I recently overheard my thirteen-year-old son answering a friend who had asked him how he was, “The whole country is on fire and we’re about to have World War Three! How do you think I am going?”

His reply hung in the air, like the smoke from the fires, as I pondered Christmas just gone and the season of Epiphany we have just entered. In the Orthodox tradition, ‘Epiphany’ is called the ‘Theophany’ (“God shining forth”) and the lectionary gives us plenty of readings where we are invited to see where God might be shining forth in the world and in our lives.

My son’s reply echoed the feeling of many who struggle to see where God might be “shining forth” amidst the catastrophic fires, the loss of life and property, the increasing despair globally about climate change and now the rising tension between Iran and the US. One of my favourite cartoonists put it this way, “The pain and the terror of these bushfires cannot be held in a single human heart.”

This reminded me of something Archbishop Desmond Tutu is supposed to have once said: “God, I know that you are in control – I just wish that you would make it a little more obvious.” In other words, if the Messiah has come, when will things start to look better? When will the lowly be lifted up? When will the wheat be separated from the chaff? When will the sick be healed, the prisoners be released and the swords be beaten into ploughshares?

It is possible to become trapped in a downwards spiral of these sorts of questions.
For such times, Jewish wisdom in The Talmud offers this, “Do not be daunted by the magnitude of the world’s grief. Act justly now. Love mercy now. Walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.” In other words, rather than being overwhelmed, find the thing that you can do: you might contribute to an appeal for money, volunteer your time or simply commit to doing a little research before sharing a social media post. During our recent family holiday to the Solomon Islands we felt a little overwhelmed by the great need we saw in so many places: our response has been to start a GoFundMe page to raise money for one project – a small medical clinic funded by the local church. We cannot do everything, but we can do something.

St Claire’s is a small medical clinic in the small village of Taraoniara, providing services to many villages in the surrounding area. The clinic is staffed by one midwife and funded by the local church. Bishop Jeremy and Josie have started a GoFundMe page to help raise money for a water tank and basic plumbing.

Centuries ago the German mystic Meister Eckhart wrote, “We are all meant to be mothers of God. For God is always needing to be born.” If Eckhart is correct, that somehow God is always needing to be born into the world, then the incarnation becomes God’s invitation for us to join with God in the transformation of this world; making the kingdom of heaven – the hope and dream of God – a present reality for this earth.

In his recent Epiphany homily Pope Francis spoke of what becomes possible when we find the courage to trust God even in times such as these, of allowing “Jesus to heal and to change us...to
transform us by His love, to kindle light amid our darkness, to grant us strength in weakness, and courage amid trials."

However, there are times when it is too much, when it is too difficult and sometimes we simply have to let others do the believing for us. One of the great gifts of the Church is that there are always others with far more faith than me who can do the believing when I find it too hard, until I find myself able to believe again. Sometimes it is enough to rest into the tradition, to let the liturgy or the prayers of others wash over us until we are rested enough, brave enough, to believe again.

**Features • Thursday 16 January 2020 • By Adrian Gibb**

**A mysterious end to an ‘other worldly’ life**

Dorothea Tomkins as a nursing sister in New Guinea during the late 1930s (Courtesy of the Records and Archives Centre, Anglican Church Southern Queensland)

Dorothea Eleanor Florence Tomkins was born in 1903 to a family dedicated to the Church. Her uncle and some cousins were priests, and the missionary work that she would herself engage in was well established within the Tomkins family. Determined to be a nurse, she trained at the Royal Brisbane Hospital from 1925, later working as a staff nurse at the Nambour Hospital for some years. In 1937 Dorothea felt ready to begin training for missionary service. She trained at a facility set up by the then Australian Board of Missions called 'The Women’s Missionary Training Hostel’. She would have known fellow students [May Hayman and Mavis Parkinson](#), and both Dorothea and May Hayman were posted as missionary nurses to the Diocese of New Guinea, overseen by future Archbishop of Brisbane Philip Strong.

Remembering Dorothea in an ‘In Memoriam’ that we have a copy of at the Records and Archives Centre, Archbishop Strong wrote, “I remember so well when she first joined our staff...how frail I thought she looked. And frail in body she remained all through the years...But a wonderful faith animated that frail body and always triumphed over it. It seemed as if our Lord’s words to St. Paul...
were specially applicable to her: ‘My strength is made perfect in weakness’, and ‘When I am weak, then am I strong’ and ‘My grace is sufficient for thee.’"

She was fearless and indefatigable, often running stations almost single-handedly while the mission was short-staffed. Strong remarked in the same document that he had complete confidence in her, “...wise and enlightened and loving management of the affairs of the Church and in her oversight of Papuan fellow-workers, teachers, evangelists, medical trainees, Church Councillors and even Papuan Clergy.” She was said to be completely trusted by the Papuan population and loved for her gentleness mixed with steely resolve.

It is well established that her friends and fellow missionaries Mavis Parkinson and May Hayman did not survive the 1942 Japanese military invasion of New Guinea where they were martyred. Dorothea, told to evacuate by the government, was able to escape the oncoming danger with Bessie Newman, Denis and Lesley Taylor, and their six-month-old baby John. What followed was what can only be described as an epic journey across the Owen Stanley range. For two weeks she looked after the physical and spiritual needs of the party until they reached safety. While it cannot be confirmed, it is likely that she was one of the first people of European descent to cross what became known as the Kokoda Trail. The party found their way to safety and were evacuated. Dorothea, however, returned to New Guinea, as soon as she could in 1944. In an address at the Eucharistic Commemoration of Dorothea at St John's Cathedral, Bishop Eric Hawkey recalled the poem that Dorothea, who wrote throughout her life, penned to memorialise a Eucharist service they had along the way.

Despite the incredible feat described above, Dorothea remembered a feeling of guilt in leaving her mission to escape the oncoming invasion. In 1967 she was interviewed upon her retirement by the South Pacific Post. In this article she states, “My worst moment...was when I had to face the Bishop during the war and explain why I wasn't on my station.” She need not have been concerned, as this same Bishop, Philip Strong, wrote some years later of his, “...heartfelt thanks to our Heavenly Father for the rich gift he gave to His Church in New Guinea of Dorothea; for her saintly and dedicated life, and for her most devoted work for His son Our Lord, and for all His people in Papua New Guinea.”

She suffered ill health throughout her life, and in 1948 was sent to Brisbane with a lung issue. Things got so dire that Bishop Hawkey and Bishop Strong attended on her and administered the Sacrament of Holy Unction. She pulled through, however, and used her long period of convalescence to begin to write, along with co-author Brian Hughes, The Road from Gona, chiefly about the New Guinea Martyrs, a copy of which resides here in the Records and Archives collection at Church House. She again returned to New Guinea and did not let any infirmities limit her desire to help. She even took on extra training to become an authorised teacher, as well as a nurse.

Finally, in 1967, after 30 years of missionary work, Dorothea retired and purchased a small cottage at Lota, not far from her Brisbane family. As the years progressed, however, her physical and mental faculties diminished, and the decision was made for her to move to Nazareth House at Wynnum, run by the Good Sisters of Nazareth.

In early 1981, at 2 pm on a Sunday afternoon, Dorothea was seen walking towards the main gates of Nazareth House. She had been at the home for several months by that stage, and was known to walk the grounds. She was never seen again. Despite a massive search by police with tracker dogs and appeals from her family to look out for her as she was likely in a confused state, she simply vanished. In his ‘In Memoriam Bishop’ Strong states, “We all felt grieved at the deterioration of her health in her later years and the failing of her natural powers of body and mind, and then finally at her mysterious
disappearance. Perhaps we need not have grieved so much, for all the time she seemed to have a kind of mystic and ‘other worldly’ union with our Lord. Because of that we can be sure she has been most precious in His sight, and under his special protection and care.”

Dorothea Tomkins stands as a symbol of what can be achieved through a life of service. Whether it was supporting the whole party that crossed the Owen Stanley Range in 1942, or the countless Papuans and New Guineans who shared such an incredible relationship of trust with her, her fortitude and spiritual determination showed no bounds. Dorothea, about to leave New Guinea for the last time, wrote, “I love the people and have felt very much at home here.” For Dorothea Tomkins it was that love, so obviously returned, and her boundless faith that drove her to do extraordinary things during extraordinary times.

Dorothea in later years (Courtesy of the Records and Archives Centre, Anglican Church Anglican Church Southern Queensland)
Former trailblazing model and new ACSQ RAP Coordinator receives prestigious Australia Day Honours award

The reality of receiving an Australia Day Honours award is still sinking in for Sandra King OAM who says she burst out crying when she heard that her work was being honoured.

“To be nominated...it’s huge...I do things because I believe in what I do, you don’t do it for recognition – never have I done it for recognition,” she said.

Wiping away tears, she starts to laugh a little as she confesses that she does not even celebrate Australia Day and was ‘in two minds’ when she heard she was nominated for an award.

Humbled, honoured and still slightly conflicted, Sandra decided to accept the OAM (Order of Australia, General Division) for service to the Indigenous community.

Sandra, who is a Quandamooka (Stradbroke Island) and Bundjalung (Tweed Heads) woman, believes she might be the first person in her family to receive a national award, and the last person to believe it is real.

“I had to talk to a close friend about it and she said you’ve been nominated because they recognise what you’ve done – we all know what you do, we all know what you’re like and if anybody deserves it, it’s you,” said Sandra.

“I don’t know how many times I've read that email and said to myself: ‘Is that really me?’
“I’m overwhelmed and very proud! I’m a part of the oldest surviving culture in the world, and I feel extremely privileged to have that.”

Sandra is best known for being a trailblazing Aboriginal model, from starting her journey at the age of 14 to gracing the cover of fashion and lifestyle magazines to being featured in countless fashion spreads in newspapers and even catalogues in the 1970s.

Her catwalk career later transformed into the creation of her own management company. Her evolution as manager, mentor, motivational speaker and event organiser for hundreds of young models and aspiring young women (mostly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) who wanted to break through an array of glass ceilings, eventually venturing into careers they did not think were possible.

“As a young child, I started to take notice that there were no black faces on TV... there was nobody like me,” she said.

“And then a show came on called Julia, starring American actress Diahann Carroll. She was an African American single parent and she had her own TV series...a black woman having her own TV series in America! That was the only black person that I could relate to – there was mum and there was Julia.”

However, Sandra did not love Julia just because she was a strong woman and the first woman of colour on American (and Australian) television who was not in a ‘servant’ role. She touched Sandra’s spirit because she looked like a young girl in faraway Brisbane – she looked like her.

Like Diahann Carroll, Sandra dreamed of gracing the silver screen, but was held back by a speech impediment that made it difficult for her to follow a script. Yet she was determined to break free from her social shackles as a young Aboriginal woman and recalls the lightbulb moment that set her on the twisting and turning path to a successful modelling career.

“Mum worked for a well-to-do family in Kenmore. The wife used to give Mum her fashion magazines, so Mum brought Vogue magazines and Women’s Weekly home,” she said.

“As I was flicking through them, I would practise doing the hairstyles and practise the poses in front of the mirror. Then I realised this is a career I can have where I can perform on stage – on the catwalk. I can perform in front of the camera, but I don’t have to speak. So that was my career, only for that reason.”

As an impressionable young woman, Sandra hit a roadblock when she succumbed to peer pressure and started drinking excessively at the age of 15. However, she was able to turn this into a life-defining moment in which she broke out of a vicious cycle.

“Drunk and waiting for my friends one night, a fashionably-dressed couple walked past me. I looked at the bottle of beer in my hand and I realised I wasn’t going to achieve my dreams if I continued drinking,” she said.

“I poured the beer out and smashed the bottle against a tree – since then I haven’t looked back. That was a life-changing moment and we have to guide and allow our young ones to break that same cycle.”

In 1975, a close friend told Sandra about an audition for a Myer commercial and that is when Sandra got her big break to audition for a commercial with Myer.
“It was huge, especially for an Aboriginal girl! Back then there were only Myer and David Jones as the major fashion outlets, that's all there was. After that, I was booked for newspaper spreads and fashion parades for Myer and then Sportsgirl came into it and Sportsgirl started booking me constantly to do their fashion parades,” she said.

Attributing much of her early success to the strong female role models in her life – her mother, model agent Mrs Billie North and her manager Sandra Robbins – the former self-proclaimed tomboy took to the runway with elegance and confidence beyond her years.

“It just takes a few people to believe in you and that’s all it is...being around positive people. Joan of Arc and Florence Nightingale were my heroes when I was in school because they were women who did amazing things. On a personal level, I'm inspired by all my aunties.”

Despite her beauty and confidence exuding on the runway, Sandra become an actress – hiding the fact that she was a very body-conscious young woman.

“Even though the ‘Black is Beautiful’ campaign hit the world, I didn't feel beautiful being Aboriginal. I never felt attractive. I never felt beautiful,” Sandra said.

“You just wanted to be like all the other girls and have that blonde straight hair and have it blowing in the wind, and of course the media loved the blonde-haired girls, you know...when you’re the ‘black’ one in the modelling agency – you’re going to struggle, no matter what.

“I look back at my photos now and realise – yes, I was ‘okay’. Although there were many times on fashion shoots or parades that I always felt like the ugly one.”

As her career flourished, without knowing it, Sandra became a ‘Julia’ to other young Aboriginal girls who, like her, rarely saw themselves reflected in magazines or fashion parades.

“I didn't realise it back then that I was inspiring others, I had no idea – you're just trying to achieve a dream and you don't think about the positive impact on others,” she said.

The motivation for starting her own management company – and associated fundraising luncheons and calendars under the name ‘Black, Bold and Beautiful’ – was to pass on to the next generation the benefits of not only her knowledge and personal experience, but also to share her achievements and struggles with women who wanted to be successful.

When it comes to racism – and she has experienced much prejudice over the decades – she is optimistic that the world is changing, albeit at what she calls, a “snail’s pace”.

In 2020, Sandra is trying to become an agent of change in a different sector – in her new role as Reconciliation Action Plan Coordinator with the Anglican Church Southern Queensland.

Her role involves educating clergy, staff and parishioners across the Diocese about cultural and historical issues, challenging people's perceptions and broadening their views on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – where we are today and how we can unite and move forward together.

Sandra believes the Anglican Church is tackling a complex healing process with beauty and grace – and more importantly, with a willingness to embrace change.
“There’s a lot of heartache and a lot of trauma that involves the church and the Aboriginal people, it’s not necessarily just this church – it’s all churches going back in history and their role in running missions and with the Stolen Generations,” Sandra said.

“But to move forward we all have to heal and I have always had my faith, so I feel that it is very important now to move forward and try to heal each other and speak truth.

“The church has opened up to listen to ways in mending and healing the past, what has happened here – they’re open to listening to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that says a lot.

“To me I see that the Diocese is really well and truly on the right path. And that’s why I’m pretty excited about this role and about the whole Diocese.”

Spotlight Q&A • Thursday 23 January 2020 • By The Rev’d Dr Hugh Begbie

Q&A with third-generation Anglican priest The Rev’d Dr Hugh Begbie

Hugh at the beginning of the great Central Highway near Kata Tjuta on a recent trip

The Rev’d Dr Hugh Begbie is a dedicated locum in our Diocese – one of many retired priests in our Diocese who contribute significantly to ministry. When he is not locuming and travelling around Australia, he worships at St David’s, Chelmer.

How long have you been involved in the Anglican Church and in what roles?

I came from a dynastic Anglican family in Sydney. My grandfather, father and three uncles were all clergy in that Diocese, as was my brother. Following a stint as a National Service Army officer, I studied prior to ordination in 1976 in The Diocese of Armidale serving in Narrabri, Collarenebri and Armidale. In 1989, I returned to the Army as a Chaplain. In 1995 I was appointed Principal of Cromwell College at
The University of Queensland where I remained until I retired in 2010. I am currently a locum priest in our Diocese and when not doing locum work, I worship at St David’s, Chelmer.

What projects and activities are you currently working on in this role?

I will be beginning a new locum role at the end of January. I am also Chair of Mathew Hale Public Library, a Christian Trust Fund dedicated to ‘resourcing, promoting and encouraging leaders in the Anglican Province of Queensland to exercise ministry shaped by a clear understanding of biblical truth.’ In addition, I volunteer weekly as a Chaplain for the Wesley Hospital.

What have been the highlights of your Anglican Church roles so far?

My time as a University Chaplain in Armidale was the highlight, while my role as Principal at Cromwell hopefully left an enduring mark on many lives. I enjoy locum work. Not only does it provide an opportunity to serve God and help others, but it encourages me personally. As a widower, I value the support and friendship of God’s people. One story illustrates how faith can affect all we do. While Principal, I had one international student who had a real chip on his shoulder. He was always getting drunk and causing problems. One day in a drunken rage he not only annoyed all the students, but verbally abused me. When the time came for discipline, I instead took him out to lunch and shared with him man to man. That act of grace was the beginning of a changed life.

What are your plans and goals for the next 12 months?

In the next 12 months, I will be locum at The Parish of Noosa from the end of January to the end of June. Following this, I will be embarking on another trip around Australia. This year I travelled 27,000 km, including travelling right through the centre of the country. It seems to me that, while I have the strength, I should take the opportunity to explore this wonderful land.

Can you tell us a little about your personal faith journey?

I have been a believer all my life. There have been challenges, not so much to my faith but in living life and my faith well. Perhaps the most difficult time began in 2000 when my wife Helen was diagnosed with bowel cancer. After surgery and chemo, it eventually returned and I nursed her at home until she died in my arms in December 2002. The journey since has been tough. Living alone has been hard and left me feeling vulnerable and at times broken. Having a great family and Christian support around me have been wonderful but have not removed the primal void in my life – the emptiness that comes from losing my wife and best friend. Everyone suffers at some point, but the difference for Christians is that we know that with the cross comes the resurrection, and while bad things remain bad things, God can use those bad things for good outcomes, such as helping others. I have found comfort in this gracious truth as well, as in the support of friends and family.

How does your faith inspire you and shape your outlook, life choices and character?

My faith is at the centre of everything I do. I don't always live up to my calling, but I know that ultimately, I am not only supported by God’s most surprising and wonderful grace, but I am called upon to live my life as Jesus lived his. This is an ongoing commitment and at times feels like a battle, requiring me to seek forgiveness and renewed strength to begin another day.
What is your favourite scripture and why?

My favourite scripture varies, but one I will share with you is the shortest one in the New Testament, ‘Jesus Wept’. I love this verse as it reminds me that I serve a God who not only cares for me (and you) in the strange mix of wonder and brokenness of our lives, but he knows how to weep in, for and with our brokenness. We believe in a God who, in the incarnation of his Son, has entered the full darkness and mortality of the world embracing it on the cross and then conquering it in the resurrection. In that extraordinary gift of shared suffering and hope, I find joy and strength to live and love.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

Many people have inspired me, but I will tell you about one couple I knew. I only ever saw them once a year when I was collecting gear for a Beach Mission I led at Hawksnest north of Newcastle. They spoke very pious language (which is definitely not me) but their love and hospitality were overwhelmingly beautiful and their love has left an enduring impact on me.

What are the primary strengths of the Church and what is the best way to make the most of these for the benefit of our communities?

The Church consists of those who follow Jesus, believers who gather each week to be strengthened by the Word through prayer and fellowship and then encouraged to go into the world as God’s little lights in the darkness. That is what it should be and that is what we should be seeking. Unfortunately, that is not what it always is because we do not always live up to our calling. At its best, it is the one place that people of all backgrounds can meet, experience grace and communally worship God. At its worst, it is legalistic or compromised in its teaching or behaviour as we have tragically seen in the terrible child abuse investigated by the Royal Commission.

What are the primary challenges currently encountered by the Church and what is the best way to overcome these for the benefit of our communities?

The Christian faith, or at least the Church, is being challenged from outside, and there are also serious internal divisions. To make matters worse we live in a victim culture that can make any form of debate difficult. In this kind of culture if you don’t agree with me, you are automatically my enemy. Maybe in this environment we should enter into conversation from a more personal basis, being prepared to share our own journeys, struggles and vulnerabilities, rather than merely debating. Maybe, just maybe, this will help to take the edge off the tribal mindset that dominates currently.

What is the kindest gesture you have ever received or witnessed?

I have witnessed many kind gestures. There was a couple who walked with me, literally as well as metaphorically, during the worst of my grief. Another important moment was when acapella group, The Idea of North, came and sang around my dying wife’s bed. ‘Amazing Grace’ takes on real power in the face of death. A third was when my home group held a makeshift ‘Lord’s Supper’, breaking of bread and wine around the same bed. My wife was too weak to partake, but the power of that moment will never be forgotten.

What do you do in your free time to recharge and relax?

I walk and ride my bike a lot. I love photography, mainly on my travels, as well as live theatre and reading. I just finished reading Anna McGahan’s autobiography, Metanoia and the fascinating
discussion on the fine tuning of the universe called *A Fortunate Universe* by Geraint F Lewis and Luke A Barnes, both astro-physicists.

**If you found yourself on a deserted island, what three things would you choose to have with you?**

Water, food, company and an EPIRB. Oh, and of course, a Bible and a few other good books.

**If you could have a billboard with any text on it, what would it say and why?**

‘Seek the Lord while he may be found, call on him while he is near’ (NRSV). The incarnation we remember at Christmas and the whole story of Jesus leading to his death and resurrection is the moment God came near. John tells us that ‘The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us’, which really means that God set up his holy of holies, his tabernacle among us with his presence and glory now being made human and visible in Jesus.

**Where do you do your best thinking?**

When I am walking or riding.

**What keeps you up at night and what gets you out of bed in the morning?**

I sleep well – nothing keeps me up. I believe in living well until you die, so I get up in the morning and just do stuff. I don't do home alone very well so I do need to get out and be active to keep sane and more or less on track.

**What’s your best childhood memory?**

Holidays in Gerringong with my family. I remember running, swimming and hiding in the cliffs at Boat Harbour. I also remember the joy of being physically strong, which for me bought a kind of transcendent joy. While I'm still fit for my age (70), the tide has gone out a long way and I look on that with loss and sadness, but also thankfulness for what I have had and hope also in the resurrection.

**If you are having a bad day, what do you do to cheer yourself up?**

I have never been a moody or depressed person, but I have days when I feel alone. When I feel like this, if I’m not doing voluntary work or some other activity I get out and walk, ride, watch a movie or visit friends.

**What is the funniest thing that has happened to you recently?**

Recently I met a young man who was the spitting image of a person I knew 40 years ago – it was like being sucked back in time. The young man turned out to be the son of the friend, but I have never seen a son look so much like his father. It was a kind of breathtaking moment that left me stunned.

**What makes you nostalgic and why?**

Apart from the obvious loss of my wife and the joy of married life, as previously mentioned I miss being as strong, fit and fast as I was when I was younger. When I was 22, I ran up Masada near the
Dead Sea, which is a sheer cliff with a goat track running up it. I did this in something close to 45-degree heat.

**What day would you like to re-live and why?**

We all have regrets. There are days that would be nice to ‘undo’. As it’s not possible though, I am called to rely on forgiveness and the capacity of God to use even the messiness of my life for his glory.

**What’s your unanswerable question – the question you are always asking yourself?**

I have never been angry with God as I have always believed that we live in a broken world in which terrible things happen and people die. But that doesn’t stop me at times wondering why some things happen and what God does with prayers. I guess I find comfort in what Oz Guiness once said: “We do not always know why but we can know the God who knows why.”

**Events • Tuesday 24 December 2019**

**Leading small churches (without settling for less)**

Hear from international bestselling author, Karl Vaters, as he affirms the value of small-sized churches and explores how small churches can create and nourish their capacity for effective ministry. Register by 5.00 pm Monday 17 February 2020. This special event is an initiative of The Parish of East Brisbane, supported by the Parishes and Other Mission Agencies Commission.
Scarves for seafarers

Soon after Dr Solari’s visit to St Paul’s School, MTS Chaplain The Rev’d Stephen Briggs (pictured) collected the calico bags and the gifts at the Cathedral for distribution to international seafarers who visit the MTS Port of Brisbane centre daily

St Paul’s School Year 6 students recently gifted personally designed calico bags filled with toiletries and 80 handknitted scarves and beanies to Mission To Seafarers (MTS) in collaboration with St John’s Anglican Cathedral.

Over the years, St Paul’s students have knitted scores of scarves and collected toiletries for Cathedral Honorary Deacon The Rev’d Dr Ann Solari to distribute to the people she serves in her ministry and work as a general practitioner, including international Mission To Seafarers visitors.

Year 6 St Paul’s School students said that they found knitting the scarves both enjoyable and challenging, and were motivated to knit the scarves conscious that they were going to people in need.

“The cause behind our knitting project really helped to raise our awareness of other people in our community and the work they do to support people who are less fortunate,” Ben said.

“Knowing that the scarves were going to someone in need helped me to preserve when the knitting got tricky. It’s harder than you think!” Annabel said.

“It was really fun to make the scarves. It felt good to know that we were helping people in need,” Amaya said.
“Doing something special for a good cause felt like I was able to give back to my community and others less fortunate,” Georgia said.

“Knitting was actually really fun and we hope that the scarves go to people in need,” Isaac said.

One of the student’s grandparents worked with her friends to knit 80 beanies for the St Paul’s student-driven initiative.

Over the years, St Paul’s students have knitted scores of scarves and collected toiletries for Cathedral Deacon The Rev’d Dr Ann Solari (pictured, centre) to distribute to the people she serves in her ministry and work as a general practitioner, including international Mission To Seafarers visitors.

Year 6 student Liam said that knitting alongside grandparents was the highlight of the project for him.

“Knitting with grandparents and friends across generations was surprisingly interesting – there was so much storytelling,” Liam said.

This inspiring student-led project is a reflection of St Paul’s School’s mission to be “a student-centred Anglican community with a purpose of preparing resilient global citizens who are innovative thinkers with a heart for servant leadership.”

The Rev’d Dr Ann Solari said that the students decided to decorate calico bags and put toiletries inside reusable zip lock bags after she encouraged the school to consider improving the environmental sustainability of the project.

“When I went to talk to the students recently, I was amazed when I was presented with 80 handknitted scarves not in cellophane wrapping but in calico bags, which had been printed with a message and a picture that each individual student had designed,” Dr Solari said.

“Inside each bag was scarf knitted by students and a beanie which one child’s grandmother and her friends had made when they heard what the children were doing.

“Each bag also contained a zip lock bag with toiletries inside.”
The Cathedral, a Resource Church, is well known for its commitment to social and environmental justice and working alongside like-minded organisations and community groups, shaping its ministry around all of The Five Marks Of Mission.

Soon after Dr Solari's visit to St Paul's School, MTS Chaplain The Rev'd Stephen Briggs collected the calico bags and the gifts at the Cathedral for distribution to international seafarers who visit the MTS Port of Brisbane centre daily.

The Rev'd Stephen Briggs said that the seafarers value the practical benefit of the knitted apparel receive, as well as receive a morale boost.

“Seafarers are most appreciative of the thought and effort that goes into making beanies and scarves for them,” The Rev'd Briggs said.

“To know that someone cares enough about them to make something that keeps them warm on cold days and nights at sea warms them not only physically, but emotionally as well.”

The Rev'd Briggs said that it is important for different parts of our Diocesan community to collaborate on projects with international reach.

“Our ministry should not only be to those close to us, but also the wider world community,” he said.

“Initiatives such as making items of clothing for seafarers demonstrates our Christian witness globally as the seafarers whose lives we touch, through small acts of friendship and hospitality, communicate that with other seafarers and their families across the world.”

Mission to Seafarers is a registered charity and worldwide missionary society of the Anglican Church, operating in over 230 ports internationally and in 28 ports around the Australian coastline.

MTS Brisbane supports seafarers and their families back home by providing emergency assistance, hospitality and communications facilities in its Port Of Brisbane centre, transport, ship and hospital visiting and spiritual support.

This practical and pastoral care is critical to the wellbeing of seafarers, many of who come from majority (developing) world countries, spending long periods away from their families in order to send money home.

In her visits to St Paul's School over the years, Dr Solari has introduced the work of MTS to the students, as well as shared about other areas of justice that are core to the Anglican Church's mission.

“The children in our schools are not only being taught about God and how to worship God, but about principles of social and eco justice,” she said.

“We are teaching them and others about love and what love in action really looks like.

“We are building a community here, where all are welcome, where all can find a home, where all can worship and pray together.
This initiative is a heartwarming example of how our Diocesan schools, churches and ministries are working together to live the Gospel message and bring about the Church’s mission. If you have similar stories to share, please contact the Anglican Focus Editor, Michelle McDonald, via focus@anglicanchurchsq.org.au.

News • Wednesday 22 January 2020

Tips for managing the start of school in 2020

Whether your child is starting school for the first time, or returning for the next chapter in their educational journey, the start of the school year can be an anxious and draining time for the whole family.

To help parents and guardians manage the transition as smoothly as possible, Anglicare’s Mental Health and Family Wellbeing team have put together their top tips for starting school.

Anglicare Service Coordinator Alecia Williamson said parents and guardians had a crucial role to play in helping children adjust to the school environment.

“It’s really important that parents don’t think they can just rely on teachers to help their little ones adjust and feel comfortable,” she said.

“Children – especially those of prep age – are like sponges. They pick up on the moods and demeanor of the adults around them, so it’s really crucial to be self-aware, calm and consistent, especially in the next few weeks.

“Even small changes in what we say or do at home can have a huge impact on how children perceive the school environment and even their relationships with classmates and teachers.”

Ms Williamson said parents and guardians should make a conscious effort to speak positively and with enthusiasm about going to school.

“Be positive and share your own stories. But also don’t skirt around the issue of being anxious. Talk about times when you were worried and what you did to overcome it – you really are your kid’s most important teacher,” she said.

Tips for starting Prep

Ms Williamson said Anglicare runs regular programs with families who have little ones starting Prep and also speaks to a lot of teachers about what they experience.

“Teachers are telling us that while reading and writing skills are important, there are some very basic skills that will make a big difference to how Preps adjust,” she said.

These include being able to:

- Hold a pencil, zip up their bag, take their shoes off and put them on
- Recognise their belongings and name
- Put their own things away
• Chat with other children
• Sit on the mat for short periods of time for story time
• Go to the toilet by themselves

“These things seem simple to us, but for a Prep student in a new class with other kids they don’t know, they can quickly become overwhelmed.”

**Involve them in the preparation**

“By getting them involved they have some choice and control over the change that is occurring, it also allows for conversations about school. A good way to do this is to get them to go shopping with you to choose their bag and shoes, try on uniforms.

If you really can’t face the idea of the back-to-school shopping as a family group, then let them have a look online beforehand.”

**Tackling lunchtime**

“Let your child help pick their lunchbox and drink bottle if you can. Pick one that is suited to your environment, and insulated in areas where it is hot is always a good idea. Talk to them about what they like for lunch and even consider creating a menu so you can rotate through ideas and they don’t get bored!

“Get them involved in packing their lunches and making their food – it gives them responsibility but they are choosing their lunch so you know they like it.

“When thinking about lunches think about how active they are, are they a talker, do they get bored easily, do they eat a little or a lot, can they open packets and containers, what stores well?

“They need enough protein and energy to keep going all day so a balanced lunchbox is important, remember to check sugar labels as it’s often higher than you think.

“If you have a busy schedule or mornings/evenings are tough think about what you can make ahead of time and store in the fridge or freeze and defrost.”

**Sticking to a routine**

Ms Williamson said consistency was the key and setting an achievable family routine would make the transition to school easier for the entire family.

“After the holidays it is hard work for everyone, but a routine makes a big difference and the earlier you start the better,” she said.

“Have a smaller routine individualised for each child and consider using age-appropriate pictures showing the child doing the task.

“Look at what can be done the night before, such as bag packing or laying out clothes or packing lunches and always get the kids involved whenever you can.”
“Start having conversations about heading back – what are you looking forward to, what is your favourite thing at school, friends, etc? Take a tour of the school with your child and try to understand their concerns and consider how you they can address these.”

“It is also a tough time financially for many families, so see if you can save on uniforms. If uniforms are costly check the school policy – can you get plain shirts, hats, shorts and skirts in the school colours? Is there a second-hand uniform shop or are there second-hand uniforms being sold in your local Facebook group?”

**Monitoring how they’re going**

Ms Williamson said once a child was back at school, it was also important monitor how they are going.

“When school goes back, prepare for kids to be tired in the first couple of weeks. Bed times and good food will be important,” she said.

“It’s also important to ask open-ended questions to monitor how they are going. Instead of asking ‘how was your day?’ ask questions like:

- What was your favourite thing that happened today?
- What happened today that you wish hadn’t happened?
- Are there any rules that are hard to follow?
- What subject was the most interesting today?
- What was something new you read today?
- Did anyone do something nice for you today?
- Did you do something nice for anyone?
- What are you looking forward to tomorrow?
- What is your favourite part of class?
- Did you learn anything new today?
- What made you feel good today?
- If you could change one thing about today what would it be?”

Download the Anglicare ‘[2020 getting ready for Prep checklist](#)’.

**About Anglicare**: Anglicare Southern Queensland is a member of the Anglicare Australia Network and is one of Queensland’s most trusted social welfare organisations. It is a not-for-profit charity delivering a broad range of community services, including homelessness support, mental health and family counselling, foster care and aged care. One in every 30 Queenslanders is empowered by Anglicare Southern Queensland.

**Features • Thursday 23 January 2020 • By Steve Window**

**Safer Internet Day**

Safer Internet Day is marked on Tuesday 11 February in 2020. Safer Internet Day (SID) previously signified the first online safety event of the new year specifically for schools; however, the eSafety Commissioner has evolved the day into a wider community movement.
Safer Internet Day started in the European Union in 2004 to enable children and young people to benefit from the Internet, while also developing a culture of responsibility. The project aimed to create awareness in a positive way so as to promote the use of technology and empower children and young people with accurate information, which would allow them to take responsible decisions online.

Now Safer Internet Day has evolved and reaches 150 countries around the world. The Australian eSafety Commissioner wants to use SID to help you start the conversation about online safety in your wider community, your school, your family and your work.

The worldwide Safer Internet Day movement is coordinated by the INHOPE Network, with the eSafety Commissioner coordinating the day here in Australia. Both organisations have similar missions aligned to ensuring a safer childhood for our kids.

Back in 2004 when Safer Internet Days started, I was a simple flatfoot detective in the Queensland Police, albeit with some technical knowledge. By 2009 I had become involved in investigating crimes conducted against children using the online environment. At first, I believed tracking down people who hurt our children would be just like running any other serious crime investigation. I was wrong. I remember calling my wife one day from work and telling her I couldn't do my job any longer. I said, “I can't go into the details, except to say that I now know monsters do exist.”

I did keep doing the job and in 2010 I had the privilege of being made a trainer in Taskforce Argos. I was filled with apprehension and anxiety due to the gravity of the task. However, I was fortunate to have been mentored by some truly remarkable people and one of those was a detective from the USA Internet Crimes Against Children Taskforce who inspired me with the simple words “A child's innocence can never be replaced.” These words were written on an otherwise worthless coin that he gave me, and I treasure it for its meaning. After collaborating as a group, the message was clear that “every little bit helps” to ensure a safer internet for our kids.

By 2016 the internet seemed to be a vast space of connectivity and innovation with little or no social responsibility. It was and is vulnerable to cyber security threats from issue-motivated groups or criminals and deindividuated persons (someone who feels free to behave impulsively without care of the outcomes, such as trolls and hackers). By 2019 online risks to children were delineated into the following four categories: Conduct (how they use it), Contact (you they connect with), Content (what they look at) and Commercialism (advertising and hidden costs).

It is 2020 and what each of us does online matters, including what we ‘like’, where we go, whom we join, how we talk to others, what we post, how we handle our devices, how we respond and what we consider important enough to click on. The message “every little bit helps” is as valid today as it was 10 years ago.

This is highlighted by the change of language from ‘cyber safety’ to ‘online safety’. The differentiation has been made to distinguish from the complex concept of cyber security (i.e. special language coding, algorithms and highly technical process) to online safety.

Cyber security and online safety do cross over, however. Online safety is something you can do right now by empowering yourself with accurate information to make responsible decisions for you, your families and others. Online safety should not be left solely in the hands of experts, gadgets or programs, as they cannot be 100 percent effective and we cannot fully outsource child supervision. Online safety is about people. It is something that you control. It is the process of how we use
technology and interact with others online. The first step to a better internet is to talk about the risks and ways to avoid them.

What you do matters. Every little bit helps.

Events

**Anglican Schools Commission event: Safer Internet Day, 10 February 2020 9.30 am**

‘Keeping Safe in the Game’

The Anglican Schools Commission hosts the eSafety Commissioner team in a live webinar

An eSafety Commissioner event for Safer Internet Day “Keeping safe in the game” for students in Years 4-6. Empower students to keep safe when gaming. Students will explore skills for creating safer gaming environments, including balancing time online, dealing with abuse and cyberbullying, managing in-app purchases and accessing help and support.

[More information](#)

**Free eSafety Commissioner Events, 11 February 7 pm (AEST) and 12 February 12 pm (AEST)**

‘Teens, tech and time online’

eSafety's live webinar for parents and carers of young people aged 12-18 years will explore the latest research and expert advice for using technology safely. The session will cover how to start the chat about harmful content, relationships and online harassment.

[More information](#)

**Free eSafety Commissioner Events, 12 February 7 pm (AEST) and 14 February 12 pm (AEST)**

‘Helping Kids Thrive Online’

For parents and carers of children aged 5-12 years, the session will cover how to start the chat about harmful content, contact with strangers and cyber bullying.

[More information](#)

**Help spread the online safety message**

Where do you start? [Your community can participate in safer internet day](#).

You can host a Safer Internet Day activity in your office, parish, home or simply start a conversation about coming ‘together for a better internet’. Why not as a group participate in one of the free online parent webinars? Perhaps even over an office lunch?

Register your support and download the resources. Then talk and share about online safety.

Bookmark the revamped [anglicancsaw.org](https://anglicancsaw.org), which will be posting tips and hints leading up to SID.
Climate activism

St Margaret's student Sophia Colledge: "Anthropocentric attitudes have governed the world since the start of the industrial revolution. More than a century on, it's time to reconsider our commitment to the health of the planet."

Young people have always been subject to scrutiny. Whether it be our ignorance, inexperience or unorthodox attitudes, our perceived inability to follow expectations laid down for us by generations prior has been at the forefront of social dialogues for centuries. Most recently, however, as the issue of climate change reaches the attention of global communities, youth activists have again been villainised.

As a 16-year-old student, I find this mentality extremely troubling. Like most of my peers, I share in the common concern for our home, our world and our future. It takes no scientific PhD to observe the daily environmental changes occurring on a local scale, let alone a global one. From degrading water
quality due to irresponsible farming practices to rising carbon emissions as a result of continued funding of non-sustainable energy sources, the existence of a climate emergency IS irrefutable and will only worsen with inaction.

That's where so called, 'climate extremists' come into the spotlight. Merely seeking to challenge widespread complacency towards the deteriorating state of the environment, activists are simply exercising their democratic rights to hold governments accountable. Whether it be through the online sharing of material or organised protest in the streets, all forms of activism vitally maintain societal function and, in such process, breed future political leaders.

As a young Australian, the impending climate disaster we face is deeply alarming. I wish to preserve this world for generations to come. I wish to instil the importance of action within each of us. And, above all, I wish to fulfil my Christian calling to care for God's creation. As a community who supposedly share in the same scripture and values, I sure see a great lack of temperament when it comes to the valid concerns of young people. All too often we have been dismissed, name-called and belittled by members of our own church. It must cease. Otherwise, how are we expected to grow in togetherness?

Last March, along with over 300,000 students across Australia, I made the decision to participate in the Global Climate Strike instigated by Greta Thunberg. Leaving school early to grab my placard, bussing into the city and marching outside Parliament House was truly empowering. I had a stake in my future, I was encouraging the next step towards climate action – pressuring the government to declare a climate crisis. As future rallies like the School Strike 4 Climate continue to flourish and gain momentum, I have faith that the voice of youth and all those who wish to prioritise care for the environment will be heard and will propagate the urgency of national reforms.

Already, international counterparts have funded and implemented considerable sustainable policies, backed by the willing corporation of civilians. They have paved the way, shown us a small sampling of a plethora of possibilities to come. Therefore, it is only just to follow. We have the infrastructural means to drastically innovate energy production, we have the scientific means to track our progress and meet set targets...yet despite this, what we appear to fundamentally lack is the political will to do so!

In a seemingly barren political landscape of contradictory and poorly enacted policies, a new tide of capable leadership is called upon more than ever. Commitment to climate action will require ambition, dedication and, justifiably, compromise. We can't expect to redirect national industries overnight, however with revitalised MP-driven proposals and an enlivened public body, progress can be made.

Now, encouraging political redirection is all well and good provided small-scale ethical decisions are made additionally. No one likes a hypocrite — so through widespread mindful consumption and deliberate disposal of items, each of us has the potential to contribute to era-defining efforts in the reversal of climate change. No matter your background, or indeed, political orientation, it won't ever hurt to scrounge up some decency to care for the world around you.

Anthropocentric attitudes have governed the world since the start of the industrial revolution. More than a century on, it's time to reconsider our commitment to the health of the planet. An international obligation, a moral impetus and a future worth protecting.
More folks than ever are shoudering their backpacks, pulling on their hiking boots and setting off on a pilgrim journey.

Have you felt this yearning? Has your heart been stirred to “long on pilgrimage to go...seeking foreign strands...(and) distant shrines renowned in sundry lands” (to quote Chaucer in The Canterbury Tales)?

Amidst the noise and bustle of modern life, the tyranny of the overwhelming ‘to do’ list, the incessant demands of our technological devices and our own time poverty, we often struggle to create space in our lives. How often do we simply just stop, pause and listen to ourselves and also to the Divine?

Sometimes, it takes something drastic for this to happen – perhaps exhaustion, illness, a crisis or one of life’s severe reversals. Other times, we find ourselves choosing to pause in order to rest, re-create and find some solitude.

But, what sometimes happens when we do stop and ‘unplug’? We may find ourselves alone and by ourselves. How terrifying this can be...to encounter the person you truly are and perhaps also the One who truly is.

Often our listening can also become distinctly uncomfortable...perhaps too many inconvenient Divine invitations arise seeking to pull us away from the demands of our usual lives, agendas and obligations.
We sometimes feel the yearning to put all that stuff ‘on hold’ and venture forth to explore further – perhaps going deeper inwards, as well as further outwards to foreign lands.

As the faithful, we are often reminded to let go of seeking control over our lives, recognising that, “Is not the all-powerful God the pilot...of our boat? Leave it to him. He himself guides our journey as he wills” (to quote St Brendan).

Increasingly, there are those in the West who are not churched that also feel, and are yielding to, this call.

For both seekers within and outside of the Church, this can be a truly challenging time when past attitudes, values, habits and behaviours, which seemed to serve us well in the past, no longer fulfil our needs.

The pain to stay where you are within your comfort zone may at some point become greater than the pain involved in risking growing and stepping forth and becoming who you are meant, and are being called, to be and become.

In past times, this yearning was recognised as what it actually is – a “holy longing” (Goethe), a restlessness to embark upon your true pilgrim quest...until “rest” is finally found in the Divine who made us for himself (as suggested by St Augustine).

Once we decide to surrender to this yearning...what is the next step? Some seekers create space in their diaries, undertake their preparations and head off on a journey to a faraway sacred location, such as Canterbury, Jerusalem, Santiago de Compostela or Iona, so that external travel may accompany and inform their internal quest. Others more modestly focus on ‘mini pilgrimages’, such as retreats, meditation days and labyrinth walks.

Whilst everyone's pilgrim quest and path are different, one thing remains the same – you return a different person to the one who departed, or in the words of TS Eliot: “You arrive where you started...and know the place for the first time.”

In order to encourage and foster growth in disciples and discipleship, how are we as the Church called to respond to the emerging yearning for pilgrimage? Opportunities abound, with more Anglican ministries, parishes and schools offering pilgrimages, both locally and abroad.

I have been privileged to join in some of the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) pilgrimages to St George's College in Jerusalem and Campfire In The Heart in Alice Springs. Both were life changing for me and my fellow pilgrims, while also supportive the mission of ABM.

My parish at St Matthew's, Holland Park has organised opportunities for parishioners and the wider community to experience different types of pilgrimages for themselves. These opportunities include a ‘Pilgrimage around our church’, exploring different physical aspects and sacred spaces, including the baptismal font, stained glass windows, sanctuary, memorial garden and artworks, as different prayer and Saturday morning meditation stations. In doing so, we offer an opportunity for the broader community to be welcomed and experience the church space. We also annually walk in pilgrimage from Holland Park to the Cathedral for the Sunday Evensong service, as well as hold pilgrimage labyrinth walks on a monthly basis.
Perhaps this is one of our callings at this time as a church. In past times, the parish was the point of encouragement, departure and return for pilgrims. Can we reposition ourselves to again facilitate fresh opportunities for pilgrimage? Will we encourage and seek to assist seekers restless for spiritual growth and Divine encounter?

“Keep the pilgrim spirit always. Now, go and live your lives without fear,” says the Bishop of Santiago at the pilgrim mass to pilgrims at the end of El Camino de Compostela.

For more information on Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) pilgrimages, please visit the ABM website. For more information on the St Matthew's, Holland Park 'Pilgrimage around our church' and walks to the Cathedral for Sunday Evensong, please contact the Parish Priest, Archdeacon Allan Paulsen at ajpaulsen@bigpond.com.

Editor’s note: anglican focus is keen to hear from people in our Diocesan community about their own pilgrim journeys, whether through ABM pilgrimages, labyrinth walks, journeys to sacred places abroad or other ways of sacred journeying. Please email the Editor, Michelle McDonald at focus@anglicanchurchsq.org.au if you would like to share your story.

Films & TV • Tuesday 24 December 2019 • By Jonathan Sargeant

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker

Attend any workshop on writing stories, whether for scripts, novels or short stories, and eventually you'll hear this: "It's a cinch to start a story. What's really tricky is finishing it!" This issue is magnified when the story at hand is a decades-spanning saga, revered all over the globe. It's been 42 years since the first Star Wars film was released. When social theorists define the term 'cultural phenomenon', Star Wars is often in the next sentence. People name their children after these characters and we theologise about the themes from the pulpit. With all of this pressure, does Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker deliver?
Let’s start with the answer to that build up: yes. It’s a resounding yes, with maybe a minor quibble or two.

With the Resistance led by Carrie Fisher’s General Leia on the run, evil Supreme Leader Kylo Ren (Adam Driver) hunts for an item that will forever cement his position. With formerly dead (!) Emperor Palpatine (Ian McDiarmid) reappearing, that position looks tenuous! And, do embers of light still battle the darkness in Kylo’s soul? Certainly, and former scavenger and Force-sensitive protagonist Rey (Daisy Ridley) hopes to find out. With those threads in place, this last Star Wars film (for now) launches at light speed.

That frenetic pace is kept up for two hours plus. One might argue it needs to; there are so many characters, storylines and themes to resolve in this film. Where such a pace might be wearing (see the films of Michael Bay!), here there is such a euphoric vigour that the film is ultimately energising. Propelled by amazing set pieces, esprit de corps-based comic banter and a surprisingly nuanced struggle between good and evil, the film exhibits a relentless creativity, not easy considering the well-worn paths of the series (and many, many spinoffs in books, comics etc) for more than four decades.

The wonderful performances of Driver and Ridley deserve special mention. Their faces, often large in the frame, carry the weight of the spiritual heart of Rise of Skywalker. Both manage to convey the struggle that goes on in each of our hearts, establishing that a duality of mind and spirit is complicated and fraught. There’s a lot more going on here than in your everyday blockbuster, providing good fodder for homiletic examination. With a light and dark side and the area in between, the Force remains a potent concept for spiritual pondering.

There’s an extra touch of poignance here, too, because Carrie Fisher features in a pivotal role. That’s unsurprising until you realise the actor died in 2016 before shooting began. With unused footage from previous instalments, director Abrams and fellow scriptwriter Chris Terrio have crafted a story which enables Fisher to appear as a present character. Seeing her on the screen was a bit disorienting at first, but her performance works well.

There were times I wanted the pace to ease a little to allow big emotional moments to have their chance to breathe. It’s no spoiler to acknowledge that, like every other Star Wars film, with redemption and sacrifice as key themes, not everyone is going to make it out alive. The hectic momentum can sometimes be confusing plot-wise, too.

But the sheer feat of successfully tying together so much of the Star Wars universe into what is a fitting and emotionally-charged end with such good-natured verve and beautifully rendered film-making is to be soundly applauded.

Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker, rated M, is directed by JJ Abrams.
Over 10% of CHAC graduates awarded OP1s

Cannon Hill Anglican College (CHAC) is delighted to announce that 10.8 percent of their 2019 Year 12 student cohort achieved an OP 1 and 47.3 percent of the cohort achieved an OP 1-5.

Principal Gary O’Brien said that the school community is proud of the students’ results and keen to see how the 2019 graduating cohort will contribute to the broader community in the future.

“CHAC is very proud of the results achieved by our recent Year 12 graduates – each student was supported and encouraged to pursue their very best, and these exceptional results reflect the College’s commitment to preparing world- and work-ready individuals,” Mr O’Brien said.

“We are delighted with these outcomes and look forward to watching our graduates as they continue to contribute to society in meaningful ways.”

Recent CHAC OP1-awarded graduates Mia, Dan, Jacques, Jarrod and Emily have shared their Year 12 highlights and offer advice for future senior students.

Mia, who is looking to study Veterinary Science at The University of Queensland, said that, “I think it’s good to get involved in the community, there are so many extra-curricular activities to be a part of it whilst you are in Year 12.”

Dan, who is hoping to study Maths and Economics at The University of Queensland, said that, “Year 12 is really just about doing your best, you put the effort in where you can and do your best.”
Jacques, who is looking to study International Studies at The University of Queensland, said that, “My advice would be to take hold of as many opportunities you can that come around.”

Jarrod, who is keen to study Advanced Science and Maths at The University of Queensland, said that, “For me, it was to not be discouraged – if you do bad in one assessment, it’s not the end of the world.”

Emily, who is looking to study Law and Science at The University of Queensland, said that, “For me, it was the support network and the community at CHAC, it was great.”

Three other CHAC Year 12 students were also awarded OP1s.

All 2019 Year 12 graduates will be invited back to CHAC in February 2020 to attend the annual Honours Assembly where they will be formally recognised.

This was the last year of OPs in Queensland, with 2020 seeing the introduction of the ATAR system.

**Reflections • Thursday 23 January 2020 • By The Rev'd Andrew Schmidt**

**What does ‘changing the date’ say about Aussie values?**

At the Good Shepherd Church in Bundaberg West, we have a bit of an Australia Day tradition with a themed morning tea after church on Sunday, a few damper, some lamingtons, meat pies and a couple of Australian bush ballad songs.

I often wonder if it is appropriate to reflect on Australia Day in the context of the church service, and I usually choose not to. I have made that choice in the past because I feel it does the church no favour to be too mixed up with nationalism and national identity.

I also wonder about the ‘change the date’ conversation. When I initially heard about ‘change the date’, my first thought was, ‘Why bother? It’s just a day!’ But, there are at least two problems with ‘It’s just a day!’ thinking. The first and most obvious is, if it is merely a day, then why not change it? The second problem is deeper – that it is not just a day. Historically, 26 January marks the date that the First Fleet landed at what is now named Sydney Cove in Port Jackson, which for some people is the birth of modern Australia, and for others the day an invading nation landed. When the history of the day is considered, it becomes clear why celebrating Australia Day on 26 January is difficult for many people.

I then started to think about what Australia Day might symbolically honour. What are the values we are trying to renew and celebrate in this annual telling of our story? I am sure most people would use language like ‘mateship’, ‘frankness with the truth’, a ‘fair go for all’ and ‘easy going’. Some people would even point to a multi-cultural make up of our population, and a comparably flat class structure.

If these are the things we value, not just things we say we value, then applying these to the question of when we celebrate Australia Day means we would consider changing the date. These values have no direct connection to 26 January 1788, but should inspire us to greater empathy for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mates who hurt every year at this time.

I suspect that resistance to changing the date for Australia Day comes from people who have some or more of the following inclinations.
Some people, including me, have an instinctive reaction against change. This is often bolstered by a perception that the world is rapidly changing and we do not know where the change is going to end. I suspect this may be one of the reasons for a conservative approach to church life in general, as people desperately want certainty in a shifting culture.

Others no doubt feel a genealogical connection to the First Fleet colonists and do not feel like they are descendants of an invading force, but rather that Australia is their home and 26 January marks the start of that. They may feel as though they and their ancestors are being personally attacked by the ‘change the date’ conversation, and so are tempted to react rather than reflect.

All in all, I think changing the date would be the ‘Aussie’ thing to do. Doing so would best reflect our shared values of ‘mateship’, ‘frankness’, a ‘fair go for all’ and ‘easy going-ness’, by recognising the hurt for our mates, being frank about the history of 26 January 1788, being willing to give all people of this land a fair go, and being open to trying something different.

What are your thoughts?

News • Tuesday 21 January 2020

Aboriginal Anglican leaders urge a cautious reading of Australia Day Lectionary texts

This year's NAIDOC Week theme is 'Always Was, Always Will Be'

The Rev'd Dr Garry Worete Deverell, Trawloolway man and Vice-Chancellor's Fellow in Indigenous Theologies with the University of Divinity, is asking Anglicans to reflect critically upon this week's Lectionary Readings for Australia Day.

As well as setting out readings for the Third Sunday after Epiphany, An Australian Lectionary 2020 lists optional readings for Australia Day, including Deuteronomy 8.5-14a which describes God's provision of a 'promised land' for Israel.

Dr Deverell states “I beg you to read these texts with caution. If they are read as legitimising the invasion of this country by Europeans (and without treaty) then I believe we will have missed the terror inherent in these texts, and therefore the gospel of God. If you use these texts, please read them critically, and in the light of recent 'post-colonial' biblical scholarship.”

ABM's Reconciliation, Advocacy and Education Missioner, Brad Chapman points out that the Anglican lectionary makes a choice to associate Australia Day with a text about God giving an already inhabited land to another group of people.

National Aboriginal Bishop, Chris McLeod is aware of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander congregations in the Anglican Church who find the readings set for Australia Day offensive and confronting.

ABM is calling on the Anglican Church of Australia to consult with NATSIAC (the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council) about the ongoing appropriateness of the Australia Day readings. “Listening to the perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is critical for our missional work of reconciliation” says Mr Chapman.
Another Aboriginal Anglican Priest, The Rev'd Glenn Loughrey has produced a special liturgy for January 26, *An Australian Eucharist for Lament & Hope*. The service begins with an acknowledgement of country and imagines Australians coming together in a post-colonial society, alert and repentant of the injustices in our history, and forming a new understanding of who we are as a nation.

For Dr Deverell and Bishop McLeod, an attractive option for churches on January 26 is to use the default readings set out for the Third Sunday after Epiphany rather than the Australia Day options.

ABM is encouraging all churches to begin Sunday services with an Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners of the land where they meet. For anyone wanting to think further about these issues, the free study guide *A Voice in the Wilderness* begins with a chapter exploring the Doctrine of Discovery.

*A link to the liturgy is provided for information. A reminder that Anglicans should seek the permission of their bishop for new liturgy where required.*

**News • Tuesday 28 January 2020**

**Anglican Communion called to repent as primates affirm commitment to walk together**

A new Communion-wide Eucharistic liturgy prepared by the Task Group was used for the first time during a service for Primates on the shores of the River Jordan.

The work of a Task Group, which was established by the Archbishop of Canterbury after the January 2016 Primates’ Meeting, has been commended by the Primates.
The Task Group has called for a Season of Repentance, focused around the fifth Sunday in Lent this year (29 March), and has prepared a common Anglican Communion eucharistic liturgy and papers on Anglican identity.

In their communiqué, released at the end of last week’s Primates’ Meeting, the Primates explained that the Task Group was established “to look at how we might walk together despite the complexities we face.”

They added: “at this meeting we affirmed our continued commitment to walk together; we received the work of the Task Group and commended it to the other Instruments of Communion – the Lambeth Conference and the Anglican Consultative Council.”

They also recommended that a new group be established “to continue the work of the Task Group to explore how we live and work together in the light of the Lambeth Conference.

“We invite the Churches of the Anglican Communion to set apart the Fifth Sunday of Lent (29 March 2020) as a day to focus on the Prayers of Repentance produced by the Task Group.”

Last week’s meeting in Jordan was the third Primates’ Meeting since Justin Welby became Archbishop of Canterbury. His first, in January 2016, was called in part to address disagreements and division within the Anglican Communion. At that meeting, the Primates agreed to “walk together, however painful this is, and despite our differences, as a deep expression of our unity in the body of Christ.”

At the next meeting, in October 2017, the Primates reviewed the previous discussion and agreement to walk together, and said: “we endorsed this approach, which we will continue with renewed commitment”.

In 2018 and 2019 a series of six regional Primates’ Meetings were held at which the Anglican leaders discussed plans for the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops, taking place in July and August this year.

Those plans formed part of the Primates’ discussions last week in Jordan.

- Read the Communiqué released by the Primates at the conclusion of their meeting.

Sunday Devotion: 2 February 2020, Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

What pleases God?

**Main Readings:** [Micah 6.1-8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Micah%206.1-8&version=ESV); [Psalm 15](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2015&version=ESV); [1 Corinthians 1.18-31](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%201.18-31&version=ESV); [Matthew 5.1-12](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%205.1-12&version=ESV)


“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” ([Micah 6.8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Micah%206.8&version=ESV))

The popular movie, *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, in which Tom Hanks portrays the children's television presenter ‘Mister Rogers’, is a timely story of kindness triumphing over cynicism. Fred Rogers was actually a Presbyterian minister with a Master of Divinity degree. And, as the movie reveals, his humility, empathy and care for others reflect the theme at the end of today's reading from Micah.

During the eighth century BC, Judah was experiencing great wealth and prosperity. It appeared that God's people were thriving, but there was something wrong. Corruption, exploitation, ethical violations, hollow sacrifices and empty acts of worship abounded. The nation had drifted far from God.

Micah 6.1-8 answers three related questions: What does God want from us? How are we to live? What is pleasing to God? Putting it simply, we are required to act justly, love others, and walk humbly with God. The first two requirements focus on people. Micah reminds us that we have a responsibility to work for social justice in our society – working against racism and discrimination and working together to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and heal the sick. The third requirement focuses on our relationship with God. To walk humbly with God is to live in relationship with him through active prayer, discernment, daily obedience and worship.

Jesus did not come to establish a new set of beliefs or doctrines – he came to show us a new way of life, a life of where justice, kindness and humility prevail.