Reflections • Monday 23 September 2019 • By Archbishop Phillip Aspinall

Prayer for rain and those affected by the ongoing drought

Dear sisters and brothers,

The ongoing drought is currently affecting 65% of the land area of Queensland and now, sadly, we are witnessing devastating fires in some parts. Many are suffering the significant hardship and strain involved in enduring prolonged drought, let alone the trauma of bushfire.

Faith in Christ and drawing on collective resources to face present difficulties help enormously. Generous donations to the Archbishop's Emergency Relief Appeal have enabled some relief to be provided, distributed through clergy and lay leaders in parishes most affected. This fund has assisted drought-stricken families, as well those affected by the floods in North Queensland earlier in the year.

I express my deep appreciation and thanks to the many people and parishes who have contributed to the Archbishop's Emergency Relief Appeal. Since August 2018 when I first renewed calls for donations, approximately $144,301 has been generously given and $92,000 distributed. Donations have slowed in recent months and soon we will have distributed all the funds contributed.

I have responded to individual donors where possible, but in some cases have been unable to find enough identifying information to enable personal thanks. However, to all those who have donated, thank you.

Hopefully there will be some much-needed rain in drought affected areas before too long, which will do more than anything to relieve the suffering and stress that many people are enduring. Meanwhile please join with me in prayer for relief from these trying conditions and comfort and hope for people suffering its effects. You might find the following prayer suitable for personal and public use:

All things look to you, O Lord,
To give them their food in due season;
Look in mercy on your people,
and hear our prayer for those whose lives and possessions
are threatened or destroyed by drought, flood and fire.
In your mercy restore your creation and heal our land.
So guide and bless your people,
That we may enjoy the fruits of the earth
And give you thanks with grateful hearts,
Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

I also encourage you to make use of the resources produced for the ‘Season of Creation’. Each year, from 1 September (the Global Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation) to 4 October (St Francis of Assisi Day), many Anglicans use the Season of Creation to pray and celebrate, with special focus on living in harmony with creation, being good stewards and healing the Earth.
Churches and Christians worldwide are encouraged to participate through:

- Celebrating the goodness of God's gift of creation in worship, drawing on the Psalms and other scriptures to rejoice in the Creator's glory;
- Reflecting on our mistreatment of creation, repenting of poor decisions we have made, and committing to better practices and habits;
- Learning more about the wildlife and ecology of our communities;
- Teaching our communities about God's web of life, and conveying the truth that we can both provide for people and protect our planet;
- Practising nature conservation in our homes, schools, churchyards and community spaces; and
- Advocating for care of nature in our home communities and beyond.

Please also join with me in praying the Season of Creation 2019 prayer:

Creator of Life:
the Earth is full of your creatures,
and by Your wisdom you made them all.
At Your word, the Earth brought forth plants
yielding seed of every kind
and trees of every kind bearing fruit;
the waters teemed with swarms of living creatures of every kind,
and the world was filled with every kind of winged bird,
walking animal, and creatures that creep upon the ground.
Mountains, plains, rocks, and rivers shelter diverse communities,
and through the changing seasons
your Spirit renews cycles of life.
During this Season of Creation,
open our eyes to see the precious diversity that is all around us.
Enlighten our minds to appreciate the delicate balance
maintained by each creature.
Inspire us to conserve
the precious habitats that nurture this web of life.
In the name of the One who came
to proclaim good news to all creation,
Jesus Christ. Amen.

Yours in Christ,
The Most Reverend Dr Phillip Aspinall
Archbishop of Brisbane
UN International Day of Peace: call to prayer

We are living in dangerous and anxious times. The need for peace-makers is vivid.

Especially given the trends:

- The weapons are so destructive. The worst of them, nuclear weapons, are being “modernised” whilst more nations are seeking them, recognising the connection to power and resenting that the nuclear-weapon states refuse to disarm, notwithstanding the promises they have made under the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty; *
- The opportunity cost of militarism causes more of the poor to starve, robbing funds from health and welfare systems; *
- Meanwhile, in so many places there is unspeakable suffering caused by violence; *
- Meanwhile too, there is a rise in authoritarian regimes which crush dissent and fan various fears and resentments in their populations to consolidate power at the cost of social cohesion;
- At the same time, the climate-crisis evolves before our eyes. The regulatory regime to contain a rise in global temperatures is fragmented and lacking coherent political leadership.

In this context, is it any wonder that the young are anxious and ask us if they prepare at school for a future that will never arrive, because of global violence and climate change?

For their sakes and for the sake all who are vulnerable, including many species at risk of extinction, the National Council of Churches is asking people of faith to make UN International Day of Peace, 21 September, a special day of prayer and meditation for peace.

Churches across the nation are being asked to open their doors from early in the morning to facilitate prayer and meditation for peace.

Peace, in the Christian understanding, is both a divine gift and our task as we respond to Jesus’ call, in the Sermon on the Mount, for peace-makers. Peace, as gift and task, come together when we pray and meditate.

As we know too, “thoughts and prayers” are not enough. Peace-making requires practical service, advocacy and research. Peace-making means making this the era of dialogue rather than that of violent confrontation.

UN International Day of Peace, 21 September, gives an opportunity to contribute and to renew our hope together.

ABC Journalist, Sophie McNeill, will present the 8th Brisbane Peace Lecture at St John’s Cathedral on Saturday 21 September between 6pm and 8pm. Sophie McNeill is a reporter with the ABC’s investigative program Four Corners and is a former Middle East Correspondent for the ABC. This free event is hosted by St John’s Cathedral and the United Nations Association of Australia. Find out more on Facebook.

Bishop Huggins’ media release can be downloaded.
Gold Coast students experience rural life in Western Queensland

On Monday 2 September, in Week 8, approximately 40 Coomera Anglican College students from Year 9 set out on an eight-hour journey to a small town named Mitchell in Western Queensland, as part of service week.

The remaining 40 Year 9 students went to the town of Charleville or completed local community service.

The group that embarked on a journey to Mitchell stayed at the local sporting complex. We helped out at the small local schools in the town – Mitchell State School, with approximately 120 students and St Patrick's School, with 31 students. Here, we not only spent time with the kids, we also helped fix up their schools by painting music rooms and archways. The kids were so happy to see us and we all felt like part of one close community. To conclude our time with them, two barbeques were held – one by the community at Saint Patrick’s School and the other held by CAC at the sporting complex.

Some of us went to a museum in Mitchell, where students made repairs to exhibits and washed and cleaned old cars to improve the museum.

While we were out at Mitchell, we received the opportunity to go on a tour of Mitchell and learn about the history of the town. We visited a local farm with the students of Mungallala State School, over 600 km from Brisbane. This school only had five students enrolled in total from Prep to Year 6. We learned about the Mungallala State School students’ lives and saw how their farming lifestyles differ from our city lives. We saw how a cattle farm operated and all the work that went into raising cattle.
Year 9 students Lily and Victoria with a very special Doris Gibbs (wife of the late Ivan Gibbs, who was one of the founders of Coomera Anglican College) visiting Arcare aged care centre as part of the community service engagement during Service Week 2019

The trip to the West was extremely rewarding. Not only was it refreshing to spend a week away from technology and just be in the presence of both old and new friends, it was also invigorating to experience another lifestyle. The trip made us feel grateful for the learning resources we have at the college and it felt good to help out those in need and bring smiles to their faces.

It gave us a new appreciation for the simpler things in life and we have all come back with a better mindset, ready to continue to make a difference in our communities through serving others.

The initiative was part of Coomera Anglican College’s annual Service Week.
People of faith gather with striking students, workers and business owners

Members of The Anglican Church Southern Queensland joined 30,000 student strikers and other community members in Queen's Park for a global day of action rally and march on Friday, three days before the UN's Climate Action Summit in New York.

The Brisbane rally was one of several around the nation, with a total of 300,000 people reportedly gathering across the country in one of the largest protest events in Australia’s history.

Over 2,500 businesses across the country took part, either shutting or allowing employees to attend the rallies.

It is wonderful to see all sectors of our diverse community, including students, workers, business owners and people of faith coming together to demand:

- No new coal, oil and gas projects, including the Adani mine
- 100% renewable energy generation and exports by 2030
- A just transition and job creation for all fossil-fuel workers and communities.

The global day of action was led by Swedish 16-year-old Greta Thunberg, whose initial strike outside Sweden’s parliament in August last year sparked a global movement, and her nomination for a Nobel Peace Prize.

In response to the large numbers of people who gathered in Australia on Friday for the global day of action, Greta took to Twitter saying, “Australia is setting the standard!”
A number of Anglican school students joined in the rally and march, many with parents and family members who came to support and stand in solidarity with them.

Siblings Hannah and Thomas Greaves were among the students who participated, clearly articulating why they attended and the urgency of the situation:

Hannah Greaves said, “It is necessary for students to strike because it is our future that is being ruined by climate change.”

Thomas Greaves said, “If some students protest, then it will help spread the message of how important climate justice is.”

Prior to the rally and march, clergy and lay people from across our Diocese attended a Climate Justice Prayer Event hosted by Wesley Mission, our Doing Justice team, Queensland Churches Together and other Christian organisations.

The event allowed people from various churches to gather, pray and reflect before joining other concerned locals in Queen's Park for the Global Climate Strike event.

The speakers and prayers at the Climate Justice Prayer Event led us in a lament. We acknowledged that we have allowed the land to be degraded, the seas to be polluted and the atmosphere altered.

Those who spoke and prayed reminded us that we have the capacity to address this crisis of our own making.

They also reflected on the need for the church to be the voice of those on the margins, including the people of the Torres Strait and the Pacific, who are already being affected by Climate Change.
We resolved to support our farmers who are facing unprecedented drought, and to advocate for a just transition for communities and workers who will be affected by the changes that will occur as we deal with the climate emergency.

We also thought about how the spirituality of kinship that inspired St Francis of Assisi to call the Earth ‘Mother’, and other creatures ‘sisters and brothers’, is something that the Christian tradition can offer the world at this time.

Some Christians are asking why the church is supporting the student strikers, and this is understandable if they are unaware of the international role of churches historically in peaceful protests and civil disobedience.

These include priests and pastors who campaigned for African-American Civil Rights; churches who hid Jews in wartime Europe; and, Australian Christians who protested and engaged in civil disobedience in the 1980s and 90s to protect East Timorese people.

There are even Biblical examples of civil disobedience, including the Hebrew midwives in Exodus who disobeyed Pharaoh's edict to kill all male babies, instead protecting them. In Acts, John and Peter were arrested for disobeying the Sanhedrin by teaching people in Jesus’ name.

The Anglican Communion’s Fifth Mark of Mission is, ‘To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth’.

Those taking part in the prayer event and Global Climate Strike events were seeking to honour this integral part of the church's mission.

Features • Monday 23 September 2019 • By Dr Stephen Harrison

Church growth – what do we really know?

What do we know about church growth?

Is the church growing?

Where is there particular growth?

What do we know about why some churches grow and some decline?

Are there factors likely to be present in growing churches and declining churches?

What strategies appear to make no difference at all?

These were some of the questions the Church Growth Research Programme, which ran between 2011-2013 in the UK sought to address.

Their findings titled ‘From Anecdote to Evidence’, discovered that while there was ‘no single recipe for church growth’ there are a number of ‘ingredients’ which are linked to growth in parish churches and can be applied to any setting. These are:
• Having a clear mission and purpose
• Being ready to self reflect and learn continually
• Being willing to change and adapt
• Assigning roles to lay people as well as ordained clergy
• Actively engaging children and teenagers
• Actively engaging with those who might not go to church/are outside the existing community
• Good welcoming and follow up for visitors
• Committed to nurturing new and existing Christians
• Vision

Importantly, the research found that theological tradition appears to make no significant difference to church growth or decline. Neither does the gender, ethnicity or marital status of the leader.

If you want to find out more about these factors and how they relate to church growth, you could read the report directly or go to the From Evidence to Action website. Evidence to Action provides a toolkit for your church to think about each of the factors and to act in order to develop them. It has worksheets, leaders guides, case studies, resources and a summary of the research findings for each of the factors.

In coming months, this blog will focus on individual factors and provide some links to resources that might be useful for growing your church.

First published on the PMC faithful + effective website, created to encourage and equip church leaders for faithful and effective ministry.

News • Thursday 19 September 2019 • By Rebecca Crockett

Community thanks 'Helicopter Heroes'

Under the grateful gaze of around 200 students and community members, helicopter heroes from the Peregian firefight flew into St Andrew's this morning allowing our community the chance to personally meet the heroic pilots, and give thanks for their efforts.

Upon landing at the College in the 214B Bell waterbomber, the most powerful of the three helicopters used during last week's fire event, and after the noise and bluster from the huge rotor blades stopped, the pilots jumped out and were welcomed with smiles and cards, handshakes and hugs.

Among the pilots at the event were David Williamson and Fergus Frater who were tasked to the Peregian firefight last week and took time to mingle in the crowd to answer all sorts of questions about the fire, the helicopters, themselves and flying in general.

Students and members of the public also had the chance to sit in the helicopter crew area and cockpit to ‘drive’ the aircraft.

Mr Williamson has over 50 years' flying experience and Mr Frater has been flying for over 30 years.
St Andrew's Anglican College Principal Chris Ivey thanks pilot David Williamson for his service during the recent Pereigian fires

There were three helicopters used in the fires last week – two with a water tank and a hose to suck up fresh water (the 214B Bell helicopter and Bell 204, which are both American aircraft) and one with a bucket (the AS 365 Dauphine, a French aircraft).

The helicopter that landed this morning was the largest of the three due to its 3000 litre water tank, which takes 35 seconds to fill thanks to specialised internal pumps (some people may have seen it around the Pereigian Springs Golf Course taking water from the lakes).

Mr Williamson said he was fighting fires in Bundaberg when he got the call to come down to Pereigian Springs in the 214B helicopter.

The pilots work for McDermott Aviation, a family owned Cooroy-based company tasked to assist Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to fight fires across the state and in other parts of the country. McDermott Aviation staff member Rod Miller said the company is the largest privately-owned aviation company in Australia and was happy to come to the event today.

After assimilating the noise of the chopper with a fire it’s a “positive experience for people to interact with the chopper to see what they do and how they work.”

In all, around 12 staff from McDermott Aviation visited this morning with pilots, support staff and Managing Director and Founder of McDermott Aviation John McDermott also attending.

Along with a fleet of specialist firefighting and rescue helicopters, McDermott Aviation also has fixed wing aircraft which works in 14 countries around the world in 23 locations for private charter and also supports emergency services, including organ transport, medivac and rescue.

While the recent fire which threatened the Pereigian Springs area was a terrible event, the wonderful turnout today certainly showed that community spirit is alive and well on the Sunshine Coast.
Loving our Muslim neighbours

In 2017 whilst as Dean of Bendigo my wife, Frances, was diagnosed with breast cancer. I will always remember how lovingly supported she was by Muslim members of the Bendigo community who attended medical appointments with her, cooked nourishing meals for her, and decorated her bald head with henna following chemo treatment.

Whilst in Bendigo at the Cathedral we had regular breakfast and lunches between members of the congregation and members of the Islamic community. We were then invited back to Iftar dinners, and when the Cathedral was reopened it was a pleasure to have members of the Islamic community there with us.

During the early hours of Wednesday morning last week, the walls of Holland Park Mosque on Brisbane's southside were vandalised with swastikas, ‘SS’, ‘remove kebab’ and ‘St Tarrant’ in reference to the Christchurch mosque shooter who killed 51 people in two terrorist attacks in March.

It is no coincidence that this cowardly and racist act of vandalism was carried out on the anniversary of September 11, with mosque leaders reporting that verbal abuse from passers-by and other incidents spiked on such significant days.

The defacement of the Holland Park Mosque was an act of desecration of a sacred space where families come together faithfully every week to worship, just as our parishioners come together to worship every week. An attack on a mosque in this way is just as bad as an attack on a church.
Our ability to come together every Sunday to worship is a right that we share with people of other faiths, including Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and people of other faiths.

When a mosque is vandalised or Muslim worshippers verbally abused, I often wonder whether we, as Christians, take for granted our own right to worship in peace and safety. Muslims are often easily recognisable by their hijabs or other attire, leaving peacemaking women and men who practise Islam vulnerable to bullies motivated by irrational fear.

We want to live in a country that allows us to worship in freedom, peace and safety without fear. We want to live in a country where we can wear a cross on a chain, read the Bible openly, converse in public about Jesus, and worship on Sundays with our congregations.

As people of faith we have a special and sacred responsibility to uphold the rights of others to practise their faith. So, when I found out about the vandalism of the Holland Park Mosque, I immediately reached out to Imam Uzair Akbar, who supported my Holy Week ‘walk and talk’ pilgrimage, with a message of solidarity and sorrow.

A group of Cathedral Precinct clergy and staff also visited the mosque on Friday with a collection of money to assist the mosque with the installation of security cameras. I was unable to go with the group, so with my blessing they went. Upon arrival, they were warmly greeted by mosque worshippers who had just finished their Jumu’ah prayers. They then met with senior mosque leaders and shared lunch and conversation.

Imam Uzair spoke about how the community had rallied around them, including two twenty-something women, who live close by and whom they had never met, who voluntarily scrubbed off the vile graffiti. Imam Uzair also shared that his congregation feels safest when people from the broader community visit the mosque and befriend their Muslim neighbours.

This is what ‘loving your neighbour’ looks like.

There are many ways that we can similarly safeguard the rights of our Muslim brothers and sisters to practise their faith. We can bring food and water to the mosque when they break their fast (Iftar) during Ramadan. We can learn about their faith by talking to a neighbour or worker who is a Muslim. And, we can reach out to them when they are in need, as we reached out to the Holland Park Mosque community last week.

Most significantly, we can politely and firmly stand up for our Muslim brothers and sisters in conversations when people express prejudice. Such prejudice can be subtle or it can be blatant. Either way, it is unacceptable for us as Christians to let it go.

Following the Sri Lanka Easter bombings in April, a group of Muslims from Brisbane’s southside phoned all the local churches, and then delivered flowers and a letter of condolence and support, signed by many mosque congregation members. Sunnybank Anglican Parish described the gesture as “an amazing gift”.

There is much we can learn from one another and there is much we can do to support one another in times of need. Through simple actions we learn and grow; not only learning about people who also practise faith, but learning about ourselves as Christians.
The Gang of One

Robert Harris published five books of poetry before his death in 1993, aged 41, apparently either of influenza or a heart attack. When his body was eventually discovered, his friend and fellow-poet Barry Dickins wrote that “[he] had only known two things in his short life: poverty and poetry”. Harris' poetry has been included in the massive *Australian Poetry Since 1788* and Les Murray's *Anthology of Australian Religious Poetry*. Nevertheless, *The Gang of One* is the first ‘select’ publication of his work, thereby making it available to those who, like myself, were utterly unaware of it.

Philip Mead's Introduction to this ‘selected’ collection provides a biographical sketch, including a moving and symbolic account of his reception into the Anglican Church, taken from Harris' own ‘Autobiographical Notes’. Harris' mother died when he was six years old, and ‘Six Years Old’ describes something of its impact: “My work on the earth was to stare it down and say nothing”. Several of his other poems reference her as well. Yet his lyricism shines through:

“On the filthiest square in his city
yes, there, is the seashell below,
and overhead
gold. Gold & cobalt“ ('The Convert').

Harris' depth, insight, skill, and productivity leave me in awe. The selections included here from his first book *Localities* (1973) show remarkable poise and proficiency for one so young. Throughout his career, he showed a remarkable power to ambush with words, images, ideas, and catchy titles, such as *Memoir of Cherry Bomb & the Stomach Pump; A Reader of Poetry Comes to a Tea Warehouse; Isaiah by Kerosene Lantern Light; From a Seat in Joe's Seafoods, A Horse on the Bus...* He can conjure a scene in a few words ('Cane Country'), and often ends with an ambush.

While he shows a depth and a learning from the proverbial school of hard knocks, he also displays a wide-ranging academic learning. This is particularly evident in the poems in *Jane, Interlinear* (based on the short politically fraught life of Lady Jane Grey, queen of England for nine days until her execution in 1553), ‘Little Iliad’, and (from his Royal Australian Navy years), ‘Seven Songs for [HMAS] Sydney’. He is the only poet I have ever read who managed to weave a Hebrew phrase from Genesis 1.2 appropriately and surprisingly naturally into his text ('The Transportees' Dormitory '); presumably (judging by the note on p.216 re Lady Jane Grey) relying on The Hebrew-Greek-English Bible.

His spiritual acumen and poetic proficiency persuaded me to give him the benefit of the doubt about what I initially thought was a misprint (“alter” for “altar”) in ‘Reading the Hymn Book; if “alter” is indeed correct, Harris is making a stunningly profound theological statement (with which I wholeheartedly concur).

Such a rich collection! I imagine I will be drawn back to it again and again for its breadth, its depth, its insight and energy. I have been drawn in by the power of Harris' writing in a way I struggle articulate.

I register two minor matters. First, p.121 includes a quote from Rudolf Bultmann, which is wrongly credited on p.217 to “Richard” Bultmann; this can be corrected in later printings.
Second, the collection's title *The Gang of One* is perhaps the title of one of Harris' own poems, but if so it has not been included in this selection – which is somewhat puzzling. If it is not a Harris title, where did it come from, why was it chosen, and why has it not been duly acknowledged?

Thank you, Judith Beveridge, Philip Mead, and Grand Parade Poets. Australian poetic enterprise and creativity will be all the richer for this publication.

**Reading the Hymn Book** (pp.188-189)

...my social decision is to drive this morning,
volutarily, parking, yes, in clothes good enough,
making time for a coffee because it will bore me,
the early is done in an hour, The Second Order,
if I can
forego the Reformation and Samuel Marsden
for the suburbs where houses cross their fingers with horseshoes
nailed for luck onto bargeboard. We will see
who is clearly illiberal soon enough, so I steer
clear of fellowship, fellow vets. To call this
absolutes too is a démarche, as it is to cite
the great poetry. And a melody from the thirteenth century
like a sea shanty sung by a workmate, seas and
the sun's long fulvour in my eyes. I love it when
I can hear them, their songs were better than
Petrarch in Provence; Heave Away, Santa Anna.

Then the limitation to central, musical range
because we are here, after all, not there.
Time only divides upon the time we turn
and reassembles here where stone may float,
or so the artist-glaziers must have thought
composing their colours with fearless primaries,
till earth and design were in time and in division,
where a man will wear his defects,
a woman a plain face all her life.

I file forward in reverie
often reading the placement of their scenes. You'll leave
with Lazarus to catch your eye hint hint.
And it sweeps through me like a breeze at the alter rail
which is history I know and take my turn,
where the priest goes back and forth on tessellations,
a blue and white pattern the kneelers gaze above,
secular for underfoot, the stars.


First female Māori bishop

Waitohiariki (Wai) Quayle was ordained and installed as Bishop of Upoko o Te Ika (the Maori Anglican Church in the lower North Island) during a day of joy and celebration in Masterton, just north of Wellington, in Aotearoa New Zealand recently.

She also became the first Aotearoa New Zealand-born woman to be elected bishop in the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

More than 1000 supporters turned out to the pōwhiri (welcome ceremony) and ordination service at Anglican School Rathkeale College, where six marquees were ready to welcome the crowd.

Cheers rang out several times during the ordination service, as an underlying sense of excitement and anticipation spontaneously broke out into joyous applause.

Bishop of Polynesia Archbishop Fereimi Cama said that Bishop Waitohiariki's ordination was groundbreaking for the Anglican Church and a special day for Tikanga Māori.

“We are overjoyed at this opportunity to celebrate the first Māori woman ordained bishop,” Bishop Cama said.

“This is a great achievement for Tikanga Māori and a breakthrough for the whole church.”

For Bishop Waitohiariki, the highlight of the day was seeing the body of Christ gathered together as one family with everyone playing their part.
“I don't believe in dividing people, in saying you are this or that. We have to be a lot more kind to one another – all of us – all the time,” Bishop Waitohiariki said.

“That's not just something that we come to hear about at church on Sunday, or in the Bible stories and what Jesus said. Kindness has got to be who we are – 24/7.”
They were supported by Assistant Bishop of Adelaide Denise Ferguson, the first New Zealand born female bishop, and the former Archdeacon of Moreton in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland.

Bishop Waitohiariki intentionally raised the voices of women and youth in the service, putting women forward to lead each of the readings, songs and prayers, as well as The Rev'd Teri-Rori Kirkwood, a female priest from Upoko o Te Ika, who presided at the Eucharist.

Bishop Waitohiariki’s behind-the-scenes encouragement also shone through in the many children and youth who served on her special day as acolytes, readers and cantors, and provided hospitality and logistics for the hakari (ceremonial feast).

Dr Doris Kaua from Te Awa Kairangi Roopu believes there’s no mystery as to why so many responded to Bishop Waitohiariki’s call to take part,

“Waitohiariki is a very empowering leader. When she speaks with you she makes you feel important – she empowers young people, women, men – everybody,” Dr Kaua said.

Young people powered much of the day’s events in song, beginning with kapa haka (group dance) from Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Wairarapa following the opening karanga (summons).

Hukarere College arrived en masse to support the new bishop in song – which they did with power and grace at the pōwhiri, the service and at times in between, singing alongside a cohort of boys from Te Aute College, while Rathkeale College choir provided the first waiata (song) to open the service.

Amidst the joy and celebration, Dr Jenny Te Paa Daniel sounded a note of caution, calling on the church to make sure Bishop Waitohiariki’s historic first does not become a long-time standalone.

“This Church is not to place an intolerable burden of expectation upon the strong and capable shoulders of one woman, and nor is it to become inappropriately self-congratulatory,” Dr Daniel said.

“...rather it is now our collective responsibility to not only applaud and uplift our beautiful new bishop, but it is to work unceasingly to replicate such appointments from here on in.

“Waitohiariki needs and deserves our ongoing solidarity not just our momentary salute.”

A week or so ago Jenny Te Paa Daniel wrote to ask Bishop Waitohiariki how she was coping in the lead up to her ordination day, relating that “…you responded so very simply and eloquently when you said to me:

“I have this incredible calmness that I have carried since the Electoral college. I believe the Holy Spirit is surrounding and uplifting me on this journey. And I am so grateful for the positive people around me as well.”
Australia is so very fortunate to be able to recruit seasonal workers from Pacific Nations, who assist regional areas with labour shortages, enrich our communities with their vibrant cultures and bless our churches with their enthusiastic, prayerful, and often musical, presence.

While such visas do financially assist these seasonal migrant workers, the bottom line is that visas would not be granted unless it was in the Australian national interest.

Personally, I do not believe that we are an innately fearful nation. No fear of ‘the other’ is innate. My impression is that our fearful rejection of ‘the other’ is instigated by the press and motivated by political powers.

When we extend an invitation to people, including seasonal workers, to join us, we have both the responsibility and privilege to listen to their story. Sharing narratives is at the heart of Christian community and essential for our own sense of person and place.

As a locum priest at St Alban’s in Gatton, I have been fortunate to meet a small band of Solomon Islanders who work in the area. Some pick fruit, some work in nearby meat processing works, some on vegetable farms – all have wonderful stories to share.

Henry lives on a small island in the Malaita Province. His father was the first priest at the Holy Pentecost Church in his village, and now his cousin continues in the role. Henry’s mother lives in...
Honiara and it was while visiting her that he heard about the opportunity to come to Australia for seasonal work. Henry describes himself as “shy, but pro-active” and told me that he was overwhelmed by the kindness of all the Australians he has met.

Tony has almost finished his time in the Lockyer Valley. In just a few weeks, he will return to his home in the Isabel Province. However, he cannot return to the island where he was born and went to primary school. That island is now underwater – not metres deep, but enough water to mean that his entire village had to be moved to a higher, larger landmass. Tony says that his family sometimes go back to the island on special days. He says that it is still a disturbing reality that his home land is underwater. In conversation with Tony, he revealed that the church at his new home would value incense and candlesticks! Such is God’s providence that the closure of St John the Divine at Surat in the Western Region has meant that sacred vessels have been made available to more than one Pacific Island church. Earlier in the year, a cross and candlesticks were gifted to the Solomon Island congregation of St Peter's Church, Tatarabebe Village, in the Malaita Province where Henry comes from. Now Tony will take candlesticks back to his village in the Isabel Province.

Why is Tony's homeland underwater? Essentially, this is due to increased levels of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere which trap heat. This happens in response to the burning of fossils fuels like coal, oil and natural gas, the manufacture of cement, deforestation and wildfires. As the earth’s temperature rises, so does the sea temperature. We know from basic physics that when we warm water it expands in volume. If we then add to this increased water volume, the melting of sea ice and the glaciers at high altitudes, there is a slow but relentless increase in the volume of our oceans. The water must go somewhere, and it does. It flows onto the low-lying land masses that many island people call ‘home’.

This reality is not confined to the Solomon Islands. The Rev'd Dr Jione Havea was born in Tonga and writes about his experience of the loss of his home island from encroaching seas. Through his theological writings and drawing on the psalms of lament, Jione seeks to support his fellow home landers who can never call their island in Tonga ‘home’ again. When Jione periodically returns home, he faces the scattering of bones along the seashore as ancestors long dead have the indignity of their mortal remains unearthed by rising tides and scattered anonymously. They no longer have a place to rest. Tony explained to me that in his village in the Solomon Islands, this has so far not been a problem since the cemetery has always been on another island – one which has not yet flooded.

There is so much to learn about our world and each other. September is this Season of Creation. Start a conversation in your parish and amongst your friends about what climate change means for you and our neighbours.

**Reflections • Thursday 12 September 2019 • By The Rev'd Andrew Schmidt**

**Biases and bunkers**

In this reflection, I would like to introduce you to something called the ‘Dunning-Kruger effect’, in the hope that it might reduce something I have noticed in various debates.

Many of the debates that have occurred across the media – on radio and TV, in print, and of course on social media – and subsequently in our own everyday conversations, could be categorised as less than friendly. You might think about the way climate change denialists have been lampooned on social media, as have those who are campaigning to raise awareness of our impact on the earth. Possibly
you might think about the debate leading up to the same-sex marriage postal vote, and how many people on both sides behaved poorly. Within the context of the religious domain, I have heard people talk about how ‘others’ want to take away our freedoms, while these ‘others’ are also often vilified.

I suspect the tendency to very quickly retreat into our bunkers, and to start actively protecting ourselves by attacking ‘the opposition’ is driven, at least in part, by the way people feel so certain about their positions – such that if anyone disagrees, they must be fundamentally wrong.

Enter the work of Dunning and Kruger, who noted that in a given task people with less skill or knowledge would overestimate their competency, whereas those with a higher skill would more accurately assess their own knowledge. Thus, the ‘Dunning-Kruger effect’ is a type of cognitive bias in which people believe that they are smarter and more capable than they really are in a given area, and as such are unable to recognise their own incompetence.

In the climate change debate, which is driven by numerous factors, some scientific and some ideological, we can see this cognitive bias at work. Many of the climate scientists, particularly in the early years of awareness raising, acknowledged the limits of their knowledge. Their appropriately careful language inadvertently led those with less knowledge to identify what they saw as ‘gaps’ in the scientists’ research and this, together with their inability to recognise their lacking expertise, armed them with an unwarranted certainty.

A similar cognitive bias has been identified as one of the factors that led to the second invasion of Iraq, in which careful intelligence gathering led to wrong conclusions, in part because leaders did not have the capacity to unpack and understand the nuances.

I think this kind of cognitive bias is relevant for us and our own mindsets and conversations. Before we dehumanise or dismiss those who disagree with us, perhaps we would be well advised to explore how much we truly know about the topic at hand, as we meaningfully endeavour to consider the facts and implications, as well as see the other’s point of view, before we launch ourselves into a war.

**Sunday Devotions • Monday 23 September 2019 • By The Rev’d Moira Evers SMMS**

**Sunday Devotion: 29 September 2019, Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**Main Readings:** Jeremiah 32.1-3a, 6-15; Psalm 91.1-6,14-16; 1 Timothy 6.6-19 or 4.12–5:8; Luke 16.19-31 [Amos 6.1a, 4-7; Psalm 146]

**Supplementary Readings:** Psalm 96; Luke 20.19-26; Jeremiah 36.1-4, 14b-24, 32; Psalm 146; 1 Timothy 4

“Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony.” (Luke 16.25)

In 1990, media mogul Kerry Packer suffered a heart attack and was clinically dead for seven minutes. When asked of his experience, Packer is reported to have said, “Son, I've been to the other side...there's no one waiting for you, there's no one to judge you, so you can do what you bloody well like.” Those of us committed to the way of Christ would beg to differ!
There is nothing subtle about the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus; its message is quite clear – there is no place for greed in the community of Christ! In the naked poverty of his birth in a stable through to the naked poverty of his death on a cross, readers of the gospel of Luke are confronted with the fact that Jesus is not the triumphal Messiah that Israel had hoped for. He is the Messiah of the abandoned places, the hovels of the poor, the sad camps of the lepers, the filthy bed mats of the sick. He is the Messiah who had nowhere to lay his head, the Messiah who rode into Jerusalem, not on a black stallion heading a mighty army, but rather on the back of a humble donkey followed by a group of scruffy disciples.

This parable is an uncomfortable reminder to us that the pursuit of wealth, at the expense of the poor, may bring us some measure of comfort in life, will not in death, where rich and poor stand together before God's gaze as naked as on the day they were born. As St Paul said, “We brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it.”

News • Thursday 12 September 2019 • By Tim Reid, Lisa Sargeant

Open Space revitalises Synod

Reconciliation Action Plan Coordinator Chrissy Ellis and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIAC) Executive Member Aunty Rose Elu discussing Reconciliation and The Uluru Statement From the Heart in a packed-out Synod Open Space session.

While Synod 2019 has come and gone, many Synod participants continue to explore and share dialogue about issues of interest, such as climate change, support for rural and remote ministry, and new models of Christian community.

Thirteen action plans were included in the Open Space book of proceedings, which can be found on the Synod webpage. Many Synod members expressed interest in ongoing action planning. Each action plan has a convenor and email address listed so others who are interested can make contact and join in.
An online survey of participants taken a few weeks after Synod revealed the success of the Open Space program. 90 percent of survey respondents said that incorporating Open Space this year improved their Synod experience and engagement.

A number reported highlights such as the opportunity to have a say without judgement; enjoying the collaborative nature of the conversations; building each other up even if we do not agree; enthusiasm and passion for making a difference; tolerance of other’s points of view; learning from voices not typically heard; and, hearing stories that people may otherwise have missed.

84 percent of respondents said that Open Space had positive flow-on effects for the rest of Synod, with comments such as “People listened more and we worked better as a group”; “People were more actively engaged”; “It created an opening for connection and dialogue”; and “I felt more contented because I had contributed”.

Importantly, 98 percent of respondents reported that they were either ‘Fully Engaged’ or ‘Engaged’ in the debate on Synod motions.

95 percent of participants thought that Synod should continue to include a different way of meeting that encourages engagement and dialogue, with most saying this should occur every two to three years, and some saying every year.

The feedback from this survey is encouraging and includes helpful suggestions for improving future Synod planning. This includes suggestions on how to better set out business papers, improve venue logistics and enhance the interaction and participation of Synod members.

If you have any questions regarding the survey or how your Action Group can be supported, please contact Lisa Sargeant via The General Manager’s Office on 3835 2253.