In a radio broadcast from Suva on 22 March 1944, my grandfather Bishop WH Baddeley (the seventh Bishop of Melanesia) spoke of his time in the Solomon Islands during the Japanese occupation and of the challenges that lay ahead.

“Now the war has receded, is receding, from the Solomons: and most of my sphere of Mission activities is now free of the enemy. I hope that before many months have passed, I shall again be able to visit Rabaul and our stations on the South Coast of New Britain.”

“We have got to see this thing through. We’ve got to go on – not getting tired, not wearying of delays, difficulties, disappointments – until ‘this evil thing’ is completely overcome. We are fighting that the world may be a better, healthier, a dearer place where men and women, boys and girls may have the fullest opportunities to live full lives – with bodies that are healthy and strong, fed with good wholesome food, housed in happy, healthy surroundings, with adequate hospital and nursing facilities available for them in times of sickness: with minds that are clean and open and free, developed by education that is open to all, no matter his [sic] race or class: with freedom of opportunity to develop his [sic] spiritual life without let or hindrance…”

“[Before then] we have to rebuild villages, re-establish stations – schools, hospitals, dispensaries, training centres; we have to re-plant gardens, re-stock our sties, our byres, our chicken houses; we have to face a very changed situation – a new mental outlook brought by the war…There are difficult days ahead but we are all in this together, Britisher, Australian, American, Solomon Islander;
administrator, missionary, planter, trader – all of us will continue to be in this together – for the building up of a better world.”[1]

Last weekend I was in the Solomon Islands for the enthronement of the seventh Archbishop of Melanesia.

Archbishop Leonard Dawea was enthroned in an overflowing St Barnabas Cathedral to the sound of magnificent Melanesian harmonies and with dancing and speeches...lots of speeches.

The Solomon Islands are very different to the islands my grandfather left 72 years ago and while there is still work to be done with regards to “schools, hospitals, dispensaries and training centres”, there are also new challenges to be faced.

Climate change and rising sea levels are rapidly impacting the low-lying lands of the Solomon Islands, with crops failing and lands disappearing. Whole communities are being displaced from Islands that have been home for generations because rising sea levels make fresh water scarce and prevent traditional food crops from growing. In some places, like the island of Tauba in Lau Lagoon of the coast of Malaita the land has disappeared beneath the waves all together. I have old photos from my grandfather of Langa Langa lagoon that show far more Islands than exist today!

The Anglican Church of Melanesia is at the forefront of advocacy and action in the Solomon Islands with regards to climate change but for some communities it is already too late.
The advances of “the enemy” were eventually halted 70 years ago and the Solomon Island communities have rebuilt all that was destroyed during the Second World War. For Archbishop Leonard and the people of the Solomon Islands, and for people in communities all over the world, climate change poses a far more serious threat. If that threat is to be addressed, we need to remember that rallying call of Bishop Baddeley from all those years ago, “We’re all in this together... [and] all of us will continue to be in this together – for the building up of a better world.”

What we do does matter and as Anglicans all of us are called through the Five Marks of Mission, “To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.”

We must all consider what we will do for “the building up of a better world.”

[1] Broadcast by The Right Rev’d W.H. Baddeley, DSO, MC, Bishop of Melanesia at Suva, on 22.3.1944

News • Tuesday 8 October 2019 • By Michelle McDonald

Chance to win an iPad for you and your priest or chaplain*

To celebrate the one-year anniversary of anglican focus going online, we are giving away two iPads – one to a reader and one to the winning reader’s nominated priest or chaplain.

We are thrilled with the way in which our Diocesan community has embraced anglican focus since it launched in October last year, and to say thank you we are giving away a couple of iPads, so two people in our Diocesan community can read anglican focus on new devices.

Subscribe to the anglican focus e-news for your chance to win.

The winner will be drawn from the pool of anglican focus e-news subscribers at 4.00 pm on Friday 6 December 2019.

The winner will receive an Apple voucher valued at AUD $600 to redeem an iPad. The winner’s nominated parish priest or chaplain will also receive an Apple voucher valued at AUD $600 to redeem an iPad (the nominated parish priest or chaplain must be a parish priest or chaplain of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland).

If you are not already a subscriber to the anglican focus e-news, you can subscribe here.

If you already subscribe to the anglican focus e-news, you don’t have to do anything except remain a subscriber on Friday 6 December 2019 at 4.00 pm.

If you would like to help get word out about this competition in your parishes, ministries, or schools, there are a number of ways you can do this:

- share this story on your social media channels using the easy sharing functions below
- download and insert Pew Bulletin text
- download and insert e-Newsletter text
- post these Facebook infographics here and here
- post these Instagram infographics here and here
- use these widescreen and standard PowerPoint slides for your announcements.
Prayer Spaces – a journey worth taking

School students today often face an increasingly stressful journey during their education. Worryingly, Headspace reports of heightened anxiety, stress and depression among our youth, with 70% of youth rating their own mental health as only poor or fair. In addition, young people are leaving their faith and seeking new ways to find meaning and purpose in their lives.

Against this backdrop of wellbeing and spiritual challenges for youth, Anglican schools in Southern Queensland have embraced ‘Prayer Spaces’. While Prayer Spaces may not provide a panacea for all the problems young people face, they may provide a map to help students navigate their way through any troubling or turbulent times at school.

Prayer Spaces support students because they are so much more than a physical area. A ‘Prayer Space’ can be a place to meditate, to breathe, to journal or to relax. The term ‘space’ carries with it the metaphysical dimensions of thought, inquiry, reflection, contemplation and time. In the Prayer Spaces framework, ‘space’ can unite mind, body and spirit, as students are positioned in a safe context of quiet and calm, where they can consider the ‘big questions’ of life and faith. Students have access to the ‘space’ they require to connect with their own spirituality as they embark on their own unique journey of discovery.

There is currently a vision of ‘slow education’ emerging in Australia. Associate Professor Miriam Tanti, Acting Head of the School of Education in NSW and the ACT at the Australian Catholic University (2019,
Education Matters) explains that slow education allows for examination and reflection. It fosters creativity and allows for connecting to self, others and place. Slow education involves asking life’s bigger questions to seek clarity and insight. Prayer Spaces have a natural synergy with slow education, where learning flows naturally and according to each student’s own rhythm and pace.

In fact, Prayer Spaces are really like a pathway for students allowing them to wander through their ideas, beliefs, concepts and issues, connecting as needed with others on the way. It could be described as a ‘mini pilgrimage’, with students travelling from one prayer space to another, lingering, learning and listening to their hearts. For some students, this process soothes the soul. For others, it creates questions or demands reflection. Each student is free to have a unique encounter in their own time of solitude. This special journey, facilitated by Prayer Spaces, is completely invitational and often we do not know where the path shall lead.

Prayer Spaces, as we use them in Southern Queensland Anglican Schools, have been inspired by the wonderful folk of Prayer Spaces in Schools. The story of how Anglican schools have come to embrace Prayer Spaces really begins with the vision of The Rev’d Susan Crothers-Robertson, who opened our eyes and hearts to this idea in 2014, when she created the first known Prayer Space in Australia at St John’s Anglican College in Brisbane when she was the College’s Chaplain. The Rev’d Susan acknowledges the work of the Christian organisation, 24-7 Prayer as leading the way in the development of Prayer Spaces the UK, more than 10 years ago. Since The Rev’d Susan's first connection with Prayer Spaces, she has fostered a very close connection between our schools and the Director of Prayer Spaces in Schools in the UK, Phil Togwell. The Rev’d Susan continues to maintain her strong connections with the UK, in part through her administration of the Prayer Spaces in Schools Australia Facebook page. If you want to know anything about Prayer Spaces, The Rev’d Susan is currently working on her doctorate in this area. She is passionate, experienced, energetic and shares generously with everyone who asks for her support! Since discovering the world of Prayer Spaces, The Rev’d Susan has found herself extolling the virtues of Prayer Spaces at a number of conferences in Melbourne and Brisbane. Listening to The Rev’d Susan's passionate descriptions of the power and the potential of Prayer Spaces has inspired many of her peers to follow suit and introduce Prayer Spaces into their own schools.

Prayer Spaces are non-denominational and welcome all students of all or no faiths. It is this extraordinary inclusivity and ability to meet students exactly where they are in their own faith journey that makes Prayer Spaces so effective in Anglican schools. As Anglican educators embraced Prayer Spaces to provide their students with a spiritual experience, regardless of their own faiths or beliefs, they began to recognise the transformational power of a ‘Prayer Space’ experience. In a safe and non-threatening setting, students can ponder the big questions of life without feeling any expectations, pressure to perform or judgement. Students are exposed to a way of knowing that respect their own personal journeys, allowing for reflection and time to think. Students can journey through the ‘Prayer Spaces’ according to their own needs, interests and desires.

Inspired by the transformational nature of ‘Prayer Spaces’, many schools have adopted this practice and made it work for their own school. Mrs Ingrid McIlwarith, the Religious Education teacher for the Junior School at St Hilda’s School, began by developing wonderful Prayer Spaces in her classroom. Ingrid used her creative flair for design to create themed Prayer Spaces in her classroom. She would often have a group of students queuing at her door at break times, hoping to spend a little time praying, thinking or reflecting in her special Prayer Space. As Ingrid notes, “I find that a few girls really love to come in and chill and reflect.” For Ingrid's students, Prayer Spaces provide a place of emotional support, where students can pray and find spiritual support when they are in need. The Rev’d Nicki
Colledge, an experienced creator of Prayer Spaces, has been known to transform the Chapel at St Margaret's Girls’ School into a series of Prayer Spaces on many occasions, with both staff and students taking time out to write prayers for one another.

The Rev'd Susan Crothers-Robertson, our resident expert on all things to do with Prayer Spaces, has used the school Chapel, assembly space and the great outdoors to develop a series of Prayer Spaces over the years. Each location was unique, with each evoking a sense of tranquility and inviting students to embrace the peace and connect with their own spirituality. The Rev'd Gillian Moses, from St Aidan's Girls School in Brisbane, appreciates the way Prayer Spaces allow her students to experience contextual theology. The Rev'd Gillian and The Rev'd Susan both use Prayer Spaces to explore Reconciliation and have created some original ‘spaces' that were contextual to Brisbane. The Rev'd Gillian says that Prayer Spaces allows her students to explore the stories of engagement between Europeans and the Jagera and Turrbal people, whilst also drawing on Judeo-Christian traditions.

If you have not yet had the joy of developing Prayer Spaces in your school, rest assured that one does not need to be experienced or an expert to embark on the Prayer Spaces journey immediately. The website Prayer Spaces in Schools contains all the information required to prepare you to create Prayer Spaces for your schools’ community. If in doubt, we always recommend you look at the Top Ten Prayer Activities which we have used in schools and in St John's Anglican Cathedral. We suggest that you follow the structure of having a range of activities so that students are encouraged to send their prayers upwards to God (prayers about the Big Questions of Life), to send their prayers outwards to the world around us, and finally to send their prayers inwards to self.

One cannot create Prayer Spaces without developing a few favourites that always seem to resonate with a particular school's students and teachers. We love Thankful Play Dough, which encourages students to think about their lives and all the things for which they can give thanks. Cardboard Home is a powerful and profound experience for many and develops empathy and understanding as students reflect on the many people who have no home, and possibly no food or family.

Prayer Spaces can reflect current units of work, issues the students themselves feel strongly about or the social and emotional needs of a certain cohort of students. They provide experiential learning at its best and allow students to respond and reflect in a meaningful, relevant and timely way. In using Prayer Spaces, students can explore big issues such as peace, justice, conflict and nonviolence in a deep and profoundly personal way.

If you are interested in seeing your students develop their thinking, their compassion and their own awareness, incorporating Prayer Spaces into your school program may be just the tool you need. A Prayer Space provides students with such a unique opportunity to expand their view of the world because they provide a safe space for students to think, learn, reflect, consider and maybe gain a new perspective. Prayer Spaces allow students to step off the busy roller coaster ride that is school and pause, breathe and unite their mind, body and spirit.

Of course, if you have any questions about Prayer Spaces, the team in Queensland is always available for support and help. Remember, as theologian and philosopher Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote, “Faith is not clinging to a shrine but an endless pilgrimage of the heart.”

May the hearts of your students be blessed by your own Prayer Spaces.
An accidental advocate

Angela Fredericks is a young Biloela resident, mental health social worker and Parish Council member from the Rockhampton Diocese. Since March last year, she has been working alongside other Bilo community members to bring ‘Home to Bilo’ a young Tamil family, father Nades and mother Priya and their two young daughters, who have sought safety on our shores. They are currently detained in the Christmas Island Detention Centre, awaiting the outcome of their two-year-old daughter’s asylum claim.

I currently attend St Gabriel's Anglican Parish in the Callide Valley, where Biloela is located, and I sit on Parish Council. I was privileged to have been born and raised in a Christian household. I grew up attending Sunday School, attended an Anglo-Catholic high school, St Stephen's College, and boarded at St John's College at the University of Queensland.

Like many people, I have been through my own battles with trauma and mental health, and my faith is the rock that has kept, and continues to keep, me going. While I have never questioned God or my faith, I routinely battle with the behaviour and attitudes of some Christians. When I continue to see people who say that they serve God so easily turn their backs on those who need protection or care, it really does shatter my faith in humanity. I have to keep reminding myself that at the end of the day we are all human and that is exactly why Christ had to die for us.

I first met Priya, Nades and Kopika at the Biloela Hospital and as happens in small towns, once you meet someone you then see them everywhere. Most commonly I would bump into Priya and her toddler daughter Kopika, and then later baby Tharunicaa in her pram, on their afternoon strolls around the block. Nades and Priya are such beautiful, generous souls. Since coming to Biloela they
always helped those around them and were so grateful for friendship and support. Nades, always with a smile on his face, became part of the community as he volunteered and worked hard. He is always keen to roll up his sleeves and help his friends and neighbours. Priya worked as a dressmaker before coming to Australia, where she settled into her role as a loving mum. She takes such delight in watching her girls grow and learn.

Priya and Nades come from the Hindu faith; however, they formed a close relationship with a Catholic nun in Biloela through Nades’ volunteering work with the St Vincent de Paul Society. They lived across the road from the Catholic Church and Priya would often go across to the church to light a candle and say prayers. Priya would also bring Kopika, and then baby Tharunicaa, along to the Mainly Music sessions at St Gabriel’s Anglican Church.

Since arriving in Biloela Nades and Priya worked hard to integrate and become part of the community. While Priya had more barriers due to her ineligibility for English lessons she still always found a way to communicate with us. That is the wonder of human contact – smiles and hugs are universal. Such amazing friendships were made during the more than three years they lived in Bilo, and so it was devastating when our gentle, peaceful friends were taken away from us in such an unnecessary and traumatic way. Kopika and Tharunica were only two years old and nine months old when they were taken from their Biloela home by Border Force in March last year. Now they are aged four and two, and our community has missed watching them grow up and sharing what should be an exciting time in their lives if Kopika was able to start kindy.

All my life I have been Christian and have spent a lifetime learning about Jesus, the son of God who stood up for people who were downtrodden, marginalised or poor. He often challenged leaders and political figures, even though he knew it would impact his reputation and advancement, ultimately costing him his life.

Jesus fought not just to transform individual’s lives but to change the systems that perpetuated inequality, poverty, exclusion and exploitation. The fourth Anglican Mark of Mission is to “transform unjust structures of society”, and for me this is exactly what it means to be a Christian – it is our role to speak out and challenge unjust systems.

So, I was compelled to fight for this family and boy has it opened my eyes into just how unjust, inhumane and impractical Australia’s immigration and refugee system is. On a positive note, though, supporting this family has also opened my eyes to all the incredible people across Australia and the world who do care, and who spend every day fighting injustice for our global neighbours.

I launched an online petition through Change.org which now has over 255,000 signatures. I have twice gone down to see the family in Melbourne, as have several other Biloela friends. I have also organised and attended peaceful vigils across Australia to show support for my friends, as well as met with politicians in Canberra. The biggest journey was to take a 27-hour trip over to see them on Christmas Island recently. Nothing beats being able to hold them all in my arms.

As it says in Mark 12.30-31, Jesus said that “The most important commandment is to Love the lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

My prayers always involve me asking God for the strength to follow his plan, asking him to use me as his mouthpiece and instrument for positive change, as well as asking his protection for Priya, Nades,
Kopika and Tharunicaa. For me, prayer is a constant part of my life. Whether it is my ritualised nightly prayer before I go to bed each night or the quick ones I do throughout the day.

I have a very deep connection with music, which gives me times of great reflection and connection. Right back at the start of my journey fighting to keep Nades and Priya and their daughters safe here, one of my closest friends sent me the song 'Fix my Eyes' by For King and Country, which is a song about making Jesus and his call the priorities in our lives. The chorus is this:

“Love like I'm not scared
Give when it's not fair
Live life for another
Take time for a brother
Fight for the weak ones
Speak out for freedom
Find faith in the battle
Stand tall but above it all
Fix my eyes on you”

This very quickly became my backing track, and it has helped sustain me since March last year when Priya and Nades and their girls were unexpectedly taken by Border Force officers at dawn one morning. This song is my armour, which I play before attending a campaigning event or making a difficult phone call.

This year another friend sent me two songs that immediately got added to my regular playlist. These are ‘Trust in You’ by Lauren Daigle, which helps centre me and place all my fears and burdens back into God's hands, as well as ‘Love Anyway’ by Tenth Avenue North. This latter song was a Godsend as it reminds me to keep love front and centre.

It is important to be there for your family and friends, but you cannot forget ‘the strangers’, the people you have never met. Because at the end of the day, we are all neighbours and we are all one family – God's family. It has been an absolute privilege for me to get to know Nades and Priya and their girls, my neighbours, and to share their story with people across the globe and it is an honour to be able to now call them my family.

Priya, Nades, Kopika and Tharunicaa are all currently being kept in a detention centre on Christmas Island as they await their next court hearing. While Priya, Nades and Kopika have run out of all legal options, Tharunicaa has never had her own claim to asylum assessed. This is what the current court proceedings are about. The very sad and scary situation is that we need the Minister for Immigration to use his ministerial powers to allow our friends to come back home to Biloela, something he can do at any time. We are all very frightened about the dangers this family face if they are forcibly returned to Sri Lanka and the Bilo community will not rest in our endeavour to ensure that they have the peaceful and safe life that all families deserve.

You can keep up to date with our current activities to help this family via Change.org. As Priya says, Biloela is where her life begun and I know that Biloela is where this family will know peace and happiness again.

Thank you to Angela Fredericks, who was invited by anglican focus to share her story on how her faith sustains her in her advocacy for Nades, Priya, Kopika and Tharunicaa.
Expert advice on communications, fundraising and grants for parishes

Parish representatives travelled from throughout the Diocese to attend the one-day workshop at Hendra-Clayfield Ministry Centre

Parish representatives recently had a unique opportunity to boost their knowledge and skills around key areas of interest including fundraising, philanthropy, grant writing, social enterprise and community engagement at a parish workshop.

40 people attended the five-hour workshop on Saturday 28 September at Hendra-Clayfield Ministry Centre, with industry experts recruited to share the benefit of decades of experience in areas seen as vitally important to the future viability of parishes.

In a workshop-first for the Diocese, organised through the Parishes and Other Mission Agencies Commission and the General Manager’s Office (facilitated by Policy and Advocacy Advisor Ian Eckersley) all aspects of philanthropy, fundraising, the writing and submission of grants and community engagement were covered.

Archbishop Phillip Aspinall opened and blessed the event and inspired the audience by citing the story of Dorothy Day, who founded the Catholic Worker Movement in New York during the Great Depression, who tackled “the impossible” and whose movement has since flourished to the point of establishing 200 Catholic Worker Houses around the United States, as well as internationally.

Everald Compton, one of Australia's foremost fundraising and philanthropy experts with 42 years’ industry experience in 26 countries around the world (including the completion of St John's Cathedral in Brisbane) provided plenty of words of wisdom.
He said that stewardship of money that was donated through fundraising and philanthropy was critical because the engagement and gifting of money involved people's spiritual lives.

Mr Compton suggested that “people usually give to people, rather than causes” and that the motivation was often by a personal relationship and the respect and integrity of those associated with the parish. He said it was always important to get your capital and running costs right, especially on major projects.

Daniel McDiarmid (who studied at St Francis College for two years when he was in his early 20s) said philanthropy in parishes should include effective offertory giving (parish needs, community, and personal need to give); occasional campaigns for capital works; continuing bequest promotion; encouragement of support for Diocesan and national ministries; and, one-off responses to local needs.

He said effective fundraising should include a need/opportunity and a vision; the willingness of parish leaders to be donors and supporters themselves; a strategy to identify others who might care; the confidence and ability to ask effectively; a follow-up that ensured it included a thank you as well as a commitment to report progress and impact to donors; and, the confidence to not be afraid to “ask again” at a later date.

Dominque Henry, an expert in grant writing and applications, said that grant applicants need to understand how the fund-seeking landscape worked in order for their applications to be successful.

Ms Henry said that it was critical for applicants to meet the organisational eligibility criteria and grant objectives; ensure that the grant aligned with their organisation’s mission; adequately explain their proposals; show how their given project would meet needs; and demonstrate success measurement processes.

Fr Daniel Hobbs, parish priest at St Paul’s, Manly shared his wisdom and significant experience with social enterprises which he said should be linked to the Five Marks of Mission – put simply ‘people using business as a force of good’ and viewing social enterprise as the means to an end.

He said the question should not be, “Do we generate revenue?”, but rather parishes should ask, “How do we generate revenue and what do we do with the revenue?”

Gold Coast North Parish administrator Rod Mengel used his parishes’ three op shops as a case study in how to run a successful community enterprise. A fourth op shop is due to be opened on 12 October at Ormeau.

Advocacy and Policy Advisor, and former ABC veteran broadcaster, Ian Eckersley closed the workshop with a 45-minute session around media and public relations and community and political advocacy.

He stressed that parishes should feel free to ring for media or communications advice, especially around any adverse media or community issues.

With elections due next year for local government (on 28 March) and Queensland (on 31 October), he also encouraged parishes, especially those with community outreach services, to get to know their local political candidates and explore ideas around potential collaboration or projects of mutual benefit.
You can access most of the content from the workshop including video and presentations at the faithful + effective website.

Editor's note: Thank you to Ian Eckersley for initiating, planning and coordinating this valuable workshop.

Features • Wednesday 2 October 2019 • By Michael Rogers

Helen Barrett MBE AO: St Aidan's alumna revered in the Solomons

The life of nursing Sister Helen Barrett MBE AO echoes her family's motto – Honor Virtus Probitas, Latin for 'Upright in all things'.

Helen Barrett is the daughter of Hilda and The Very Rev'd William Barrett (Dean of St John's Cathedral from 1932 to 1952). When St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School was founded in 1929, Helen and her sister Joyce were the sixth and seventh students, respectively, to be enrolled.

Helen was appointed School Captain in 1938, and contemporary school accounts note that Helen was a natural leader and motivator, with exceptional organisation skills. Their father, who strongly pushed for the school's foundation, was also School Chaplain until his retirement in 1952. Barrett House was named after Helen, with the Memorial Library (opened in 1964) named in honour of her father.

Encouraged by Bishop Walter Baddeley (Head of the Oceania Diocese and the Bishop of North Queensland, and grandfather to Bishop Jeremy Greaves), Helen trained as a nurse in Brisbane and Sydney, and studied the languages and customs of the Solomon Islands at the Sydney Missionary Hostel. In 1946 she joined the Anglican Board of Mission in the Solomons, where she spent most of her life up to 1984.
Soon after her arrival, Helen set up a clinic and an education centre for girls in Lepi Village (Santa Isabel Island) – previously only boys had been educated in the area. In 1949 she worked at the hospital (where there was no doctor employed) and as the school nurse at Kerepei (Ugi Island) and provided care for the staff, students and the farm animals. In an interview with Queensland Museum staff, Helen noted that her training in Sydney did not include animal husbandry, and that she “learned a lot, my education was much improved” in terms of delivering piglets and calves.

Hospital of the Epiphany and staff (Fauabu)

Other positions in the Solomons included school nurse at Maravovo (Guadalcanal) and Head of the School at Tasia (Santa Isabel Island), finally being appointed as Matron of Fauabu Hospital (Malaita) in January 1968. Her duties as Matron included taking trainee nurses to the local schools to give public health talks and providing medication and care to patients infected with tuberculosis or leprosy. Many of the visits were conducted by foot (or on the mission ship Southern Cross) where she passed on her skills to schools and clinics.

The trucks they relied upon often broke down – but thanks to her sister Joyce in Brisbane, spare parts were sent over and assisted in reducing the amount of foot travel. After returning to Australia in 1984, within two years Helen was working as a nurse and teacher in the Torres Strait Islands and she helped set up a Mothers Union Branch – something she also did in the Solomons.
Sister Helen with Mothers Union members from the Solomons in 2017

In today’s ever-changing society (with so many technological advancements replacing older techniques and practices), preserving and promoting cultural traditions have become even more important. Helen is one of the Church’s strongest champions in this regard. During her time overseas, Helen received many gifts from visitors and villagers. Many of these have recently been donated to the Queensland Museum. Noting a string basket hand-crafted by villagers, Helen commented that this skill had nearly been lost. With the encouragement and assistance of friends, Helen started classes in the 1950s on how to make the baskets. The skill came back into fashion when everyone knew how to make something that was really theirs, and string baskets are still being made in Maliata today.

In 1970, Sister Barrett’s dedication and care were officially recognised for the first time when she was awarded an MBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours. Her many other awards and honours include:

- Premier’s Award (for outstanding service to the citizens and community of Queensland)
- Archbishop of Brisbane’s Medal
- Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (In recognition of her services to the community, particularly in relation to the women and children of the Solomons and Torres Strait Islands through the Anglican Board of Mission and the Mothers Union).
- The Cross of the Solomon Islands (for nursing, education and community development)
Although she officially retired in the early 1990s, Helen was always helping Mothers Union branches in Brisbane, particularly at St Stephens, Coorparoo. She noted in 2002 that she "did what I thought God wanted me to do. Sometimes life is hard but life isn't easy so I just went ahead and did the best I could." Helen's Bible, given to her by her parents, is inscribed with these words:

“Absolute self-giving is the only path from the human to the divine – St John of the Cross”

Being such a humble person, Helen often said that there were many others who helped in her work but received no recognition – there are few better examples of self-giving than this locally living legend of St Aidan’s.

Reflections • Monday 7 October 2019 • By The Rev’d Dr Graham Warren

Reframing climate change

Perhaps we are part of the problem. I am talking about what we do or do not do to address climate change. To begin, I would reframe the problem as ‘climate justice’. I do this because at the root of the problem is a raft of injustices done by one party against another. The injustice of our exploitative and extractive way of viewing the earth. The injustice of we as humans commanding dominion over the earth and all that is in it. The injustice of one people appropriating the lion’s share of the resources at the expense of the rest. The injustice of demanding that we change our ways to address the looming problem by insisting that those who have the least bear the greater burden.

The greater burden comes in many forms – lost jobs, lost employment prospects, lost ways of life on the land or at sea, lost security without insurability, lost chance of home ownership. These are but the beginning of a long litany of implications.

By reframing ‘climate change’ as ‘climate justice’, our focus is shifted somewhat from the impact of our exploitation of the earth’s resources on the earth, to the impact of our exploitation of the earth’s resources on human beings.

When those who have contributed little to the problem of climate change are asked to participate in the austerity demanded to reverse the damage done, they rightfully ask, “Why us?” Whether we like it or not, we are all caught up in a culture conflict, or more accurately a class conflict. Yes, even in the so-called Great South Land where egalitarianism is a by-word for Australianism, we have classes, and so also class conflict. Colonisation in this country brought with it boundaries, structuring our national life around class. Class is predicated on one’s access to the good things in life – education, health, freedom, opportunities, and living space with home ownership security.

Since the end of World War II, there has been an explosion of education, health resources, and social mobility. But the benefits have not been equally shared. For many reasons the gap between those the ‘haves’ and ‘the have-nots’ is widening. With this increasing gap becoming a gulf, our social cohesion is breaking down. Without social cohesion it is not possible to collectively and effectively address climate change, which is why we need to refocus on climate justice. Seeking climate justice will require far more from us than it would take to reverse climate change, enormous though that task will be.

The injustices of the widening gap between the classes in Australia will produce, and has produced, our own version of the ‘strong-man’ politician. There is a certain comfort to be had from leaders who say that they will ‘Make America Great Again’ – or our local version, ‘How Good is Australia!’ Around
the world we see the same phenomenon, namely the rise of the strong-man leader whose message to the disenfranchised is, “we will stick it in the eye to the elites and we will return to you the lost respect and dignity that have been eroded with the changing face of work and life in our society.” The promises are hollow, but very seductive. These politicians are very reluctant to address the urgent issues that will incite resistance from those who have put them in power. Who are they? Well, there is an unholy alliance between the disaffected in society and the super-rich in society. Neither can see advantages in addressing climate change because they can only see losses for themselves.

We have little chance as a church to influence the high and mighty. Corporations are without soul and so impregnable to any argument that may reduce or challenge the financial return to their shareholders. But we have a clear call as Christians to be compassionate to people whose rights are marginalised. They are calling out for their right to respect and dignity to be upheld. This is what has been lost in the late-modern post-industrial world. The new world based upon information and knowledge capital has left them high and dry on the shores of impoverishment. Their future, and that of their children, has been sabotaged and they are angry and despairing. It is to their calling that we must respond. How do we do that?

That is the question for us to consider at every Parish Council meeting, at every meeting of Diocesan Council, at every meeting of the Bishops-in-Council, at every Synod, and at every place of prayer and worship.

**Features • Wednesday 2 October 2019 • By The Rev’d Adam Lowe**

**Carols by glow stick**

A simple carols service is one of the most effective ways to share the Good News of Christmas with a range of people from both inside and outside of your local church. Incredibly, almost everyone (even if only secretly) loves coming along to sing carols! Despite living in an era in which fewer people
identify as Christian, it is amazing that still so many are delighted to join in and sing perhaps the highest Christology that would ever pass our lips! It is also an opportunity to be less formal and more accessible, providing an important ‘entry point’ for people who may never have been to a church before.

At St Bart’s, we have found that a simple one-hour service, followed by refreshments of fruit (fruit, fruit cake, and fruit punch), is an incredible opportunity to welcome people in a non-threatening way. We hold the service mid-week, usually in the last week of the school term, as this is often a slightly quieter time (and before everyone goes away). Over the years, we have also found that our own parishioners are increasingly comfortable in inviting other people along.

Two of our children’s team, Kate Venables and Bettrys Lowe (Children and Families Minister), delivering an enthralling Kids’ Talk at St Bart’s ‘Carols by Glow Stick’

We hold the carols inside (now over two nights) so that the events are less weather dependent. Holding the carols inside also helps create more intimate engagement with people, and is a first step in making St Bart’s Church familiar.

God has used these carol services in ways that we could only previously have dared to imagine – there has been some extraordinary Gospel fruit, including people coming to faith, returning to the life of a local church, and taking another step towards Jesus.

Over the years, we have used the following guidelines when planning our ‘Carols by Glow Stick’:

1. **Missional**: The clear focus is sharing the Good News of Jesus. This happens through the songs, kids’ talk, Bible reading, a brief message, and also prayer. We do not start planning until we have an event prayer team in place to help ensure that our focus is on God.
2. **Welcoming**: People should receive an amazing welcome (beginning online in the advertising, and continuing as they arrive in the carpark, enter the church building, during the fellowship time, and then extending afterwards following the event).
3. **Multi-Generational**: There should be opportunities for all generations to engage. This means that we design a more contemporary and informal service to reach a broader demographic. (We do love the traditional lessons and carols too, but would serve a different purpose in our context.)
4. **Excellence**: Everything we do should be simple, but high quality.
5. **Succinct**: We keep to one hour for the actual service. We recognise that it is a busy time of year, people are tired, and we would love people to leave still wanting more (not less!). We also do not want to hinder people from staying afterwards by making it too late.
6. **Invitational**: Our people are encouraged to be invitational (by distributing flyers and social media sharing, including sharing Facebook event pages). Making it easy for parishioners (e.g. quality promotional material), building their confidence (through positive experiences each year), and modelling (e.g. interviewing people on Sundays preceding the carols on how to invite someone) are helpful.
7. **Free**: We do not charge for tickets, glow sticks, any gifts, or refreshments – the night is a small, but sincere gift to all who attend (however, we do have a bowl for optional gift giving in the foyer, as many people ask to make a contribution and we want to honour their request).
8. **Intentional**: During the service we invite people to our Christmas services (flyers are handed out afterwards) and we also offer follow-up via expression of interest cards (e.g. a short four-week course on Jesus). Many people have responded!
9. **Generous:** We offer a small gift with a simple Gospel message to all who come along (see the sample in the link below) that helps families of all shapes and sizes to be discipled. Last year we produced sets of cards with some really practical ideas to prepare for Christmas in a meaningful way. This was inexpensive, and very much appreciated.

10. **Relational:** The fellowship time afterwards (refreshments) is not just an ‘add-on’, but a key opportunity for engagement and great Gospel conversations. Having a photo booth provides a terrific point of contact and also an appreciated gift (we print the photo on an attractive magnetic card with some information about children and family activities at St Bart’s) that can be displayed on people’s fridges.

To access a range of helpful resources (including a sample order of service, flyer, post cards for photo booths, 12 days of Christmas gift cards for families, and St Bart’s kids’ videos) visit our [website](#).

**News • Tuesday 8 October 2019 • By Gillian King**

**People of faith commit to living sustainably around the nation**

Anglicare, St John’s Cathedral, General Manager’s Office, St Francis College, and Finance and Diocesan Services Commission staff and clergy, along with workshop facilitator Mark Delaney, at the Living the Change workshop in the Ann St Darnell Room on Monday 9 September

Hundreds of people of faith gathered in capital cities around the nation during the last month, attending workshops to discover how to lower their carbon footprint and live more sustainably.

The ‘Living the Change’ workshops were run by the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC).

Participants in the workshops were encouraged to talk about lifestyle changes they were considering, including their fears and concerns.
Coordinator for Living the Change at ARRCC and St Andrew’s, South Brisbane parishioner Mark Delaney, who ran several Brisbane events during the Season of Creation, said that when making lifestyle changes, it is vital for people to have the chance to ask questions and troubleshoot their concerns with others.

“It’s one thing to decide in your head that you want to live a more environmentally friendly life, but it’s another to actually do it,” Mr Delaney said.

“Expressing our concerns and fears is key to overcoming them and putting our ideas into practice.”

Brisbane workshop participant and ACSQ Justice Enabler Peter Branjerdporn said that the workshop was thought-provoking, practical and inspiring.

“I was really challenged by the workshop and committed to getting solar panels for my house over the next two years,” said Mr Branjerdporn.

“It made me realise how much of an impact my personal choices can make to restore the environment.”

Living the Change events were also held in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart during September.

Participants heard speakers from various faith traditions, including Imam Hassan Elsetohy, President of the NSW Council of Imams in Sydney, and Anglican priest and Wiradjuri man The Rev’d Glenn Loughrey in Melbourne.

President of the Multifaith Association of South Australia Philippa Rowland said that it is important for people of different faiths to unite and advocate for climate justice.

“It was a privilege to gather as people of many faiths to celebrate our commitment to interfaith harmony and to urgent climate action in Australia, just one day after the global student-led Climate Strikes,” Ms Rowland said.

Mr Delaney said that Living the Change is premised on the idea that combating climate change requires not only political action, but also individuals simplifying their lifestyles.

“Those lifestyle changes are good for us as people, but they also drive bigger-picture changes,” he said.

“Our choices show our care for creation, but also drive change.”

Key modifications people are making to lower their carbon footprint include reducing car usage, installing solar panels, avoiding plane travel, buying pre-owned goods, purchasing green energy, and even changing super funds.

Workshop participants were invited to record their commitments to a lower-carbon lifestyle on the Living The Change website.

Workshop conveners said that Living the Change participants are making very significant counter-cultural decisions for the sake of the environment.
“Miriam hasn't flown for 10 years; Ken and Harriet have built a house entirely from recyclable materials; and, Rob has purchased an electric car, generating all the power he needs from solar panels on his roof,” Mr Delaney said.

“When I hear the things people are already doing, and the commitments they're making today, it gives me great hope that change is possible.”

Features • Thursday 3 October 2019 • By Dr Stephen Harrison

How is your church responding to the local context?

Engaging with the local context was one of the common factors for church growth found in The Church of England's research report, ‘From Anecdote to Evidence', which is discussed here.

“The research showed that churches that have a good understanding of the area that they are serving, and who tailor their outreach to the needs and opportunities of their local area are more likely to be growing. It is important to be outward looking as a church and to actively engage with your local context.”

Another important insight was that what works in one place may not work in another. This is why it is so important to understand your local community.

What are you doing to understand the local context and your church's place in it?

One great idea is to get everyone in your church to take three photos in your local area that say something about the context your church finds itself in. Come together, share the photos and their meaning and talk about what you have learnt.

Another is to have church members ask people in the community – what could our church do to help or serve this community?

A particularly helpful tool is the Community Social Profile, developed by NCLS Research to help churches better understand their local community.

The free online census tool allows you to click on any area of Australia and get instant census results for that area. Churches can also purchase (for a modest cost of $220) a more detailed community profile containing:

- the demographics of the local community
- what is changing and local social trends
- how the community compares with Australia
- ways to strengthen connections with local residents.

The Community Social Profile is based on a physical address (centre point – usually the church) and any radius you specify from the centre point address (suggested radius is 2 km for urban areas and 5 km for rural areas). This means that you can decide what area in your local community you want your church to focus on. This could be used either as a tool for mission planning for your whole church or as part of a specific project that seeks to more clearly understand a particular part of the community.
“I want my mom.” And for the first time in my life, I realized that in some ways, I had her...I had Mary.

Growing up in seven different Protestant denominations didn't exactly prepare me for this moment. That is not to downplay the significant impact each of those had in shaping, growing, and shepherding me in my faith. Just that this particular moment was a gift I received on a 30-day silent retreat under the influence of my Roman Catholic brothers and sisters.

Unfortunately, it’s a tender subject, because as some of our teachers (influenced by the Dombes Group) pointed out, we have a tendency to look upon Mary either too highly or not at all, as opposed to finding a just middle – making her a point of our division, when instead, she is a victim of it.

But in this moment, as I sat down to pray, I was neither a Protestant nor Roman Catholic, but a daughter coming before her Father with burdens too heavy to bear, desiring the comforting embrace of her mom, who was over 5,000 miles, a seven-hour time difference, and 26 more days of silence away.

“I want my mom.”
And so, for the first time in my life, I let her in. I asked Jesus to share his mother with me, as he did with the disciple whom he loved, at the foot of the cross. And I told her everything...all of my joy, all of my pain...everything I had held in for months...everything to which I had no one to express to in full.

When I began this story, I was sobbing. Yet, by the end of it, I had peace. I could not see nor hear her. Her presence was as humble as her life.

Charles Péguy invites us to address ourselves “to she who is infinitely joyful. Because she's also infinitely sorrowful. Seven and seventy times seven times sorrowful.”

Mary experienced extremes of both joy and sorrow in her relationship with Jesus that I will never fully understand in mine, remaining with him in his two greatest moments of fragility, as he came to earthly life within her womb and died an earthly death upon the cross, as he inhaled his first breath and exhaled his last.

Mary knows the tension of joy and suffering. Her ‘yes’ to one did not exclude the other. And from her I learn that neither does mine.

“I want my mom.” And now, in some ways, I will always have her.


Features • Monday 30 September 2019 • By Br Alfred BoonKong SSF

The saint and the sultan

This year marks the 800th Anniversary of the encounter between St Francis of Assisi and Sultan al-Malik al-Kamil, who ruled Egypt, Palestine and Syria during the Fifth and Sixth Crusades. The motivation behind St Francis’ 1219 visit to the Sultan was traditionally portrayed by his biographer Bonaventure as his desire for martyrdom and going across the enemy line between the Crusaders and the Saracens at Damietta like sheep amongst wolves. He so impressed the Sultan that, while he
did not convert him to Christianity, he won his respect and the custody of the Holy Places and Shrines in the Holy Land.

Francis was a changed man from this meeting. In his Rule of 1221, the so-called Earlier Rule, he advised the friars to submit to the non-Christian authorities when they go among Muslims and others who do not practise Christianity, and not engage in disputes or disagreements, only proclaiming the Gospel when it pleases God.

Scholars have suggested that the ‘Angelus’ (a prayer commemorating the Incarnation) and the ringing of bells traditionally calling Christians to prayer three times a day at 6 am, 12 noon and 6 pm were inspired by Francis observing the call of the muezzin (the man who calls Muslims to prayer from the minaret of a mosque) five times a day.

Similarly, scholars suggest that St Francis’ Divine Praises, “You are holy, Lord, the only God, and your deeds are wonderful. You are strong, you are great. You are the Most High, You are Almighty...You are love, you are charity, you are wisdom, you are humility, you are patience. You are rest, you are security. You are inner peace, you are joy, you are gladness. You are justice...” was inspired by Islam’s 99 Most Beautiful Names of God (Al Asma ul-Husna).

Francis’ friendship with the Sultan challenges us today to seek ways to listen to and dialogue with Muslims and people of other faiths in a spirit of openness and collaboration.

So, who is St Francis of Assisi? Born in 1182 and died in 1226, the son of a successful and wealthy Italian cloth merchant and a French noblewoman, he was a care-free young man dreaming of being a knight in shining armour, the hero of his era! But the reality was quite the opposite when he ended up a prisoner of war after a conflict with the neighbouring city of Perugia. He began to question himself after this setback and the subsequent illness following his release from prison. His life was never the same again, as he eventually turned to God to his father’s great disappointment! On his way to another military venture, a voice in a dream asked him why he would choose to serve the servant rather than the Lord and he was told to return to Assisi and seek further direction from God.

Francis experienced a conversion process through his meeting with a leper outside the city walls below Assisi, and overcoming his fear and nausea of the dreadful disease, he embraced and kissed the wretched man! This was what he recalled in his Testament as the beginning of his life of penance. He sought solitude among the wilderness and woods, praying to God in the cavern. Eventually in the ruined church of San Damiano before the icon crucifix, he heard the painted image of Christ calling him to repair his house.

Bonaventure described Francis stripping himself of his clothes three times as he progressed in response to God’s call to conversion: exchanging his armour with the poor knight, his garments with the beggar in Rome, and finally totally naked before his father and the Bishop of Assisi. Only when he was stripped of his false illusions or masks could he be his true self before God, naked as when he was born and as vulnerable as his naked crucified Lord whom he loved. Francis covered his nakedness with the Bishop’s farmhand tunic, which he later changed to a hermit’s garb with leather belt and staff.

On hearing the Gospel being read for the feast of St Matthias about Jesus’ instruction to his disciples setting out without money or shoes or staff to preach the Kingdom of God and do penance, he changed again to the habit of a barefoot preacher with a rope in line with the apostolic mission.
Francis exclaimed with joy: “This is what I want; this is what I long for with all my heart.” This process of discerning God's will as we seek to serve God can be quite a journey of surrender, always being open to new direction because of God's unconditional love for us.

When others joined Francis for his mission, he returned to the Gospels for guidance by opening the Bible three times revealing the three texts that came to shape his Franciscan community:

“If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give to the poor...and come, follow me.” (Matthew 19.21)

“Take nothing for your journey; neither staff nor knapsack, shoes nor money.” (Luke 9.3)

“Anyone who will come after me must renounce self, take up the cross and follow me.” (Matthew 16.24)

For Francis and his friars, and St Clare and her sisters who joined them, following Jesus would mean being without possessions and living in poverty, relying on God entirely for their needs and sharing in the humiliations, insults and sufferings of their crucified Lord, while living in perfect joy with God. Out of this love for God, Francis was to receive the stigmata or the wounds of his Crucified Lord on Mount La Verna as he totally identified with Jesus’ excruciating love for all creation.

Like St Francis, St Clare of Assisi remains a popular figure in art and culture, as well as maintaining religious significance.

In response to that same love, Francis composed the ‘Canticle of the Creatures' while he was nearly blind and ill soon before he died, able to praise God with all creation, which he addressed as brother or sister: sun, moon, stars, wind, water, fire, earth. Indeed, his love of creatures included flora and fauna.

Francis challenges us today to not only take care of the environment, but also people who are poor and marginalised. Our lifestyles threaten all this; how materialistic our world has become. Do we need so many possessions to be happy?

**St Francis’ Feast Day marks the end of the Season of Creation, which commenced on the first day of Spring.**
"It is by listening that we allow people to make connections with us"

We have just listened to a story from the time of Jesus where Jesus suggests to Martha that stopping being busy and listening is a good thing.

How good are we at doing that?

What difference does slowing down and listening make to our lives and to other people's lives?

About 15 years ago a wise person I was having a conversation with shared with me that his son, a counsellor, believed that if neighbours still used garden fences to have conversations over then many counsellors would be out of a job.

Only last week I was having an internet interaction with another doctor who was bemoaning the fact that these days she just doesn't have time to read books. The amount of time she spends on social media, both for work and socially, means that she has no time left for listening, reading, reflecting.

How often do we have time to be Martha, but no time to be Mary?

What difference does really listening make in our interactions with others?

What difference does listening make when the other person is mentally unwell?

When people are mentally unwell, they are vulnerable. Mental illness is something we don't discuss much in church. Admitting to mental illness often comes with a sense of shame, as though the individual were confessing some terrible sin or shortcoming. Mental illness makes people feel different.
As humans we define ourselves by our interactions with other people, by our relationships, our friendships and our connections. When we feel different, when we feel as if we don't belong. When we lose our ability to connect with others, to talk with others, to communicate with others, we start to lose our identity, our sense of who we are. When we become disconnected it is as if we have no place and we no longer matter in the world.

Mental illnesses affect people of all ages, races, religions, and incomes. Mental illnesses are not the result of personal weakness, lack of character, or poor upbringing. They are not the result of too little faith or lack of prayer. Most mental illnesses are biologically based, and most are treatable. Most people diagnosed with a serious mental illness can experience relief from their symptoms by actively participating in an individual treatment plan, and they can live productive lives sharing their unique gifts with the world.

But most people with mental illness don't just suffer from the effects of the illness they also suffer because they lose their connections with their communities; their place in the world seems to change. Mental illness makes people feel different. Mental illness makes people different. They often feel as if they no longer belong.

And this is where the church comes in. As Christians, as individuals and as Christian organisations, we are called to be there. We are called to be there for people, whoever they are, to be there and listen.

It is by listening that we allow people to make connections with us.

It is by listening that we allow people to show us who they are.

It is by listening, really listening, that we show people that they matter, that they have a place in this world, that they can find their purpose again, that they are a real human being.

And the listening we are called to is attentive, it is being there with that person and actually hearing what they say.

It is non-judgemental listening, it is the sort of listening that doesn't tell the person what they are feeling is wrong or inappropriate, it is the sort of listening that makes the other person feel safe and worthwhile.

It is the sort of listening that allows spaces without words.

It is the sort of listening that is modelled by Jesus for us throughout the gospel stories.

It is the sort of listening that allows God to be there in the conversation with us even when we don't mention God.

It is the sort of listening that we all need at times, because mental illness touches all of our lives in some way or other.

As people of God we are called to respond to need, to be loving to all, to be there, to be a friend to those who need a friend, to allow people to belong somewhere.

Are we ready?
Sunday Devotions • Monday 7 October 2019 • By The Rev’d Kay Hart

Sunday Devotion: 13 October 2019, Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Main readings: Jeremiah 29.1, 4-7; Psalm 66.1-11; 2 Timothy 2.(1-7) 8-15; Luke 17.11-19; [2 Kings 5.1-3,7-15c, Psalm 111]

Supplementary readings: Psalm 85; Luke 20.39-47; Jeremiah 30.1-9; Psalm 111; 2 Timothy 2.19-26

“Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him.” (Luke 17.15-16a)

With toddlers, a parent’s common refrain when giving them something is, ‘What do you say?’ and the expected response is ‘Ta’. My mother also instilled in me the habit of sending thank you notes. My sisters and I even sent flowers to the intensive care unit she died in. We have always kept the etiquette of gratitude Mum taught us.

In today’s Gospel reading, the single leper of the ten to return to Jesus and thank him was not, however, just being polite or following social niceties. His actions of gratitude were a spontaneous and humble response to God’s grace. All ten of the lepers received physical healing, but only one turned back to express gratitude, a fruit of his faith. An outcast on two counts, as a Samaritan and a leper, he received more than liberation from his disease – he was made whole through his faith. When he understood he had been accepted and made whole, he could only rejoice.

It is more than etiquette that stirs us to say “Thank you” to Jesus for his blessings. It is a response to the way Christ welcomes us again, and again, no matter who we are. This leads us to ask “who are the ‘outsiders’ we must welcome into our lives and our communities?”

How can we be Christ to people on the margins, and help to bring them wholeness?