primary producers all around the country are regularly in the news, whether it is cattle farming in Queensland, wheat farming in Western Australia, or dairy farming here. Climate change, threatened CSG exploration, sourcing cheap food from overseas markets, changed regulations, disease, sudden price increases and sudden price



Bishop Kay Goldsworthy

The true price of milk

drops all contribute to a complex industry and the people who bear the tensions and strains that go with it.

As I drove across the Strzelecki Ranges last week listening to local radio, the impact on people we know and love was right before me. The ABC interviewer was speaking with a farmer whose crop was almost in, for whom recent rains had come at just the right time. More rain was forecast, and all

the signs for a good vegetable season were present. The next report included funding packages for counselling and other support measures for dairy farmers.

The scene before me was a beautiful pastoral cameo—rolling green hills, dew glistening on trees and grass in the morning sunlight, cows walking the fence line in an orderly single file on their way back to the paddock after morning milking.

The congregations I was with last weekend included men and women whose hands were weathered by years of farming, stretched out to receive the bread of life. When I asked how long they had been dairy farmers some said 50 years, others just 20 or so. When I asked how the recent drop in milk prices would affect their communities some said there would be people who would go under, others that neighbours would rally around each other as they could. It was another pastoral cameo, but this time including human pain.

Almost every parish and school community in this part of Victoria is impacted by what happens to farmers here, but the truth is that we are impacted as a nation as well. After all, it is not beyond our ingenuity to embrace a vision of the common good where some no longer grow fat while others shrivel and starve; to embrace ways of living well together where there is enough for everyone, farmers and supermarkets alike.

Practical help, contributing in our local community, getting alongside neighbours, listening to their stories, reading the brand information before we choose which milk to buy, and keeping farmers in our prayers may seem like small things. Do them anyway. It is never beyond the power of God's love to replace our hearts of stone with hearts of flesh.

+ Kay

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Saturday 25th June

1.30pm

Holy Trinity Stratford

RSVP: 20th June Carol: 51748445



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The Rev'd Colin Oakley and his wife Anthea

Colin Oakley inducted at Westernport

Jan Down

The little church of St John's Lang Lang was packed for the induction of the Rev'd Colin Oakley as Priest in Charge of the Cooperating Parish of Westernport on Wednesday 4 May.

There are Anglican churches in three centres: Corinella, Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang. The Uniting Church has congregations in Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang.

Clergy and lay people travelled from across Gippsland and further afield, including Geelong to welcome and support Colin and his wife Anthea. A number of people also came from Carrum Downs and Frankston North where Colin was recently curate.

Bp Kay Goldsworthy and the Rev'd Sani Vaeluaga, Presbytery Minister for the Uniting Church in Gippsland, shared in the liturgy of induction.

Bp Kay preached on the reading from Acts 17: 22-18: 1, when the apostle Paul spoke to the people of Athens about their altar "to an unknown god". She referred to Edwin Abbott's 1884 allegorical book, *Flatland*, which tells the story of a spherical being who had to give up being three dimensional and become a flat circle in order to relate to the two dimensional people of Flatland.

Bishop Kay explained that while originally the book was meant as a commentary on Victorian culture and society, it was later applied to the incarnation. She said that we can learn from Paul's proclamation to the Athenians. He took the time to look around Athens and observe the culture of the place. He did not ridicule or judge. He

used the opportunity presented to proclaim the unknown God "who wants people to know that he is as close as breathing".

The Bishop said that "people are seeking meaning, purpose, forgiveness and hope" and that Christ's death and resurrection mean we can "dare to live a three dimensional life". She urged the people of Westernport Parish to hold onto their vision and hope for the parish as they make a new beginning with Colin.

Mr Keith Dann, a warden at St John's, welcomed Colin and also thanked the ten people who looked after the parish in the three years it has been vacant. The Rev'd Brenda Burney was the previous priest in the parish.

Mrs Marion Dewar from the parish of Leongatha was presented with flowers to thank her for stepping in at the last minute to play the organ.

The Rev'd Geoff Pittaway, Area Dean, welcomed Colin to the deanery. Colin's wife Anthea was presented with flowers. Councillors Clare Le Serve and David Young welcomed Colin and Anthea to the local community on behalf of the Bass Coast Shire and Cardinia Shire respectively. Cr Young said that Colin's academic and craftsman's skills will help him to build the community across the three towns. (Before going into the ministry Colin worked in the trade of solid plastering.)

Colin responded to the speeches, thanking everyone and saying that he and Anthea feel very welcomed and supported. After the service the congregation adjourned to the community hall across the road for fellowship over supper.

Marsh Expo

Lyn Williams

The "Marsh Expo" held earlier this year at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale was a great success. This was an opportunity for five parishes (Maffra, Avon, Rosedale, Sale and Heyfield) to showcase areas of ministry in each parish (as one person said, "permission to brag") and to share ideas in ministry in what we do.

Each parish displayed information on the various areas of parish life through the use of charts, diagrams, photos, and other creative forms of expression. The vast range of ministries included: ideas and practices with worship and liturgy; pastoral ministries; church groups (KYB; Tadpoles playgroup; youth; men's; women's; study groups and more); Blessing of Pets; *mainly music*; Open Gardens (A Stickybeak and Stroll, High Tea in the Garden, Garden Bus tour); community outreach programs; and op shops.

Parish mission had a strong focus at the Expo, with displays of mission projects and fundraising, Op Shop

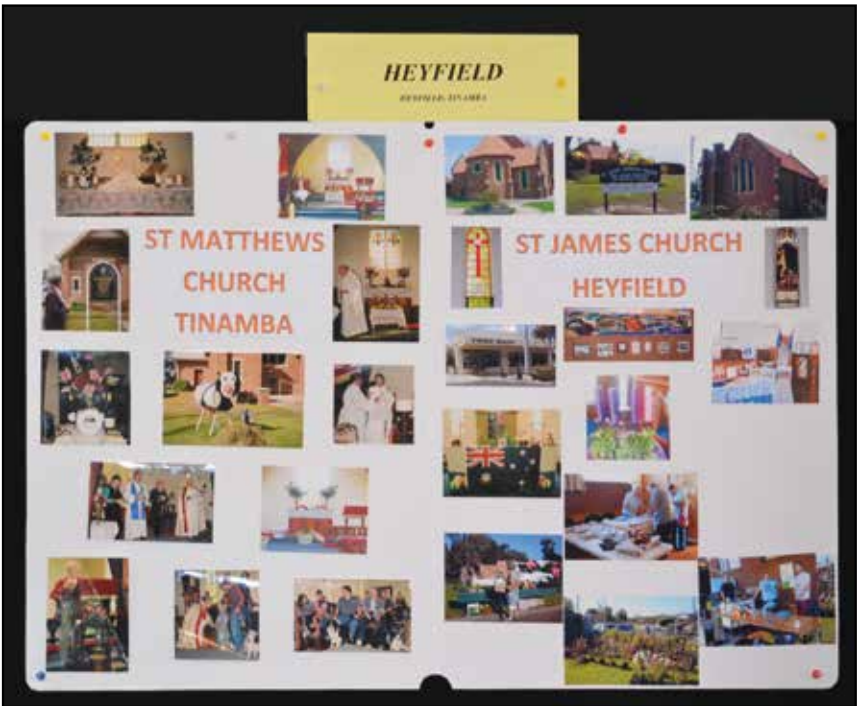
contributions to mission, and outreach, such as an op shop holding an Alfresco Shrove Tuesday Pancake Morning Tea delivered to local businesses.

People from the parish had an opportunity to speak about particular aspects of church life and, as they could not speak about everything within the time allocated, some areas were left for people to look at and read about. As ideas were shared, we all learned from each other of things that we are doing and there was the obvious sharing of ideas. Frequently comments were made, such as "I like that idea", "We could do that", or "We could use that idea and do it this way..."

The Marsh Group is working with Bishop Kay and is one forum for sharing ideas, supporting each other as small parishes, for exploring the issues churches face today, of how we understand ourselves to be church, the opportunities for outreach in making connections with the local community and networking.

The work begun at the Marsh Expo is one exciting step forward. I look forward to seeing how we will utilise all the things we have gained from this event. (Watch this space.)

The Rev'd Lyn Williams is currently locum at Avon parish.



A poster at the Marsh Expo, held at St Paul's Cathedral in Sale



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Protesting grandmothers gather on the lawns of Parliament House, Canberra

Grandmothers against the detention of refugee children

Jan Stephenson, a parishioner at St Philip's in Cowes, was invited by her daughter Linda, who attends the Baptist church in Cowes, to join other grandmothers on a bus trip to Canberra to protest against refugee children being held in detention. Jan was a member of the asylum seeker group at Bairnsdale before moving to Cowes, and is now involved in the Phillip Island group. She writes:

On March 15, over two hundred grandmothers travelled in convoy, in buses and cars, from Melbourne to Canberra. The colour purple was everywhere – on streamers, balloons, and clothing.

We were assigned to cabins in a nice caravan park, and spent the evening finalising plans for the following day, of

rallies, meetings and visiting Parliament. Early the next morning, some went to plant out 1000 cut out cardboard children in the lawn. The rest travelled, en masse, to Parliament House, and the lawns were filled with a sea of purple, and many banners, amid chanting "Free the children!" Three members of Parliament spoke in support, and two medical doctors spoke about the amount of trauma people in detention suffer, especially children. A small choir sang *A Home Away From Home* which one woman had composed, and which was quite moving.

My daughter Linda and I were assigned to the Senate where we spent one and a half hours. One Senator spoke on our group's behalf, but clearly, most seemed unimpressed. Let's hope the effort was worthwhile.



Good fellowship at the fundraising dinner for the ABM Global Response Fund

Mission Dinner

Carolyn Raymond – Morwell

Every year St Mary's selects a mission project to support. This year it is the ABM Global Response Fund. As part of our fund raising for this year's project we held a parish dinner, gathering together at the church to share an evening meal together and then watch a film.

The film was called *Keeping Mum*, a delightful English comedy full of dead bodies, intrigue and all set in the country parish of Little Whopping!

This was a great night of fellowship and fun as well as raising money for our mission project for the year.

The ABM Global Response Fund aims to provide assistance in unexpected crisis situations throughout the world. Whether it is a natural disaster, conflict or health crisis ABM seeks to help. The needs are so great across the world. We hope our contribution will support this important work of ABM.

Anzac Day poem

Lyn Gilbert – Korumburra

Sue Wilson of St. Paul's, Korumburra wrote this poem for the Anzac Centenary Service at the church last year.

The Rev'd Jenny Ramage read prayers and also this poem at this year's Anzac Service at Coleman Park in Korumburra.



Jesus rode on a donkey and the crowds acclaimed Him with palms and hallelujahs.

He was our gentle Jesus who held his people in his heart.

Our boys waved with arms and hats as the ship edged slowly from the wharf.

Their hearts were full of mateship and their eyes alight with pride.

Jesus and his mates shared a final meal and the disciples tried to understand that love meant sacrifice.

The soldiers heading to Egypt lived a shared life now, single in purpose. Their uniforms a giving up of former lives and ambitions and loved ones.

They began to understand that love of King and Country might mean deadly sacrifice.

In the Garden of Gethsemane the horror of what Jesus was soon to undertake brought him anguish;

He prayed to God his Father and in perfect obedience he set his face in flint.

And on the beaches of Gallipoli there was anguish, pain and death

And many prayed to God their Father and their faces were set in flint.

And He bore his cross till He could no more and Simon shouldered the load.

In the trenches they cursed when they could have wept and mates shared the burden of fear.

With humour and courage and grim love for each other, the mark of the Digger was born.

No-one saw that victory was being won upon a cross.

None knew that the trenches above Anzac Cove were the weft and weave of nationhood.

We loved to see them marching by, these proud though wiser men.

They were our fathers and our grandfathers and men of legend.

Their sacrifice an echo of God's own sacrifice,

Their victory, our inheritance of freedom and prosperity and peace.

Sue Wilson, April 2015



New face at the Registry office

The Registry office at Sale has welcomed a new administration assistant. Sue Court started work in the office in late April. Sue replaces Danielle Matthews, who left in February this year to take up a position at Bairnsdale.

Creative Spirit Festival – St Philip's and St John's UC Cowes



Bp Kay Goldsworthy, artist Paul Woodford, and the Rev'd Greg Magee in front of the new mural on the parish hall in Cowes

Fay Magee

The Creative Spirit Festival in Cowes on the weekend 6-8 May offered a variety of experiences. The planning by representatives of both the Anglican and Uniting Churches had benefited greatly from working with Christina Rowntree, Artful Faith Coordinator for the Uniting Church, based in Melbourne. The theme for the weekend, Sense of Place, was explored through the visual arts, the labyrinth, music, prayer and worship.

In opening the festival and particularly the Art Show, Christina Rowntree spoke of the meaning of place, of the significance of relationships and of story. She referred to the way we interact with a place through our senses. As part of our growing understandings, Christina also spoke of our sense of belonging as being broadened with indigenous wisdom, to include and be integrated with the more-than-human world (a term coined by Thomas Berry and gaining use in eco-theological circles). Christina referred to many of the works presented as illustrating these elements. The winning entry was titled *Ceremony* by local artist Lisa Kennedy. It took the viewer into a deep

reflection on colour, country and connections.

The Celtic Harp recital by Cath Connolly included explanations and insights from Cath as well as poetry read by Hilary Christie-Johnston. Cath and Hilary combined again to provide a reflective time in the Combined Service on Sunday morning in St John's Uniting Church.

The weekend was concluded with an impressive "unveiling" by our Bishop, the Rt Rev'd Kay Goldsworthy, of the mural that has been installed on the exterior wall of the parish hall in Cowes. The project was the inspiration of artist Paul Woodford, ably assisted by his partner Dawn Raff, daughter and granddaughter. Bishop Kay spoke of the function of public art which symbolizes an important part of our role in our community.

The idea for a mural had emerged from the 2015 Festival, encouraged by Bass Coast Mayor, Jordan Crugnalle, who also attended on the Sunday.



Christina Rowntree, Artful Faith Coordinator, with Josie and Camille

GFS KidsPlus+ 130th Celebration at Summit Adventure Park

Our "Gala event" to recognise 130 years of GFS ministry in Gippsland was held on 30 April at Trafalgar East's Summit Adventure Park. A number of archdeaconary celebrations are planned throughout this year.

The day commenced with the Victoria's State Council meeting preceding the arrival of other guests, including Bishop Kay Goldsworthy, the National Chairman, Gail Orchard from Newcastle, three Sydney representatives, past members and friends of GFS from across Victoria and Gippsland, and recent GFS Kidsplus+ ministry representatives from affiliated parishes of Morwell, Trafalgar, Drouin and Traralgon.

Displays of literature, photographs, and memorabilia engendered much discussion, reflection and joy, sometimes laughter, as we recognised the changing face of ministry over those years. Yes, needs and therefore ministry have changed.

This celebration, intentionally, also focused on today's young people. The Summit and idyllic weather provided activities for the many children and youth attending. Canoeing, rafting, climbing wall, flying fox, Inflatable World and Kidsplus+ equipment all challenged participants.

As throughout our history we have appreciated support from the wider diocese, on this day we thanked Bishop in Council

for financial sponsorship, MU for service of afternoon tea, our male members (yes, that is an historical change), and CEBS Melbourne for the barbecue as well as many GFS Friends for scrumptious food.

Gippsland Chairperson Carol Johnstone welcomed our guests and together with Bishop Kay and National Chairperson Gail Orchard were pleased to cut the celebratory cake provided by Jo O'Brien.

Stratford next: GFS Kidsplus+ 130th roving celebrations

Central and East Gippsland past and present friends of the Girl's Friendly Society and Kidsplus+ are invited to attend a reunion celebratory afternoon tea at Stratford from 1:30pm on Saturday 25 June.

Participants are encouraged to bring memorabilia to add to the displays being set up. Children welcome.

Of course visitors will be able to learn a little of the ministry of our 130 year old GFS Society and of our future directions. Please RSVP if possible by Monday 20 June (for catering or transport needs).

Other regional events will be held throughout the year. Contact Carol on 51748445 or email: gippskidspluspeople.net.au if you would like to link in to any of these functions.



Carol Johnstone, Gail Orchard and Bp Kay Goldsworthy cut the birthday cake at the 130th Celebration at Summit Adventure Park, East Trafalgar.

Happy 90th birthday Rene

Irene Stirling (known to us as "Rene"), a member of our Boolarra/Yinnar congregation, celebrated her 90th birthday on 24 April, with an afternoon tea party with friends and family. A few days before, the Coffee Connections group at Churchill also celebrated with a special morning tea for Rene.

Irene married Lindsay Stirling (now deceased) after he returned from service in Borneo, on 7 December, 1946. They lived in Thorpdale until they moved to Yinnar in the early 1950's. They joined Lindsay's father-in-law in the local business of fuel deliveries and the mail run.

Irene's sister Mary, three children Lynette, Reg and Laurie along with five of her seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren were present at the party which made it a very special day.

Rene has been an active member of our parish for many years.

She has been a Parish Council member, Clergy Appointments Board member and, until very recently, a Eucharistic Assistant. This year she has begun a new ministry – coming to the services at Hazelwood House (our Aged Care facility) and afterwards spending time chatting with the residents at afternoon tea.



Synod report 2016

Jan Down

The first session of the 38th Gippsland Anglican Synod began on Friday 13 May, with an uplifting Synod Eucharist at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

The interior of the cathedral was looking colourful and homely, as locum dean, the Rev'd Ken Parker, in the lead up to Pentecost (and Synod) had asked Sale parishioners to bring into the church some manifestations of their gifts. These included some beautiful examples of needlework, woodwork, photography and vegetable gardening, to name a few. An enormous 15 kg pumpkin grown by Ann and Iain Miller took pride of place in front of the altar.

On Pentecost Sunday, people arriving for the 8 am service were met with another manifestation, which Ken described as one of the more subtle offerings: a large tractor was parked right beside the cathedral doors. Ken said it seemed to have come straight down from heaven; the cathedral organist, Anthony Hahn, apparently has more than one gift.

Ken Parker, a team of Sale parishioners and the Registry staff worked hard to ensure that the Synod weekend flowed smoothly and good fellowship was enjoyed over dinner on the Saturday night.

Professional Standards legislation

On Saturday morning, Synod members assembled at Gippsland Grammar's Lorna Sparrow Hall and, after the President's Address (see pages 10-11), the work of Synod began.

Discussion of a Bishop in Council motion on Professional Standards legislation showed strong support for Gippsland's Director of Professional Standards, Cheryl Russell, and the Committee. There has been a call for Victorian dioceses to adopt uniform standards across the province. The Hon Robert Fordham reported that Gippsland likes the provincial model, but does not want to "cast aside what has been achieved" in this diocese. Legislation is likely to be brought to Synod in 2017.

Gahini-Gippsland partnership

A BIC proposal to donate \$4000 towards the building of a cathedral in the diocese of Gahini, Rwanda, generated some discussion of the current quality of communication between the

two dioceses. While there are frustrations, there is still strong support. The motion also committed the Gippsland diocese to another two years in partnership with Gahini. Bp Kay reported that a committee has been formed to oversee relations with Gahini. The motion was passed.

Debating controversial topics

The Rev'd Tony Wicking (Bairnsdale) presented a motion related to the shutting down of debate on abortion at last year's Synod. Tony's motion asked that after the mover and seconder have spoken to a motion, at least three other Synod members should have the opportunity to speak before a motion can be put that Synod "proceed to next business".

Tony argued that Synod needs to be able to debate contentious issues. The Hon John Delzoppo observed that Synod decides whether the motion "to go to next business" passes or not; it is not automatic. After a number of speakers for and against, the motion to allow three speakers was lost.

Refugees and asylum seekers

Two motions relating to refugees and asylum seekers were passed by Synod. Gordon Dowthwaite (Leongatha) moved that Synod applaud the government's commitment to take in 12 000 additional refugees; ask the Immigration Minister to address delays in the process; and commit itself to welcoming refugees in our communities.

Gordon noted that so far only 200 of the 12,000 have arrived in Australia. Heather Scott, seconder to the motion, said that the Australian government was following rigorous and lengthy processing procedures when the United Nations has already recommended several thousand refugees.

Bp Kay reported that she has said to MPs Russell Broadbent and Darren Chester that there are parishes in Gippsland ready to welcome some of the 12 000 into their communities.

The Rev'd Sue Jacka (Trafalgar) moved that Synod endorse the resource material on asylum seekers prepared by the working group established by BIC last year, and that it be circulated to all parishes.

Sue said that the world faces a huge

refugee crisis, and for Christians, this is not a political issue; we should be salt and light. She commended the committee's brochure outlining resources available to parishes, as well as another booklet, and hoped that both would soon be available on the diocesan website.

Michael Fox, another member of the working group reported that in early December our diocese hosted 80 Iranian refugees at The Abbey, adding that there is much more we can do.

The Rev'd Sathi Anthony and the Rev'd Dean Spalding also spoke strongly in favour of a more compassionate treatment of asylum seekers.

Constitutional recognition for Australia's First Peoples

The Rev'd Sathi Anthony (Moe / Newborough) moved that Synod urge the federal government to expedite the inclusion of the Indigenous people of Australia in the Australian Constitution. He observed that he himself, as a migrant, was "included" while the Indigenous people of the land were not, and argued that the church, which has been criticised in regard to colonisation, might be seen to be doing more good by asking for the expedition of recognition.

Secunder to the motion, Archdeacon Philip Muston (Warragul), reminded Synod of the 1967 referendum, when negative references to Indigenous people were removed, but not replaced with any positives. He believed there should be wording adding to the Preamble as well as to the Constitution itself, and said that we need to be part of another groundswell that leads to a new referendum.

Several people rose to speak, including the Rev'd Rich Lanham, who said the question shouldn't still need to be debated, and urged everyone to work hard for the required groundswell.



The Rev'd Kathy Dalton and the Rev'd Sathi Anthony in discussion

Archdeacon Edie Ashley (Paynesville) questioned the wording of the motion, which led to a reworking which read: "That this Synod urges the Federal Government to work with Aboriginal communities to ensure the recognition, without delay, in the Australian Constitution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as Australia's First People to be presented to and agreed by the Australian people at referendum."

Liturgy to embrace multi-cultural reality

Another motion brought to Synod by the Rev'd Sathi Anthony called for a working group to be established to draft liturgy that embraces the multi-cultural reality of Australian society, with emphasis being given to Koori people. After several speeches in support, the motion was passed unopposed.



Manifestation of a gift on Pentecost Sunday: Anthony's Hahn's tractor

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Open retirement age proposed for Gippsland clergy

Some Gippsland clergy may soon be running parishes well beyond the age of 70, after the passing of a motion calling for a Bill to amend the *Appointment Act 1994*, which would abolish the age restriction.

Archdeacon Graham Knott, Rector of the parish of Leongatha, presented the motion which includes the stipulation that clergy be subject to an annual ministerial review from the age of 68, “with a view to continuing in office after age 70”.

Speaking to the motion, Graham noted that none of the ordination services includes the concept of retirement.

In a maiden speech to Synod, Kate Commins, a lay representative from Omeo and seconder to the motion, noted that “Omeo is blessed to have Thelma Langshaw as volunteer priest”. Kate explained that Omeo is a remote and challenging parish, with a great need for ministry, but it is hard to attract people to minister there.

A number of Synod members spoke for and against the motion. The Rev’d Graeme Peters (Wonthaggi) argued that “having a retirement age allows you to retire people who should retire without it becoming a personal issue. If everyone has to retire at

that age, there is no pressure or obligation to continue and there is no need to justify why someone should step down at 70”.

The Rev’d Jenny Ramage, from Korumburra, said there was a need for an end date, but that it should be extended, and noted that many clergy go on with active service even after retirement.

Currently a retired priest can be given Permission to Officiate and work as a locum, but can only preside, not lead a congregation.

Graham Knott responded to speakers with the argument that there are many vacant parishes in East Gippsland which, because of size and remoteness, can only afford a part-time position, something which a younger priest with a family to support is unlikely to take up. At the same time, a 68 year-old priest in a busy, full-time parish, might be very suitable for one of these smaller East Gippsland communities, but if they must retire at 70, the parish may only have them for two years.

Graham argued that the solution to this dilemma is to allow priests to continue in office without a compulsory retirement age and the motion was passed. A Bill to amend the *Act* will be brought to the next session of Synod in 2017.



A little too young for retirement? The youngest visitor to Synod, nine week old Jerome and his mother Jenni Lang, a lay representative from Warragul

Synod side-steps on marriage

Continued from page 1

Those supporting the current definition of marriage expressed concern that the diocese should be faithful to scripture. The other side saw it as a matter of justice and compassion.

The Rev’d Graham Toohill (Leongatha), speaking to the original motion, said “Marriage is God’s idea” and that its purposes are companionship and procreation. He quoted Genesis 2:24, “Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife and they become one flesh” and argued that the church should “stand firm on God’s view of marriage”.

Seconder to the motion, Peter Anderson (Wonthaggi/Inverloch), noted that the motion asks for the preservation of the current marriage law, and he believed that LGBTI unions should have a different name.

The Rev’d David Head (Morwell) spoke strongly against the original motion, pointing out that the current wording in the *Marriage Act* only dates back to 2004, when “a man and a woman” was inserted as an amendment.

He argued that the marriage law was discriminatory, saying that same sex couples should be able to marry and have the same rights.

The Rev’d Greg Magee (Bass/Phillip Island) then proposed the amendment. He argued that “affirms” was a contentious word, urging the synod in a political direction with regard to the proposed plebiscite on same sex marriage.

Sue Fordham (Paynesville), seconder to the amendment, delivered a carefully prepared and passionately delivered speech, arguing for keeping open the possibility of change. She observed that while the Judeo-Christian religions defined marriage as monogamous, polygamy was once accepted practice, as seen in Solomon’s numerous wives.

Sue remembered a woman being refused entry to Mothers Union because she had married a divorced man, and observed that “These days we see divorce as a better option than staying in a toxic marriage”.

Sue put forward women’s ministry as another example of a shift in understanding. On same-sex relationships, she said our knowledge has changed. She ended by proposing “fidelity is more important than gender”.

Val Jones (Lakes Entrance/Metung) speaking for the amendment, said she did not want to send the message “that we know where God is on this issue”.

Philip Davis (Sale) also speaking for the amendment, said the crux of the matter was that the Anglican Church will need to devise a blessing for same sex unions.

The Rev’d Tony Wicking (Bairnsdale) asked how we could go against

scripture, which sees marriage as between a man and a woman. He said the amended motion did not stand up for Christ’s words, and added “We haven’t debated scripture”.

When it came to voting on the amended motion, the result was not definite until a show of hands was called for, which showed a clear majority in favour.

Bp Kay Goldsworthy then observed that “This issue will be with us for the coming years”. She thanked Synod members for the respectful manner of the debate, and made the assurance that the diocese was not about to create a blessing of same sex unions.



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Gippsland Grammar's Year 11 Ball



Back Row: Rory Van Berkel, Jeremy Todd, Tom Anderson, Xavier Monacella, Henry Turnbull, Liam Wilson, Matthew Woodward, Thomas Edgar, Jack McGrath, Tyson Whelan, Ronan Capraro, William Webb

Fifth Row: Thomas Stewart, Ace Mitrevski, Jack Boyd, Matthew Vaughan, Alexander Truscott, Andrew Bullers, Nichil Nowrungsah, Harley Kewish, Jake Holland, Harrison Broad, Thomas Duff, Gil Aitken, Nicholas Rothwell

Fourth Row: Caitlin Baker, Abigail Taylor, Charlotte Ford, Emerald Ford, Jessica Thompson, Georgia Dixon, Nikki Polintan, Felicity Ried, Breeanna Segafredo, Tess Maxfield, Charlotte Hodge, Meghann Gordyn

Third Row: Kaitlyn Steinfort, Kate Hamilton, Jasmine Doultree, Nellie Hunt, Chloe Haylock, Emily Anderson, Grace de Steiger, Phoebe Pilgrim, Caroline Basset, Annabelle Lamb, Claudia Klose, Hannah McCann, India Howlett, Alice Taylor, Tegan Hall

Second Row Alessandra Hardy, Sarah Hair, Ashleigh Cheney, Emily Morrison, Paige Barlow, Celeste Kelly, Ellie May, Philippa Shugg, Victoria Herdegen, Jasmine Hellyer, Jane Martin, Lily Turnbull, Claire Hatt, Elly Kuch, Jessica De Voogd

Official Party: Head of Year 11: Mrs Liz Bullers; Mrs Lesley Scott; Chairman of the Board: Mr Steven Scott; Mrs Jane Baker; Principal: Mr David Baker; the Bishop of Gippsland: the Rt Rev'd Kay Goldsworthy; Mr Jeri James; Head of Garnsey Campus: Ms Jan Henry; Trainer: Mrs Sue Kennedy

Absent: Elizabeth Lawrence

Gippsland Grammar's annual Year 11 Ball was held on April 29 in Sale Memorial Hall, which was totally transformed with a black and white theme by Gippsland Grammar's Events Co-ordinator, Geraldene Caldwell.

Year 10 students volunteered their time acting as waiters for the evening, which was attended by 360 people.

Leadership summit

The Year 6 students from St Paul's Anglican Grammar School's Traralgon campus recently visited "The Summit" in Trafalgar East to participate in a Leadership Challenge Day.

The day was filled with challenges based on the "super stretch" mentality that encouraged the Year 6s to take risks outside of their natural comfort zone, face fears and push themselves a little more, all in a safe, supported environment.

The students worked together in teams to try to conquer the challenges, teaching them to appreciate the voices and thoughts of others and appreciate that each person's views

are valuable, particularly in problem solving situations.

Some of the challenges that allowed students to discover something new about themselves included Bush Challenge, Flying Fox, Laser Skirmish, Tyre over the Pole, Puzzle Solving, and the Ball and Pipe Challenge.

The experience enabled students to find previously unknown leadership qualities and to celebrate personal growths and successes.

The day ended with a wet and muddy obstacle course which allowed the Year 6s to reinforce all that they had learnt throughout the day.



Year 6 St Paul's students pushing themselves to rope climb up a hill in the Bush Challenge



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The Rev'd Rich Lanham speaking at the launch of 123 on 5 May

Not perfect but dearly loved

Rich Lanham

Are we so afraid of getting things wrong, that we try and avoid the inevitable mistakes inherent in the learning process? Does this fear

prevent us from trying new things or exploring new possibilities?

One of the great moments I have had during the building of the 123 project was a few weeks ago when I had a group of young people there. Most of the young

people were willing to give it a go. A few of them were nervous because they had not painted before and thought they wouldn't do a good job. I said to them, "Don't worry, we all have to start somewhere" and proceeded to explain the process.

Once the trays were full of paint and everyone had their equipment, the work began. There were a few moments where I re-explained how to roll or brush whilst trying not to make them feel bad and generally they all got into it really well. I had said "This may be your first time painting but next time you will be an experienced painter, and the next time, and the next time."

At one point during the afternoon I began to notice the drips and runs that I was producing as I painted. I then started to notice the same from the young people. As I tried to clean up my mess I also saw the drips of paint on the floor. Suddenly I was feeling like, wait a minute, I want this to be perfect without any runs or drips.

As I found myself momentarily questioning the wisdom of not engaging professional painters, I realised the perfection of what was happening. 123 is a place where people learn new skills. A place where they

can feel safe in the knowledge that they are not being judged or told they are not good enough. A place where they are free to take a chance to grow and be supported.

I then began to think about God and how he has given us the responsibility to love and care for his creation. To make the world a place where people feel safe and included and loved. A place where people are nurtured and healed.

I thought about the responsibility Jesus has given us to tell others about him. To live a life that reflects his love of God and his love of people. I started to consider the risk God takes with what he loves dearly, when he allows us to represent him.

We Christians are not always the best representatives of God. As we look for perfection, let's consider as followers of Jesus, what Jesus desires from us and for us. People need love and truth. They need relationship and guidance. Praise God that he doesn't treat us the way we sometimes treat others, when we don't give them a place to grow. Love like Jesus loves! God bless you.

The Rev'd Rich Lanham is Missional Priest of 123 and Chaplain at Gippsland Grammar School.

THY KINGDOM COME... ON EARTH

2016 END OF FINANCIAL YEAR APPEAL



In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches us to pray that God's kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven. It is clear that God intends his kingdom to encompass both the heavenly realm and our earthly reality. Only God can build God's kingdom, but as followers of Jesus we also want to see things put right – choosing to live and work now for the world that God wants.

We are given an important responsibility as God graciously invites us to partner with Him in this work of renewal. To pray this prayer is to ask God to act, but it is also to make a commitment to doing our part to realise this vision of God's coming kingdom.

At Anglican Overseas Aid we think of our international development work as one way of living for God's kingdom. In our work we try to emphasize social equity, health and prosperity, peace and reconciliation, and care for the earth. All of these things relate closely to the theme of global restoration found in the coming kingdom of God.

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The President's Address

EDITED VERSION

The Rt Rev'd Kay Goldsworthy

We meet this year in the week of prayer for Christian Unity and on the eve of Pentecost. When Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, unity and the Spirit were on his mind. He wrote, "I therefore, a prisoner of the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all, who is above all, through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:1-6).

Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is probably as straightforward for 21st century disciples as it was for those in 1st century Ephesus. One of my early teachers and mentors used to say that it is through our life in Christian community that God uses us to rub against each other; the way we read the Bible, our theological perspectives, our spirituality, the way our lives show Jesus' love. All help us to become more connected to Christ, who teaches us how to live as forgiven and forgiving people, and to discover the fruit of God's Spirit present in our lives and life: humility, patience, gentleness, love. What a gift we are to each other!

Recognition, Aboriginal ministry

Once again this year we have been welcomed to Gunai Kurnai country by the Rev'd Kathy Dalton. It is a privilege to be welcomed by Kathy in this way, enabling us to acknowledge those for whom this land between the mountains and the seas has been home for thousands of years.

The Welcome to Country is now an integral part of the opening of many community events. It's a signpost on the journey of reconciliation. There are some people who question why we do this every time we gather. My response is because there is a long lesson to learn and history shows that it is easy to be forgetful. The horrible racial responses to footballer Adam Goodes last year make this clear. Remembering and honouring keeps us pointed in the right direction as we continue to grow into the hope of an Australia in which the story and lived reality of Aboriginal people is celebrated, and many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's experience of poverty and exclusion is overcome.

No doubt the forthcoming election will see increased emphasis on the issue of recognition of Australia's First Peoples in the national Constitution, and the growing number of voices calling

not only for Constitutional Recognition but also for a Treaty. This matter is the subject of a motion being brought to the Synod. Whatever the outcome of these discussions and debates I pray that in our journeying together our footprint on this land will be gentle, and our hearts in tune with the Spirit of reconciliation. Thank you to all who are advocates for reconciliation in your area.

The journey in Gippsland is ongoing, and the Rev'd Kathy Dalton and the Rev'd Phyllis Andy are both sources of inspiration to us all. One of the issues which must be addressed has to do with the continued support and equipping for Aboriginal ministry with a view to growing our ministry in this way. The development of a Reconciliation Action Plan for the Diocese may be a good start for this next phase. Some parishes and schools are working alongside Indigenous communities and people in various parts of Gippsland with imagination and deep commitment.

There are scholarships, yarning circles, mission enterprises and Anglicare parish partnership programs. This year the ABM resources for churches to use in the week of prayer for Reconciliation, 27 May to 3 June have been written by the Reverend Glenn Loughrey. Glenn is a Wiradjuri man and a priest in Melbourne. The theme he has used is exile. Glenn tells of being with his father. He says: "I remember my father saying, as we wandered behind a mob of sheep, 'Walk your land, and your land will tell you its story'."

The refugee crisis

The experience of exile is an overwhelming reality for close to 60 million people who are now displaced as a result of war, persecution, and ongoing fighting in so many parts of the world. People of so many different cultures, races and religions who can no longer "walk their land" are stranded in between the place they cannot return to and a place they cannot enter. Many are in detention centres.

One of the dangers for those of us who know the biblical stories of exile and return is that familiarity with the biblical texts can lead us to hear only those parts which speak of freedom and rescue and triumph; stories in which it's all too easy to skip over the deep pain of grief and loss and the cry of despair which we read of in the scriptures. It's impossible to skip over the stories of grief and loss and despair which we have seen almost daily in relation to people in offshore detention.

Many Christians find it impossible to reconcile the teaching of scripture with the practice of incarceration which has been the Australian response to many

"...It's impossible to skip over the stories of grief and loss and despair which we have seen almost daily in relation to people in offshore detention..."



Bp Kay welcoming new members of Synod

asylum seekers who seeking refuge here. Earlier this year, in response to people, including children, brought to Australia for medical or other reasons being threatened with return to Nauru, the Dean of St John's Cathedral in Brisbane publicly offered Sanctuary to a group of refugees being faced with a return to detention. The growth of the Sanctuary movement has been one way for Australian Christians to say clearly and publicly that there must be a better way to treat people fleeing places of violence and oppression than to incarcerate them for long periods in detention centres.

The Sanctuary movement has also challenged the growing fear of the stranger in our midst. Sanctuary was enshrined in law in Britain and Europe well into the 17th century. The Church and her clergy were seen as carers and guardians of people who were most vulnerable in the face of wars, uprising and local hostilities. Clearly this is no longer so; however, for more than 100 churches, five cathedrals and two religious orders around the country, the offer of Sanctuary has become one way to signal willingness to engage in civil disobedience in the face of what many believe is policy that is out of step with biblical teaching. The

media images of those who identify with this movement isn't a group of chanting, marching students linking arms and singing hymns, but grandmothers, nuns, clergy, and ordinary folk both young and old from many Christian denominations and those on the fringes of faith who just maybe are seeing something that looks a bit like a Jesus movement.

Perhaps this is a symbolic gesture, but we know that symbolic action points to deeper reality. The Archdeacons and I wrote to the Prime Minister in February asking that children being held in detention be released. I agree with Bishop Phillip Huggins, the chair of the Anglican Church of Australia Working Group on Refugees, when he said, "No reasonable

Australian wants to encourage people smugglers in any way, but it is simply morally unacceptable to leave children to languish in appalling conditions in off-shore detention centres." I know that many of you have also written to members of parliament, joined refugee support groups and are making your voice heard. Care for the most vulnerable is not an optional extra for followers of Jesus, and the gospel reminds us again and again that this means re-examining just who we think is our neighbour, the ancient laws of hospitality and the biblical witness.

Diocesan Life

Over the past twelve months people from all around the Diocese and beyond have been asking the same question. "How do you like Gippsland?" The answer is easy. It's wonderful; and both Jeri and I love being here. It has been good to travel to almost every parish (I think Orbost and Omeo are the last on the list and they're coming up very soon.) One of the differences in being in a rural and regional diocese is the amount of time spent travelling between different parishes and centres. Parishes, schools, the Abbey, local communities, places of chaplaincy are all distinctive. Each has its own story. Each has hopes and dreams. Last year I said that I would be taking time to listen to the story of your place, parishes, chaplaincies, communities, schools. Hearing some of your stories has been a witness to many incredible journeys undertaken in faith and hope since before the establishment of the Diocese in 1902.

I know that a few feel alone and forgotten. This has certainly been the case in the parish of Westernport. An agreement with the Uniting Church in Australia has been in place in that part of the Diocese for some years. Despite a three year search, a new Minister was not able to be found. It is just two weeks since the Rev'd Colin Oakley was inducted into the parish. I thought the roof of St John's Lang Lang might actually lift as we sang "Be thou my vision". Colin, welcome to the Diocese and to your first Gippsland Synod. Welcome also to Andrea.

Late last year we welcomed the Rev'd Chris McAleer and his wife Karen who moved back to Victoria from South Australia after some years. Chris and Karen are adjusting to the challenges of ministry in one of the newer housing areas in Pakenham at Cardinia Waters. This western fringe of the Diocese is one place in which creative ideas, meeting people and being present have to be considered in a new context.

We have also welcomed the Rev'd (now Dr) Dean Spalding and Kate along with their children Meredyth, Emily and Elisabeth to the parish of Drouin. Originally from Melbourne, Dean has been in Perth for the last few years.

One of the mission points for Drouin is the new housing growth which is taking place to the west and the south especially. This year marks more than 135 years of people gathering in Drouin for worship. In 2016 Drouin is growing at such a rate that there aren't enough Early Childhood Learning places available to meet demand. Attending to this need and responding with a program focused on families with young children is an obvious way to reach out to the people in that district.

On the other hand, it isn't all new directions and clear mission goals. It isn't all harmonious relationships and vibrant worshiping communities. In some places people have been a bit overwhelmed by where things have come to. One churchwarden after a difficult period sadly told me, "We've forgotten who we are".

The priest is not the only leader in the parish, but their place and role is distinctive. They are set apart precisely in order to gather people together, to gather the community around the Word and the Sacrament. At every Induction in this Diocese, the priest is presented with a number of tools, if you like, for their ministry in that place, and they are authorised by the Bishop for that particular ministry. Bible, water, prayer book, stole, oil, cup and plate for bread and wine, and alongside those a parish roll and map. Shared responsibility; lay and ordained; the body of Christ.

In every church, big, small, struggling or flourishing there is a story of faith and faithfulness which we need to hear and

honour even while we struggle with how the next chapter of the story might read in 20 years' time. Big may be beautiful; however in some small communities with declining work opportunities and populations, big isn't an option. Part of the challenge of ministry and mission we have as a Diocese is to continue to discern what kind of ministry we can bring to those parts of Gippsland, and how we can enable ministry touchstones that are sacramental, scripturally nourishing and sensitive to the ebb and flow of life in smaller community contexts.

Going on the journey

In a book reflecting on Rowan Williams' 10 year incumbency as the Archbishop of Canterbury, called *Rowan Williams – His Legacy*, the author says that one of the primary models of evangelism Rowan Williams has offered the church, one that fits with Fresh Expressions of church, is that of journeying in conversation.

The author tells of a gathering of bishops during which the person who was leading one of their sessions asked them to say what answer they would give to someone who came up to them in the street and said, "My bus leaves in two minutes. Tell me about the Resurrection in the time we've got left". After a while of listening to the bishops having a go at what they would say the leader said that the answer seemed to be that if the person really wanted to hear about the Resurrection they should be prepared to miss their bus.¹

Rowan offered a better solution. "I think I'd have asked the man where he was going, then say that I'd accompany him on the journey." The Diocesan Strategic Direction 2013-2017, outlined in the vision *Jesus Christ Here and Now for Gippsland* speaks of growing in Christ into the fullness of human life and inviting others to go with us on the journey.

Last year I said that it was my hope that as 2017 approaches we will be able to listen well, to celebrate with each other, to let go of what isn't working and to prayerfully attend to the prompting of the Holy Spirit for our future directions.

I continue to believe that we do all want to be part of vital and growing communities of hope, healing and transformation. This matter will be one for discussion at the Clergy Conference in June. Our missionary call means learning afresh how and where to enter the culture we are trying to reach in the love of Jesus.

Beyond Belief

In his recent book *Beyond Belief*, Australian social researcher Hugh McKay writes of the quest for meaning in Australia, a place which he describes as having "lost its appetite for conventional religion." Through a series of interviews, he explores the attitudes of those who used to go to church, or are wondering about God, or have no trouble with God, just with things like creeds, and doctrine that doesn't make sense.

What comes to light through the various interviews is not that people aren't interested in God, but rather that for many people the description of themselves as SBNR – that's 'Spiritual But Not Religious' – is where they are at. Perhaps that will be no surprise to those of you who have been reading about Australian spirituality over the years. But for others this may be news. I think it's good news. People are interested in spirituality and they are interested in journeying with those who seek to live in a way that shows something real and embodied that points to who we believe in and why.

More than 90% of non-church goers say they like the idea of local churches being present in their neighbourhood. The commitment of churches and church goers to the care of the vulnerable, activities for children, a place for people who are on the edge of community, meditation groups are among the things that our neighbours see. They make sense of who and what Christians are. A 2009 survey of social attitudes in Australia found that 67% of adults in Australia do believe in God or a 'higher power'.² Many people, though, aren't clear about what that means for them exactly. There is a real and expressed desire for the confidence expressed by believers, and the peace of mind they associate with the best examples of women and men of faith.

The Fresh Expression of church was obvious to all who were present at the official opening and dedication of 123 on 5 May. It was a wonderful experience of a new way of being church present in the community. This venture has wide community support in Sale, as well as providing a place for

young people especially to engage with questions of meaning and purpose and their place in the world.

A number of parishes have begun café church services, inviting people to gather quite informally over a cup of coffee in a local coffee shop. In Fulham prison the Anglicare-parish partnership program offers prisoners a place in which they can talk about what's important in life as they learn good parenting skills and then practise them by participating in a play group with their children at arranged visits.

In many parishes the *mainly music* program is what parents think of when they identify with 'their' church. For others it's the Abbey programs inviting them to explore the relationship between creation, Creator and spirituality. These programs engage many who are worried they will get it wrong in church and yet want to learn how to put words to longings, how to meditate, how to enter into the possibility that God is more than they had considered.

At the Monday night community dinner held in St George's Wonthaggi I sat next to a woman and her daughter. It was clear that life wasn't completely straightforward for either of them. While we were eating and talking her phone rang. She told the person on the other end she would call them back later because she was "in church". And she was. Was it Eucharist? Well, no; but it was definitely the community invited in and gathered around food and friendship. It was hospitality.

A Creative Spirit festival, a men's shed, a book club, a knitting circle, and the pub are all moments of connection and conversation waiting to happen. All are places from which and in which God can and does grow church.

A sustained focus on planning for mission will take us more and more into such spaces. We will be seeing what God is doing as we are going on the journey.

1. *Rowan Williams – His Legacy*, Andrew Goddard 2013; Lion Books, Oxford p64
2. *Beyond Belief*, Hugh MacKay 2016 p147



At the Synod dinner: the Rev'd Sue Jacka displaying her refugee rations, after asking people to support Act for Peace by sponsoring her in the Refugee Ration Challenge

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Photo: Carers Australia (VIC 2008)

Terry Stroud with his mother Una in 2008

Terry Stroud mechanical fitter, carer and community worker – Warragul

Jan Down

Fitting and turning has been a vocation for Terry Stroud in more than one sense: he has fitted in with dramatically changed circumstances and turned himself to a completely new way of life twice over during his working years.

After completing a fitter's and turner's apprenticeship Terry worked at Yallourn SEC for nineteen and a half years. It was work he enjoyed and he saw as worthwhile, as it provided essential services to people.

However, Terry's life suddenly took a very different direction. His father, Dick, had a heart condition, and two weeks after he came out of hospital following surgery, Terry's mother Una had a severe stroke. Clearly Dick would not be able to care for his wife, and in fact he lived only another four years.

Eventually Una was in a wheel chair, paralysed on the right side, and unable to speak much, though she and Terry could communicate well, and her mental faculties were good. Wanting his mother to have the best quality of life possible – to be as active and involved in life as she could be – Terry left his job to become her full-time carer for the next seventeen and a half years.

He had bought a block of land at Ellinbank, just south of Warragul, intending to build a house there one day – something that never eventuated.

He would take his mother out to the block and they would watch the Hereford cattle, which they found soothing and calming.

Each morning followed the same pattern: Terry would give his mother a sponge bath, help her with getting dressed and taking medication – then they would be off down the street to their favourite coffee shop in Warragul. Terry would bring her a cappuccino in a mug, three-quarters full so that it didn't spill, and an Anzac biscuit. This morning routine was something they both enjoyed and Terry still misses. He and his mother were very close.

Una died in 2009.

"...Terry found his faith in God helped him to trust that it would be all right to take the time off he needed..."

On top of the grief of losing her, Terry then also lost his occupation again. He knew he would need time to recover. Terry found his faith in God helped him to trust that it would be all right to take the time off he needed. He attended church often then – sometimes at Warragul and other times out at Ellinbank. For Terry, the quiet time before the 8 o'clock service is meditation time. He says that at that stage in his life, it helped him to see the way forward, and he felt supported through the process.

Having to explain his new situation to Centrelink "wasn't a good experience" Terry says – in fact it was quite traumatic. "They didn't have a pathway back then" for carers needing to recover after losing the person they had cared for, and then to re-enter the work force and community life after so many years of living in a different world.

He was helped by Carers Australia, and then became an

ambassador with them for about five years. This included talking to politicians at round tables in Canberra and Melbourne, advocating for the needs of carers, which was work he found very satisfying.

Now again, Terry faced a big decision. He was finding it difficult to get work in his old trade; landing a "shut-down" every so often wasn't enough. At the same time, his role with Carers Australia had taken him in a new direction. And also, he explained, "I wanted to use the skills I had gained as a carer to benefit others". But it took some time to work out what to do next, and his faith again helped him find the way.

He decided to retrain, and has completed a double Diploma in Community Services and Case Management. So Terry has been fitting and turning himself towards a new field of work for a second time.

Currently, however, he is working in his old field, contracting with Lend Lease. Terry says "There's something about the work that draws me to it". He enjoys being a FIFO (fly in, fly out) worker, meeting people from many cultures who have travelled the world. (Earlier this year he had ten weeks at Port Hedland in WA.) He says it puts a lot of pressure on families, being apart so much, and the workers have to support each other. He likes the team environment of the oil and gas work. But he is aware that being a mechanical fitter is physical work, which is another reason for him to cross over into case management.

Terry has also had some casual welfare work with students doing Foundation Studies. These are young people with special needs who are returning to study. His preference at this stage for community service work would be to assist young people to have a better life and prospects for the future.

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.

June

10–13 National GFS Mid Term Conference Adelaide

18 9:00 am – 5:00 pm VCCEM Training Day at St. Peter's Anglican Church, Leongatha.
Cost: \$80 workers, \$40 concession or refresher. There is some pre-training book work that must be completed in order to do the training.
RSVP: The Rev'd Geoff Pittaway 0411 639 363 or Denise Martin 0438 681 451.
Morning / afternoon tea and lunch provided.
Cost includes workbook materials, ID badge, and a VCCEM Polo. Please advise any food restrictions.

20 World Refugee Day

25 1:30 pm East Gippsland GFS Gippsland 130th Regional celebration Afternoon Tea at Holy Trinity Stratford; RSVP: Carol 5174 8445

July

July discount days at the Abbey: 25% discount for bookings of two nights or more

1–2 Commencing 5:00 pm Friday – 5:00 pm Saturday Short Course: "The Sacred to the Secular in Art" – the transition from sacred to the secular in Italian Art 1300 – 1600 at The Abbey, Raymond Island
Presenter: June Treadwell. Inquiries: 5156 6580

3 2:30pm NAIDOC Church Service at St John's Church, Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust

3–10 NAIDOC Week activities at Morwell, including Family Fun Day, Banner Making and more – details: 5136 5100

August

13 12 noon The Abbey Feast, with Jeff Richardson, chef extraordinaire: four course meal with wine. Inquiries: 5156 6580



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