May I speak in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

1970 was a good year, a great year, for rock and pop music! That is 50 years ago. It was the year that The Beatles released Grammy award-winning ‘Let it Be’ and American folk-rock duo Simon and Garfunkel released another Grammy winning song ‘Bridge Over Troubled Water’.

Pop music epitomises the ephemeral. Pop music comes and goes and mostly it is forgotten. But, I want to defend the lyricism of these two timeless songs 1970 by The Beatles and Simon and Garfunkel.

Paul Simon, of Simon and Garfunkel, is considered to be one of the greatest lyricists of the 20th Century, writing lyrics to songs like ‘The Sound of Silence’, which includes lines like ‘Hello darkness, my old friend’, and ‘Graceland’, which includes ‘But I’ve reason to believe; We both will be received; In Graceland’.

Bridge Over troubled Water was Simon and Garfunkel’s final original studio album together and even this masterpiece contains within it a record of the struggles they were having as a duo. Garfunkel thought Paul Simon had not written enough for the song, so the third verse beginning ‘Sail on silver girl’ was added. This album is still considered a masterpiece of modern music and was a world-wide smash hit for them. But read the lyrics as poetry and there is a deep challenge there for how we should be to a friend in need:

‘When you’re weary, feeling small
When tears are in your eyes, I’ll dry them all
I’m on your side, oh, when times get rough
And friends just can’t be found
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down’
In that same year, English rock band The Beatles also released their final studio album *Let it Be*. It had been recorded the year before and was then released after *Abbey Road*. By the time the album was released, the group had already broken up. Yet what a gift are these lyrics, these words by singer-songwriter Paul McCartney:

> When I find myself in times of trouble  
> Mother Mary comes to me  
> Speaking words of wisdom, let it be.  
> And in my hour of darkness  
> She is standing right in front of me  
> Speaking words of wisdom, let it be.  
> Let it be, let it be.  
> Whisper words of wisdom, let it be.’

Paul McCartney’s mother was Mary McCartney and he has said at times that the song is about her. At other times he has said it is up to the listener to work out whom the song is about.

Both McCartney and Simon are adept at using the language and imagery of faith in their music and both these songs pay their respects to Gospel and faith traditions in their melodies and lyrics.

These songs like so many others are an ongoing gift – their words both sustain and challenge. This is not to say that we do not have a huge repository of powerful faith-filled lyrics in the canon of hymns – we do – but pop music at times can give even hymn lyrics a run for their money.

What great rock, pop or folk songs from 1970 inspire you in your faith and mission and why?

**Author’s note:** I had some somewhat gentle pushback for not including Don McLean’s ‘American Pie’ in this reflection. Alas, this classic was released in 1971.

**Features • Monday 24 February 2020 • By Adrian Gibb**

**Mother Emma’s Day**

Mother Emma (Image from One Hundred Years of Ministry – A History of the Society of the Sacred Advent 1892-1992)
On 9 March of each year, a special commemoration takes place within the Society of the Sacred Advent (SSA), and the schools associated with the sisters, as well as the Diocese as a whole. This is Mother Emma’s Day, celebrating the life of the former Mother Superior of the community who died on 9 March 1939.

Emma Crawford was born in Kent, in the United Kingdom, in 1864. It is believed she may have had some teaching experience before, along with her family, migrating to Queensland in the early 1890s. At the same time, The Rev’d Canon Montagu Stone-Wigg persuaded Caroline Balguy to come to Brisbane in 1892 to begin the Society of the Sacred Advent. It was with Sister Caroline in charge that Emma Crawford became a postulant of the SSA in 1896 and a Professed Sister on 28 December 1897.

Mother Caroline resigned as Mother Superior in 1905 and by 1906 Sister Emma took on her mantle. She would remain Mother Superior for the next 33 years and became so synonymous with the SSA that it was written in the May 1939 issue of *The Church Chronicle* that, “…if it seems impossible to separate the Mother’s life from that of the community, that is as she herself would have wished it to be.” During her time as Mother Superior, the SSA maintained or opened schools, such as St Margaret’s, St Aidan’s, St Anne’s in Townsville, St Mary’s in Herberton, St Gabriel’s in Charters Towers, and St Faith’s in Yeppoon. Two sisters were even sent to Perth in 1933 to take charge of a children’s home there. Added to this, the nursing work the SSA sisters were tasked with when St Martin’s War Memorial Hospital was opened in Brisbane in the early 1920s, and it would seem an understatement to say that Mother Emma worked extremely hard and efficiently.

In his book on the SSA *The Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Advent and their Contribution to Educating Girls since 1895*, author Raymond Geise notes that Mother Emma was renowned for her love of children and her gentle nature, and was considered a bastion of calmness and serenity, although underneath that exterior, or perhaps alongside it, was a strength and determination to face challenges and expand the Society of the Sacred Advent and its reach.

Mother Emma died after a battle with cancer in 1939. At that time an article was written in *The Church Chronicle* about Mother Emma, by an anonymous ‘Sister of the S.S.A’. Though her time as Mother Superior is incorrectly listed as beginning in 1904 rather than 1906, the love and admiration the article’s writer obviously had for Mother Emma leaps from the page. She speaks of the late Mother’s devotion to service, and her capacity to always be present in chapel for the Offices of the day even when, ‘...ill health or discomfort might have excused her absence’. A quote is given as an example of all that Mother Emma stood for, and believed in, “A life that is lived in Christ...does not surrender to weariness or discouragement.”

While it was certainly Mother Caroline who was the founder of the SSA, it was her successor, Mother Emma, who took over the community in its infancy and oversaw 30 years of growth and service to the education, health, and spiritual wellbeing of many Queenslanders. In a tribute upon her death, Bishop John Oliver Feetham of North Queensland said, ‘Of all the people who have lived in Queensland, there are few who have affected it so powerfully as Mother Emma. She ranks as the principal benefactress of this Diocese, which had always a large place in her heart’.

With such a contribution, it is indeed fitting that her life should be celebrated, on Mother Emma’s Day, each year.
Urban farm with a mission

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me...Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25.35,40)

The idea for Baroona Farm, located at St Francis College, started in late 2018 after a period of wondering how my first vocation and studies in horticultural science might be able to combine with my vocation as a priest in God’s church. I looked at various community gardens and urban farms in different areas of our country and, for the most part, I found that these were often set up as small businesses or favoured those who wanted to garden out of interest. Having then reflected on what a ‘missional farm’ might look like, a number of residents from St Francis and I reflected together what it might mean to grow a large amount of food with and for those who are in a position where they cannot afford, or even have access to, fresh organic produce. In particular, we thought of people seeking asylum, many of who are not able to work while waiting for their claims to be processed and often have to rely on the generosity of others to feed and house themselves and their families.

So, we set out to ‘grow food and community with and for the nutritionally vulnerable’.

Not long after moving on site at St Francis College in 2018, I identified the old unused tennis court as a potential site for developing the farm. In early 2019, we approached the Romero Centre, a Christian organisation supporting refugees in and around Brisbane, to see if they would like to partner with us in developing this project. Soon after, we hosted one of the men’s groups on site to explore the idea more and start work. This relationship has continued over the last year with a group of men coming regularly and joining with others in the St Francis community.

Romero Centre Case Coordinator Mengistu Hailu shared the following regarding the significance of the project for his centre’s men’s group:
“The Men’s Group comes to the farm regularly to assist. Baroona Farm is a place of joy where people come, enjoy and have positive interactions. The Farm is a place where the men encourage each other, and share skills, experiences and culture. The Rev’d Samuel’s passion, commitment and determination amaze me every day. He puts huge energy, effort and coordination time into this project. The project will be a source of farm products for the Romero Centre soon. It will contribute towards filling up the green grocery needs at our centre.”

We chose the name ‘Baroona Farm’, firstly because of the iconic Brisbane street name that St Francis College borders, and secondly for its connection to the Aboriginal peoples of the area. For the Jagera and Turrbal peoples, the word ‘Baroona’ can be interpreted as ‘a place far away’. If this is a true interpretation, which we are still seeking clarification on, then it is a rather fitting name for a place where we offer welcome and hospitality to those whose home countries may be far away.

In growing the organic produce and building community alongside the Romero Centre men’s group members, we are embracing the Anglican Marks of Mission, “to respond to human need by loving service”; “to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation”; and, “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.”

To grow the gardens, we are utilising ‘wicking bed’ technology designed by Queensland engineer Colin Austin. This type of garden bed is built inside recycled IBC tanks which hold a reservoir of water at the bottom that is then ‘wicked’ upwards through the soil profile to the plant. This greatly reduces evaporation and water loss through surface watering and is therefore a highly sustainable way of growing crops. Currently we have 20 large raised beds in place on the old tennis court and the plan is to completely fill it, which will involve around 180 beds in total. Each bed costs around $250 to make and set up with a crop.

The ‘Baroona Farm’ ministry will be officially launched and blessed at St Francis College by Archbishop Phillip Aspinall on Saturday 7 March at 3 pm. At this occasion, Brisbane City Council will also be launching one of their composting hubs on the St Francis College site at the Baroona Rd entrance. More information on Facebook.

If you would like to make a financial contribution to Baroona Farm, please use the following electronic transfer details: Account Name: Baroona Farm; BSB: 704-901; Account: 00015479

If you would like to get involved with the project, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please email baroonafarm@gmail.com or call The Rev’d Samuel Dow on 0425 252318.
Glennie’s sweet fundraiser for Anglicare residents

The Glennie School Year 6 Student Representative Council decided to conduct a fundraiser late last year to raise money to assist the residents of Anglicare’s Symes Thorpe Residential Aged Care in Toowoomba. We had heard that residents were unable to have animals in the home, which meant many had to give up their pets when they went there. We love our pets and wanted to organise a fundraiser that had something to do with animals, while also cheer the residents. So, after a lot of discussion, we decided on ‘Pics of Pets’ as our fundraiser.

On the day of the fundraiser, the SRC girls spoke about the reason for the fundraiser and announced the winners of the competitions that had been running throughout the week leading up to the day.

For one of the fundraising competitions, we made two large posters featuring each SRC member and her pet. For a donation, students were given the opportunity to match the right pet with the right SRC girl. We awarded prizes for this competition on the day.

For the other competition, girls from each year level were asked to bring to school a photo of their own pet and put this photo in the boxes provided. There was a lucky draw from each box and prizes were given to those winners as well.

We also raised money by selling donuts that one of the parents of an SRC Councillor donated.

There were enough donuts for everyone from Kindergarten to Year Six and these were shared at morning tea to raise additional money. It made the day really special for all of us!

We raised enough money to purchase seven beautiful animal prints for the residents of Symes Thorpe, who now can enjoy the pictures and be reminded daily of their own pets and their happy memories of them.
Lessons in peacemaking from Clergy Summer School

National Aboriginal Bishop Chris McLeod (left) spoke about ‘Indigenous Spirituality’ at the Clergy Summer School, pictured with Archbishop Phillip Aspinall and The Rev’d William Loader (Image courtesy of The Rev’d Robert Paget)

Having never been to Clergy Summer School before, but only ever having heard positive feedback about the topics and guest speakers, I attended this year’s gathering at The Southport School in mid-January not quite knowing what to expect. Thankfully it lived up to its reputation!

This year’s speakers were Bishop Chris McLeod (addressing the topic of Indigenous Spirituality), The Rev’d William Loader (exploring Attitudes Towards Sexuality in the New Testament World) and The Rev’d Jazz Dow (who spoke about Being Intentional about Slow Church). Whilst we as Church internally and externally engage with all of these subjects, it is the presentation by Bishop Chris that I wish to reflect on.

Bishop Chris began his sessions by sharing some deeply personal stories of his own childhood, family and ancestry. He is of Gurindji descent, has been involved in ministry alongside Aboriginal peoples for more than 20 years and is responsible for developing and overseeing ministry among Aboriginal peoples nationally. As a master storyteller, he drew us into his own journey of faith, sharing stories with us as if we were sitting around the campfire having a yarn.

His sharing was open, honest and occasionally deeply painful. At times we laughed, at other times we sat in silence, but by the end of his sharing we were left in no doubt of the pain and challenges many First Nations peoples have experienced and continue to experience through intergenerational trauma.

During these sessions, Bishop Chris explored the role the Church has played over the years, at times protecting the remnants of colonial expansion, at other times arguably complicit with the oppression of First Nations peoples and the dispossession of their lands across the globe.

Bishop Chris’ presentation concluded with an invitation to consider how we as Church may explore ways to connect with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, to respectfully engage with our shared
history, to acknowledge the hurt and damage that the Church has committed in the past, to pursue Reconciliation, and to look at how we can collectively journey forward together.

As the Priest-in-Charge at St John’s, Hervey Bay, I have had the privilege of connecting with numerous elders of the Butchulla people in the few years that I have been on the Fraser Coast. The Butchulla people, who have been the Traditional Owners of K’gari (Fraser Island) and the neighbouring mainland for thousands of years, are a proud people with wisdom to share with all those willing to listen. Whilst our parish has engaged in small ways with the Butchulla community, attending this session by Bishop Chris further opened my eyes to the intergenerational pain and hurt, resulting from the dispossession of ancestral lands, forced/slave labour, experiences of the Stolen Generations, and the tearing apart of families through forced relocation. Sadly, their story is not unique, sharing their history of oppression with Aboriginal peoples across Australia.

Bishop Chris emphasised that many, if not all, First Nations groups in his experience are willing to work together with government, local community groups and the Church towards Reconciliation. The Church has a role to play in the Reconciliation of all people in our country. Whether it be at the episcopal level on a national or diocesan scale, or at a personal level in the local parish, we all can do our part. However, underpinning the notion of Reconciliation is the need for honesty, truth telling and an openness to listen.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups are proud inheritors of ancient wisdom and customs. In my experience, they seek a meeting of open minds and hearts, a meeting of equals, where together true Reconciliation can occur. How this can happen on a local scale is up to each parish, but I would encourage parishes (as we have started to do in Hervey Bay) to seek ways to engage with a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group.

Seek out the Elders, meet with them and explore how they wish to engage with your parish. Invite First Nations peoples in your area to speak at small group gatherings, breakfast events or church services. Learn about your parish’s and the Anglican Church’s history in the region. I have only recently been made aware of an Anglican Mission run on the western side of K’gari which has been described as “a sand-fly infested containment area...run on strict military lines [where the] death rate was abnormally high even for the times” (The Badtjala People: A Cultural and Environmental Interpretation of Fraser Island, 1994, p.16).

Whilst this may be new to me and many in our parish in Hervey Bay, these stories have most likely been passed down through the generations by many Butchulla people. If your parish is associated with an Anglican school, perhaps explore ways of working with the school to engage with the Traditional Owners. A few years ago, Fraser Coast Anglican College, as part of Archbishop Phillip Aspinall’s annual theme of Peace and Reconciliation, ran a week’s worth of events celebrating Butchulla culture. Members of the community came and danced and shared stories, music and art with the students.

Intentionally look for that which unites (rather than that which divides) the local First Nations groups and your church. The Butchulla people have lived for thousands of years by these three rules:

1. what is good for the land comes first
2. do not take or touch anything that does not belong to you
3. if you have plenty, you must share.

It is easy to see how the Fraser Coast’s Butchulla rules of life align with the Christian values of stewardship, grace and love – there is much more that unites us as a people than divides us, but we must be intentional in our peacemaking.

So, my thanks to the organisers of this year’s Clergy Summer School and to the guest speakers. If you are ordained, I encourage you to attend next year’s gathering; if not, I encourage you to persuade your priest to
attend. No doubt it will be an educational and enlightening experience for them and their ministries in your parish.

Hear Bishop Chris McLeod speak about Reconciliation in a public lecture he gave at St John’s Cathedral to mark National Reconciliation Week in 2019.

Spotlight Q&A • Sunday 23 February 2020 • By Sarah Gover

Q&A with ABM volunteer, Honorary Lay Minister and mum, Sarah Gover

(L-R) Marilyn Oulds, Bishop Bill Ray, Lynette Keyes and Saran Gover at St Francis College in July 2017 with the ABM Synod banner

Sarah is wife of Dave, and mother to three young adult sons. They attend North Pine Anglican Church where Dave is the Priest’s Warden, and Sarah is a Synod representative. This term, Sarah is helping out North Pine Anglican Church’s Mainly Music programme and is helping to start up a kids’ lunch time Bible Club at the local state primary school. Sarah enjoys travelling and the fast and furious banter that happens when all her family is home.

Where do you currently live and where do you worship?

I live in Carseldine and gather with the 9am congregation at North Pine Anglican Church in Petrie. We are currently at the end of a well-used, energising one-year interregnum and are now looking forward to welcoming our new parish priest in early March.

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

I was baptised at Holy Trinity Church in Rangiora, New Zealand. Since then I have been a part of the Anglican Church in various parts of New Zealand, America, Kenya, Rwanda, and Gippsland, including working as a youth worker for the Diocese of Nelson NZ, and as a Community Development Officer in the Diocese of Gippsland. Four years ago, I moved to Brisbane and worked as an educator for the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) for a year. Since then I have been a member of the Diocesan ABM committee.

What are your current roles and what do your roles involve?
I have just been appointed as an Honorary Lay Minister, Parish Development in the Northern Region. It means I am available to work with parishes on all kinds of ‘stuff’ from connecting with their communities, to developing and strengthening their mission partnerships.

**What projects and activities are you currently working on?**

I have been implementing recommendations of a scenario-based research project at St Paul’s School in Bald Hills. The project expanded a piece of research conducted by the school to include a parent perspective on the educational transformation happening in Australia.

**What have been the highlights of your roles so far?**

Last year I had the privilege of spending time in Gayndah supporting the parish as they strengthened a relationship they had with the Solomon Islands. I had been living in the city for three years and until I started visiting Gayndah, I hadn’t realised how much I missed the country and rural people.

**What have been the key challenges of your roles so far?**

One of the biggest challenges I have had is using the skills and experienced I have gained in other Dioceses to benefit the Church. As a community development worker in Gippsland, I had the privilege to help parishes establish many projects, including preschool music programmes; Gunaikurnai language and culture sharing initiatives; youth mental health programmes; a community meal; and emergency food programmes; no-interest loan schemes; schoolies to Africa; and, a men’s parenting programme in a local prison. When I moved to Brisbane, I realised that there were no paid vacancies, so I began to volunteer for Bishop Jeremy Greaves in the Northern Region.

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

To engage with two or three new parishes, to learn about their communities, to see what assets the parishes have and to walk with the parish, as we see what interesting opportunities and possibilities God has planned for them and their communities.

(L-R): Marilyn Oulds, Sarah Gover and Roxanne Doyle (QCWA Branch President) checking a pattern for a competition at a QCWA craft meeting in Sandgate in September 2019
Can you tell us a little about your personal faith journey?

My faith journey has been one of following God’s call, knowing that wherever I am I will always be able to find ‘family’. After two years studying in America I was disillusioned by ‘church’ stuff and ended up in Kenya, where I was gently loved back to faith by Church family in Nairobi.

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

My faith allows me to take risks, because I know I am loved by God and I am assured of salvation.

What is your favourite scripture and why?

I love the idea of flying like an eagle, of endless energy and determination, but Isaiah 40:31 reminds me that first I must wait. I am often tempted to run into a situation headfirst, and this verse prompts me to first wait, to listen.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

Bishop John McIntyre, my manager for five years in Gippsland, was a humble man, with an inner strength that he willingly shared with others. He showed me how Christ loved, without barriers, or discrimination.

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?

I know it’s a bit of a cliché, but the world is changing at an unprecedented rate. I see the Church as an anchor – a place of claim, reassurance and hope.

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?

I think one of the biggest challenges we face is to share the love and care of Christ in a way that people can hear and accept. Too many of the words and actions we would traditionally use have been tarnished by the horrific actions of past church members. I think it will take, grace, humility, and a lot of love to rebuild many peoples’ ability to trust and accept us, Christ’s church.

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

In Gippsland my parish priest wanted me to help with our preschool music programme and other ministries, but I was running out of time, working full time and being Mum to three active sons. His wife, however, had a fantastic gift. She enjoyed ironing and she offered to iron our family shirt mountain each week. Best gift ever!! I was able to gift the time I would have spent ironing to help around our parish.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received and who gave you this advice?

I completed my Masters in Economic and Community Development at Eastern University in Philadelphia. On my first day, the Kiwi Chaplain gave me a piece of advice that has been extremely helpful and on more than one occasion has saved my life. The advice was “The steering wheel goes in the middle of the road!”

What book have you given away most as a gift and why?

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

I go for a walk and catch imaginary creatures such as Pokémon and Harry Potter ‘confoundables’ on my phone.
Where do you do your best thinking?

By the side of Lake Muhazi in Rwanda, but I don’t get there very often.

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

I would have to take four items – my husband and three sons – and don’t ask me to choose between the sons!!

News • Saturday 22 February 2020

Report shows that Newstart increase is urgent

Anglicare Australia says the Poverty in Australia report, released by the Australian Council of Social Service on Friday, shows the urgent need to raise Newstart

Anglicare Australia says the Poverty in Australia report, released by the Australian Council of Social Service on Friday, shows the urgent need to raise Newstart. Anglicare Australia is a partner in the report.

“This report should shock all Australians. We are a rich country, yet one in eight of us lives in poverty,” said Anglicare Australia Executive Director Kasy Chambers.

"Worse still, one in six children lives in poverty. Australia is becoming more unfair and unequal – and the next generation is paying the price.

“We know what needs to be done to turn this around. The Government must raise the rate of Newstart and invest in affordable housing.

“Newstart has become a poverty trap. People are stuck in poverty while they look for work, and sometimes, the low rate of Newstart means they can’t get job-ready at all.

“Raising the rate of Newstart is the single biggest step we could take to reduce poverty in Australia.

“This report also shows that the cost of housing is spiralling out of control – and pushing people into poverty.

“That’s backed up by Anglicare Australia’s own Rental Affordability Snapshot. We found that there are almost no affordable rentals for people on low incomes. That’s forcing families to spend more than they can afford. And it’s condemning more and more families to crisis.”

Ms Chambers said that poverty has become a crisis that needs national leadership.

“This summer of disasters has shown that we Australians are willing to help those in need. It also showed that we expect our Governments to lead those efforts – especially in times of crisis.

“Poverty, especially child poverty, has become a national crisis. It’s time for the Government to take action and end the poverty trap, instead of leaving people behind.”

Read the full 2020 Poverty in Australia Overview report.
16 lifetimes of treasured moments captured in print

“I wish I’d asked my grandparents more questions.”

It’s a common saying for many of us. To help preserve our heritage and share stories from the past, a group of Sunshine Coast seniors have authored a new book that will feature in the State Library of Queensland.

*Moments We Treasure: Preserving Memories Forever*, features 16 personal stories from Anglicare’s Sunshine Coast Writer’s Circle respite clients.

The stories cover themes that still resonate strongly today, including migrating to Australia, fighting fires, dealing with family tragedy, caring for the sick, living on the land and coming of age.

Anglicare Lifestyle and Wellbeing Team Leader Leah Sullivan said the Writer’s Circle has been working on the project for 12 months.

“Our writers have recalled memorable moments from their younger days, some funny, some happy, some sad. One thing that shines through is the value they place on family as the important anchor in their lives,” Leah said.

“In the book you will find stories from the heart and the wisdom of the past. We also share some old sayings and remedies you might have forgotten, and how we used to celebrate special occasions.

“It is an opportunity to share stories from the past with future generations.”

Sippy Downs resident Edna Watts said the experience was incredibly rewarding.
“I didn’t think I’d enjoy it as much as I did. It’s been fantastic. It’s the most interesting book I’ve picked up for a long time,” Mrs Watts said.

“I enjoyed it because I’m a bit of a sticky beak and it’s very interesting to see how people have lived their lives.”

The book was officially launched at Kingdom House Tanawah on 11 February and will be available in local Sunshine Coast libraries and the State Library of Queensland.

**Reflections • Monday 24 February 2020 • By The Rev’d Ian Bailey**

**Serving on the Victorian bushfire frontlines**

![Image of Holy Trinity Anglican Church, in the Parish of Corryong](image-url)

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, in the Parish of Corryong, was spared from the fires that destroyed many businesses and homes in the area

Four weeks have passed since my wife, Robyne, and I travelled down to the Victorian Alps region to assist with the aftermath and recovery from the devastating bush fires.

Only a few years back, I had been the Rector of both the Anglican Parish of Moama and the Uniting Church Parish of Mathoura in The Riverina region of NSW. We had both spent a lot of time in the Alps during that period, so we know the area well.

When I heard about the fires, I contacted the Bishop Elect for Wangaratta, Clarence Bester to find out what help was needed and to identify if we had the skills to assist. Robyne is a teacher and trained counsellor. I spoke of the need to our Parish Council and they were very keen to assist us to make the journey and spend time as needed visiting parishioners and victims of the fires.

During our three weeks away in the Victorian Alps, Robyne did great work with Lee Kelb (wife of the rural Dean) visiting very frightened residents, and I conducted many services – freeing up the local clergy to work in some of the evacuation centres – including a funeral at Mount Beauty, which we had to do in the pub.

From my past experience and training assisting with emergency and disaster relief efforts, I had expected to spend time solely assisting other emergency workers on the frontlines. Things worked out quite differently, instead experiencing the adage, “there is always something new to learn!”
We left Queensland’s Esk at 4 o’clock on a Friday morning, driving for 19 hours to make it to Yackandandah, a small tourist town in north east Victoria, that night as the next day was expected to be catastrophic. We had both been in the Alps on ‘Black Saturday’ 10 years ago assisting with pastoral care needs and we held grave fears for people in the Alps and for their homes and livelihoods.

Early the next morning, we headed for Tallangatta, the main centre for evacuation and the work base for emergency services battling the fires in Corryong, 120 kilometres east of Albury-Wodonga. It was a hive of activity, with so many people doing generous and brave things and encouraging each other while doing so. It was a privilege to be able to assist there.

We learnt a valuable lesson there. While the evacuation centre was overflowing with everything, including food, clothes and beds, and while across the road there was a large park where numerous community and church groups were cooking up a storm, on the other side of the park was the largely unoccupied business area. Very few people in the shops were buying anything because the evacuation centre and community and church groups were providing all that was needed. This was one of many situations we witnessed where good intentions undermined other desired results.

The recovery centre in Corryong was being managed by Red Cross volunteers from Tasmania, with Centrelink staff from Wagga Wagga, Bendigo State Emergency Service personnel and paramedics from Warrnambool also assisting. There has been much written in the media about charities’ use of donated money. In Corryong, the Red Cross staff were volunteers and the necessary accommodation, food and transportation were all appropriately sourced locally injecting much needed revenue into the local economy.

Later in the week I was up at Corryong and Cudgewa, 430 kilometres north east of Melbourne. Most of Corryong town was spared, but Cudgewa lost most of its buildings.

Around Cudgewa the devastation to rural properties was beyond description. I spent a long time with two single older brothers who shared the one property, two houses, sheds and yards. All they had left after the fires was the steel cattle yards and stock. Everything else, including 1000 bales of hay, was gone. They were bunking in Corryong and coming out every day to hand feed their cattle. In the typical country folk way, as we sat in the heat, dust and ash, their main concern was for those who they considered were doing it tough.

Sadly, there were so many others in the same position, having lost everything.

We spent a great deal of time over towards Myrtleford and Bright 280 kilometres north east of Melbourne, and found all through the area, particularly with older residents, that the level of fear was so very high. For those whose main information source was the media, it was not helpful to constantly hear and see so many reporters trying to make their area the latest and biggest centre of catastrophe, especially when the memories of Black Saturday were so fresh.

Another lesson. It is great when people come from outside an area to assist – special bonds grow as people work alongside each other in the face of adversity – but outsiders eventually leave. We found it much more prudent and constructive to directly assist the local clergy, parish workers and business people who were really struggling so that they can strengthen the bonds in their community long after we have gone.

I could fill pages with the stories of people’s experiences, as they persevered through the terrible air quality, heat, worry and stress to help each other.

I sincerely thank my Parish of Brisbane Valley for sending us down to rural Victoria to help others even though we have enough of our own challenges here, especially with the drought.

I also thank Bishop Cam Venables for his support and for suggesting that I write this reflection upon my return.
CAC student volunteers for international public health project

Coomera Anglican College appointed Year 12 student Cambria Hunt as the 2020 College Service Prefect in an awards ceremony earlier this year.

Cambria’s role within the College is to promote service to others; help with fundraising opportunities; organise College events; and, build an awareness of community engagement and the benefits of giving back to the community and volunteering time.

During the Christmas break, Cambria was given the opportunity to join a service project in Cambodia. The Year 12 student flew out of Australia for the first time without her family, which Cambria said, “was nerve racking and exciting at the same time.”

After navigating a connecting flight to Hong Kong, Cambria finally arrived in Phnom Penh and was whisked away in her first of many eye opening tuk-tuk rides to her Projects Abroad home.

“It was such a welcoming environment from the start and I immediately felt part of the projects abroad family,” Cambria said.

Before commencing her work placement, she was able to learn about some of the country’s history by visiting The S21 Prison and The Killing Fields.

“For the people of Cambodia, this represents a very dark time in their history,” Cambria said.

“The genocide occurred quite recently, during the 1970s, and many of the stories told during the day were very difficult to hear.”
"I was thankful to be able to pay my respects to those who suffered during those years; it is a part of history that should never be forgotten, and during my weeks in Cambodia, that first day helped me to understand some of the people I met along the way."

Cambria’s project was public health related and she was assigned to a doctor.

Each day the two of them travelled by tuk-tuk to disadvantaged communities in the outer parts of the city to provide free basic healthcare and medication to those in need, including to Silk Island on the Mekong River to treat children living in very poor living conditions.

"My job was to clean wounds and dry skin patches, test blood pressure and blood sugar, clean ears, treat tooth decay, trim fingernails and toenails, and provide comfort," Cambria said.

"In doing so, I discovered that I take so many things for granted back home, like having easy access to doctors, dentists and medication – even just clean running water.

"Despite living in these conditions, the people we treated were some of the happiest I have ever spent time with.

"It was so fulfilling to be able to help these beautiful people and the little children were so trusting and sweet, with so little they continually smile.

"It is hard to put into words how it felt to leave, but I know a little piece of me will always be there.

"I hope I can go back one day and to have had this opportunity with Projects Abroad, has changed me forever, and I am so grateful to them and my family for allowing me to participate."

News • Saturday 22 February 2020 • By Anglican Communion News Service

The Five Marks of Mission: One – to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

Young drummers and dancers take part in a joyous procession through the streets of Nagpur to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the formation of the united Church of North India
In the second of our [Anglican Communion News Service] series on the Anglican Communion’s Five Marks of Mission, Canon Richard Bartlett, Director of Mission Engagement for the Anglican mission agency USPG (United Society Partners in the Gospel) reflects on the first Mark of Mission: “to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom”.

USPG, one of the oldest of the Anglican mission agencies, was born in 1701 to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom. During its 319 years of missionary history the proclamation of the Gospel has been central to its mission; although parts of its history, particularly its involvement in slavery, are shameful, and certainly not of the Kingdom of God.

Christian mission has evolved greatly over the three centuries, and USPG has been called to reimagine what proclaiming the good news might look like in successive generations and in an increasingly large number of contexts. Now, under its three strategic headings: Rethink Mission, Energise Church and Community and Champion Justice, USPG works in partnership with Anglican and united Churches across the world as together we proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom. In various places this looks very different:

St John the Evangelist was the first Protestant Church established in Casablanca. Consecrated in 1906, it is the oldest operating church building in Casablanca and one of the few official places of Christian worship in the city. Over the past seven years, attendance at the church’s Sunday services has grown steadily. Here the Good News of the kingdom is being proclaimed!

New congregation members include migrants from east Asia (especially from the Philippines) and displaced people from sub-Saharan African countries such as Sierra Leone. Last year the church’s new community centre was opened. Here the church is aiming to offer training to help people develop personal skills, to provide a place for social and spiritual activities, to provide a subsidised hot meal twice a week for some of the displaced people, and a library for studies and after-school classes.

The community centre has also been used as a temporary home for the church, because the old church building is now too small to hold its ever-growing congregation. The new, bigger church building will open on 28 March this year. Alleluia!

In Zimbabwe, Bishop Gaul College is the national Anglican theological college in the Church of the Province of Central Africa (CPCA). It is a place of proclamation, and a place where those who will proclaim the Gospel are trained. Since its establishment, the college has produced bishops and over 100 priests. It caters for students of the five dioceses in Zimbabwe and the Diocese of Botswana.

More recently, the college has opened to students from countries outside CPCA, thus bringing an international flavour and opportunities for students to think beyond their borders. Increasingly students from the laity are now being trained alongside ordinands. The College is committed to the formation, training, and equipping of clergy and laity for Christian ministries: proclaiming the Gospel in word and action.

On 29 November 1970, the Church of North India (CNI) was born when six protestant denominations came together to form one Church. Leaders of the six denominations gathered at All Saints Cathedral in Nagpur for CNI’s inauguration. This year, CNI marks a half century of “unity, witness and service” with a year-long Golden Jubilee celebration. Bishops and representatives of all of CNI’s 27 dioceses came to the celebrations, which involved the proclamation of a joyous procession in the streets of Nagpur and a thanksgiving worship service.

The events to mark the jubilee fall into three phases: “refreshing memory”, “revisiting the mission of the Church” and “celebration”. The first phase involves thanking God for the people who first brought the Gospel to India – going all the way back to St Thomas, who was a missionary to India in the year AD 52.
The second phase involves taking stock of the past 50 years to see how well CNI has upheld its mission of “breaking down the barriers of caste, class, gender, economic inequality and exploitation of nature”.

The third phase started with a huge ceremony in Nagpur last November, and continues throughout 2020 to proclaim the Good News.

USPG, in Britain and Ireland, seeks to relate these, and so many other Good News stories back to churches, communities and individuals. We have a speaker programme where a network of volunteers across the country are willing to share Good News from USPG partner churches around the world. We offer opportunities for individuals to experience the life of the church in a new context, through USPG’s Journey with Us and Expanding Horizons schemes and on returning, inspired and transformed by the experience, their proclamation of the Gospel cannot fail to be enriched.


Reflections • Monday 24 February 2020 • By The Rev’d Laurel Raymond, Haniff Abdul Razak, Helen Briffa, Cr Paul Antonio, The Rev’d Rick Gummow, Elizabeth Gillam

Celebrating Bishop Cam’s 25 years of priestly service

Bishop Cam Venables thoroughly enjoying riding a cart at the 2019 Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers as part of his role as Chair of the Toowoomba Interfaith Working Group

Bishop Cam Venables marks his 25th anniversary of priestly service today. In this special joint reflection, clergy and lay people from across Southern Queensland honour Bishop Cam for his humility, kindness, sense of humour, openness, heart for justice, enthusiasm, thoughtfulness, leadership qualities and wisdom.

Laurel Raymond – Priest-in-Charge of Allora Clifton Parish and Archdeacon of Cunningham

I first met Bishop Cameron when he came to the Western Region some years ago. His enthusiasm, ‘glass half full’ attitude and openness were refreshing and inspired us as a parish to look forward in hope to discern where God was leading us as a small struggling rural parish.
His ability to put his faith, words, thoughts and dreams to music, and share that gift, has touched me greatly. Three songs Cam has written with very powerful lyrics were tools for reflection, introspection, hope and change.

The song ‘Eurydice’, which Cam wrote in honour of a young woman of that name who was murdered in Melbourne in 2018, was Cam’s response as a father to the call of Doing Justice. The lyrics of this song invited listeners to honour the fact that we are each created in God’s likeness, and therefore should value each and every person.

‘Could you God, be calling me’, a song written and performed by Cam for Vocations Month in 2019, called us to go beyond where things are comfortable and safe, and to be open to God’s spirit which calls us into relationship with God and each other.

The heartbreaking song, ‘A Lament’ was Cam’s response to the powerful legacy of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, one so heartfelt and heart-rending it stays still in my mind.

In early December, last year Bishop Cameron was our guest speaker at the Allora Clifton Anglican Parish dinner. His theme was 'Songs on the Journey' and he spoke of his faith and sang his songs that were pertinent to his journey. This gave fresh insight and encouragement to those who gathered to hear him.

Those gathered to enjoy this evening, were blessed to encounter not only a Bishop, a shepherd and a priest, but a father, a husband, a son, and a brother who was gracious enough to share some of his personal journey with thoughtfulness, warmth, humility, laughter and grace – a man deeply committed to God and to sharing God’s love with all whom he encounters.

I am grateful that you have been part of my journey, Cam!

Haniff Abdul Razak – Secretariat to the Toowoomba Inter Faith Working Group

In 2014, the then Bishop Robert Nolan shared with me of his move to Brisbane and that a new Bishop would be appointed his successor. Immediately in my mind, I pondered the need to start a new relationship and wondered whether the successor would be as open, kind and humorous? I told myself, “let’s wait and see”.

I would prefer to share my thoughts as if I am in conversation with him.

We met on several occasions at social events, but rarely got into any deep conversation. I started to form an impression of him as someone who was determined, but kindhearted, and a good listener.

In 2016, The Venerable Master Chin Kung, President and Founder of Pure Land Learning College Association, asked me to form an Interfaith Committee. Given the dynamics of religious diversity in Toowoomba, I had some reservations. Then suddenly it sparked in me to think of the tall, determined and kind Anglican Bishop. I thought that I should try to seek his opinion and maybe ask him to chair the Committee. I made an appointment to see him. We started by sharing stories of our experiences working with the local community. Bishop Cam, as he likes to be known, shared of his time in Rockhampton and how he enjoys his work, particularly with those of other faiths and new arrivals. Sensing his deep passion to serve, I popped the question of forming an Interfaith Committee and asked if he would chair the Committee. He gave me a serious look and said he would think about it.

Well, the rest is history. He has since been the Chair. Under his leadership, the group, comprising of 18 faith representatives, is strong and socially well connected.
Let me share some side stories of him. At one of our peace conferences, he told me he would like to play the guitar and sing. I asked him, “Do Bishops do this?” His answer was that through music we can bring people to love each other. That was the perfect answer.

At one conference, we had a participant from outside Toowoomba present who was very imposing of his faith on others. As Bishop Cam was the key organiser, I expected to see him very upset. I was wrong. He spoke to me discreetly on the sideline and said we needed to be more mindful of such people and take steps to ensure it would not happen again. Wise person I thought.

In one of the many meetings with him, I strongly objected to one of his ideas. I expected him to be upset, but he listened to me and accepted what I had to say. This led me to see him as a respectful, understanding and accommodating person. And, he is humble, too.

Here I see him as a man with a pastoral heart and one that sees everyone in God's eyes. I could go on and on, but that would be writing his biography for which I am not qualified.

Bottom line: you can disagree with him and still like him very much.
I will always remember the time I witnessed Bishop Cameron at the Deb Ball at Miles last year singing the song, ‘Eurydice’, which he composed after Eurydice’s murder. The powerful words he sang moved everyone in the room, bringing tears to some people’s eyes, and making people reflect on society and how some men treat women and how this must change.

Bishop Cameron is able to speak to current issues through his weekly homily, which reaches people in different geographical and social contexts, and through the songs he composes and sings. Bishop Cam never misses an opportunity to speak in public about the important justice issues which he believes in.

Once people started hearing Bishop’s Cam’s song about Eurydice, the invites came from schools for Bishop Cam to sing his song and raise awareness of gender-based violence. Bishop Cam connects easily with school students and inspires individuals to make a difference and help change unhealthy and unsafe behaviours.

‘Eurydice’ was performed by the Centenary Heights State High School on parade in November 2019, and Bishop Cam sang it as part of his presentation at the Mayor’s Prayer Breakfast in Toowoomba early last year.

With God’s help, Bishop Cam continues to find ways of delivering his message to the wider community, speaking on current issues and keeping in touch with the youth. The highlight of my time with Bishop Cam is witnessing this.

**Lyrics to ‘Eurydice’**

(Music and Lyrics by Cameron Venables)

She was somebody’s daughter, would’ve been somebody’s mum.  
She was thoughtful, she was funny, so we’re feeling overcome.  
Coz a lovely girl in Melbourne, with a Greek inspired name...  
Has been murdered on her way home, and it’s such bloody shame.

Well we’re called the ‘Lucky Country’, and we talk about ‘Fair Go!’  
But, there’s stuff we try to hide away, pretend not to know...  
Like the lovely girl in Melbourne, with the Greek inspired name...  
Who was murdered on her way home, it is such bloody shame.

We lay flowers in memory, we weep tears and grieve...  
That there is a better way, we work for and believe...

Every woman is my daughter, every woman is my mum,  
Every woman is my sister, put it in curriculum:  
So that every girl, in every place, can be safe on their way home  
Because every man, and every boy; Every man, and every boy:  
Every man, and every boy...should respect every woman...

**Cr Paul Antonio – Mayor, Toowoomba Region**

In my role as the regional Mayor and as a practising Anglican, I became aware of, and eventually met, our new Bishop soon after his appointment to this region.

It wasn’t long before we had a few catch ups, a couple of breakfast meetings, and chats at various functions. I became impressed by his humility, his strength of character, his strong faith and his obvious leadership qualities.
Sometime later I was personally invited to the Venables’ home for dinner. It became obvious to me that Cam amid his humility, his leadership qualities and his commitment to the Word of God, has a real sense of humour, which in fact complemented mine. At our Carnival of Flowers celebrations naturally I, as Mayor, always wear a colourful floral shirt. Whilst Cam didn’t necessarily say much at the time, his amused demeanour gently indicated that the shirt was a surprising choice for the Mayor, who is also a country lad. Well, each year I buy another shirt for the Carnival of Flowers celebrations, which begged the question, do I give my flowered shirt to a local charity or would it be better to give it to my regional faith leader as a mark of my respect? I chose the latter and I’m reliably told that Cam joyfully received his first ever flowered shirt, which he wore to the Carnival Garden Party. I’m also reliably informed that he has, of his own accord, purchased a second flowered shirt. I feel so humbled that I have had such an influence on my faith leader.

Each year I hold a Mayoral Prayer Breakfast to raise funds for a charity of my choice. Last year the special guests and presenters were the formidable combination of Kate and Cam Venables. It was a breakfast to remember with a wonderful husband and wife performance, including some very special music composed and presented by Cam.

We are very blessed to have Cam and Kate in our community.

The Rev’d Rick Gummow – Assistant Priest, Maranoa Warrego Anglican Mission Area

The first time I met Bishop Cam was at his welcome event to the Western Region in 2014 as the new Bishop. It was a Eucharist held at St James’ in Toowoomba and Cam had just arrived in Toowoomba, sans his wife Kate and three children who were still in Rockhampton.

Cam declared that he had not chosen any special Scripture readings as the Lectionary always seemed to have the right reading for the occasion. So it proved to be, with the first reading from Ecclesiastes 3, “for everything there is a season,” which is a pretty perfect reading to introduce yourself with as the new Bishop.

I tell this story because there is something of the serendipitous about Cam. Initially as his Curate and now his Assistant Priest, I have lost count of the number of times I have spoken with Cam about an issue and his response has been along the lines of “funny you should say that, I’ve just been speaking with,” or “I have just received this letter from a clergy person whom you may want to speak to about this.” Such encounters are the highlights of my time knowing Bishop Cam.

But, of course, the fruit of these encounters are not merely due to the serendipitous, but Providence combined with Cam’s detailed planning and his extraordinary network of clergy and laity across Australia, PNG and the Pacific and the UK, where Cam has served.

In addition to an organised office (Cam gives much of the credit here to his Personal Assistant, the beloved and respected Helen Briffa) and detailed year-in-advance diarising, Cam’s success is also due to his leadership style.

Cam’s leadership style is to capture hearts and minds in a common purpose which encourages folk to follow, because he is sincere and excited, which I believe points to the Bishop’s humble theology. There is one Gospel story that always brings Cam to mind. In Matthew 25. 31-46, Jesus says that to all those you visited in jail and gave a glass of water to, you did so for me. And, to those who did not give the stranger a drink or visit them in Jail, they did not do so for Jesus. Christ is served by visiting and bringing a glass of water to people who need it – for no other reason than we love them, and they need it. Christ himself is served when we serve the least of God’s family.

This is Cam’s mission and approach, as he sees the suffering Christ, not just struggling families, when undertaking his ceaseless visiting.

There is much more to say about this man of God, but I’ll wait until his 50th.
Elizabeth Gillam – Chair of The Glennie School Council

I met Cam around a board table in 2016 in my role as Chair of the Glennie School Council as we were selecting the new Principal. We were two of a team of four.

I had seen Bishop Cam around. You can’t miss someone who stands head and shoulders above the rest. I soon learned that this applied not just to his stature, but to his character and brilliance as well.

Bishop Cam has a sereneness about him that enables him to listen, contemplate, ask questions, and then, using his astounding command of the English language, articulate his thoughts to you in such a way that the problem suddenly seems surmountable.

An example of this was just recently when discussing an issue that was all encompassing. I stated “I don’t do conflict – it is harmful and unproductive when seeking a resolution to get a team to work together” to which he calmly responded, “Elizabeth you do do conflict very well. What you don’t do is hostility and aggression.” By expressing this, Bishop Cam gave me the confidence in my proposed solution and in my skills.

I have since worked with Bishop Cam on another selection committee. To watch Cam participate in a bigger group environment, this time in a group of 10, was no different. He adopted his usual serenity, listened, contemplated, then spoke offering his opinions and thoughts. Again, the room paid attention. To watch him watch others, take in their thoughts and comments, then to articulate and sum up the feeling of the entire room at the end of the meeting ensures that everyone leaves the room feeling listened to and confident in the way forward. He prompts us all to stop and reflect. And, he prompts us to pray.

In my faith journey, Bishop Cam has taught me to have confidence when I pray. To ask God to provide the guidance that I require. Cam often reminds me that I am not alone – that I have God walking beside me and advising me every step of the way.

Congratulations on marking 25 years as a priest, Bishop Cam.

News • Monday 24 February 2020 • By Michelle McDonald

Religious leaders urge the PM to show moral leadership

Morton Fire, courtesy of Rural NSW Fire Service Facebook, February 2020
Senior faith leaders, with over 10 million members across Australia, have urged the Prime Minister to show moral leadership after Australia’s devastating summer by urgently scaling up the adoption of alternatives to coal, oil and gas.

In an open letter, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and Jewish leaders urged Scott Morrison to heed climate science, which shows all countries must achieve deep, rapid cuts to greenhouse gas emissions to avoid reaching an irreversible tipping point.

The Anglican Dean of Brisbane The Very Rev’d Dr Peter Catt said that the Prime Minister must heed the pleas of our young people, especially in the wake of recent weather and climate events.

“This summer’s unprecedented bushfires, air pollution, hail, flooding, and drought have been exacerbated by climate change,” Dr Catt said.

“These climate-fuelled events have taken innocent lives and damaged God’s Creation.

“Today’s children and grandchildren are righteously angry about the ecological crisis they are inheriting – we owe it to them to create a safer future.”

In the open letter, religious leaders asked the Prime Minister “to have the wisdom, courage and humility to admit that it is time to chart a new course when it comes to climate policy.”

The letter states, “It is not about ‘getting the balance right’, as you have put it, when so much is at stake...It is no longer about balancing the protection of natural resources with economic considerations, but about making life and health the priority of your administration, trusting that this choice will bring economic benefit and a sense of hope and promise to all Australians.”

Religious leaders also called on the Prime Minister to deliver a plan to support the Australian economy’s transition towards renewable energy, while providing pathways for regional and vulnerable communities.

Dr Catt said that as a senior elected representative and a man of faith, the Prime Minister has a moral responsibility to care for creation for those currently affected by climate change and for generations to come.

“Our earth is a gift from God, and it is our responsibility to do whatever we can to protect this precious gift for the sake of generations to come,” he said.

“As this country’s highest elected official and a man of faith, the Prime Minister has a moral duty to look after God’s creation, and the millions of lives that are at risk from worsening climate impacts.”

Read the open letter on the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change website.

News • Saturday 22 February 2020 • By Anglican Communion News Service

The Anglican Church of Canada launches new podcast featuring Indigenous voices

[ACNS, by Staff Writer] The Anglican Church of Canada launched a podcast recently (3 February) entitled Sacred Teachings: Wisdom of the Land. The podcast is an eight-part series featuring Indigenous speakers, who will share their insights, wisdom, traditions and stories about the sacredness of creation.

In a trailer for the podcast shared on Facebook, Ginny Doctor of the Mohawk Turtle Clan said that the series would explore the meaning and importance of the natural world to the First Peoples of the land.
She said: “it is our responsibility to live in harmony and balance with all of creation. In this time, when young people across the globe are calling out for justice and for all of us to stop destroying our natural world. We offer to use some wisdom and reflections to inform and inspire the way forward.”

The first episode features Archbishop Mark MacDonald, the National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop.

He talks about St Francis of Assisi and reflects on the idea of being in communion with creation. Since 2007, Archbishop Mark has served as pastoral leader to Indigenous peoples in the Anglican Church of Canada.

The podcast initiative is a joint project between Indigenous Ministries and Anglican Video.


Their page on the Anglican Church of Canada’s website says that “as active participants in the life of the church, we strive for reconciliation with the Anglican Communion and work towards Indigenous self-determination.”

Anglican Video is part of the internal communications system of the Anglican Church of Canada. It produces video resources for parish and individual use, as well as producing documentaries on spiritual topics.

The podcast can be found on Vimeo, Spotify and Podbean.


News • Monday 24 February 2020 • By Zoe Coleman

The mystery of the missing German windows and a 100-year anniversary

The Rev’d Roger Barker (retired) and current priest, The Rev’d Dr Jeremy Nicoll, wondered how such large and intricate windows came to grace the walls of their small church on New Zealand’s South Island.
When The Rev’d Canon Dr Marian Free became the parish priest of St Augustine’s Church, Hamilton in 2008 – which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year – there was one particular story that some older parishioners felt was a stain on the church, involving a public furore, threats to use hand grenades and missing German-made windows.

The first church of St Augustine’s was a small timber structure dedicated in 1896. By the end of the Great War it was deemed to be inadequate for the growing congregation. The foundation stone for a new church was laid in December 1919, with the first service held less than a year later.

Soon, plans were put in action to order five magnificent large stained-glass windows from overseas.

However, The Rev’d Canon Dr Marian Free said that the windows in question then became the centre of debate, controversy, protest and even death threats for one simple fact: they were made in Germany.

“Emotions ran really, really high back around 1925 just a few years after the war with emotional and psychological scars still fresh,” Canon Marian said.

“At least one member of the RSL [Returned and Services League] threatened to throw a hand grenade through the windows of the church if they were put in at Hamilton.

“And so, for many years, the fate of the windows was a mystery and as far as we knew, the windows had disappeared.”

Canon Marian said that is unclear whether the priest at the time, The Rev’d John Brodie Armstrong, was aware the windows were German made, with the windows designed and displayed as a memorial to those who served and died in WWI.

“The architect’s idea was that the morning sun would stream through the windows and so five windows were ordered from a manufacturer in Germany,” she said.

“The RSL discovered they were made in Germany and they didn’t think that was appropriate for a war memorial, even though part of the idea was that it would be an act of reconciliation.”

Members of the RSL and the wider Brisbane community were so outraged by the proposition that The Rev’d Armstrong resigned; however, his resignation was rejected by the Parish Council.

Under great pressure from the wider community, it was decided that new windows would instead be ordered and made by a local manufacturer.

However, the German windows, costing 275 pounds (approximately $23,000 today), were already en route to Brisbane.

“But when the boat arrived, the wharfies wouldn’t even unload them – it was a big controversy in Brisbane and then the windows seemed to disappear from view,” Canon Marian said.

An unexpected invitation from an ally abroad

Almost 90 years had passed and across the Tasman Sea, the story of the German windows was all but forgotten, except by The Rev’d Roger Barker, who wondered how such large and intricate windows came to grace the walls of his quaint church, St Barnabas Church in New Zealand’s South Island.

“When you walk into the church, you think ‘why on earth would a little country church like this have such magnificent windows – why aren’t they in the cathedral?’ They do seem out of place given the size of the church,” the now retired priest said.
The small wooden church overlooks the ocean atop the picturesque coastal town of Warrington, home to around 450 people just north of Dunedin.

With questions and intrigue surrounding the local legend about the windows, The Rev’d Barker said that he embarked on a mission to find out more.

“I think the first big ‘ah-ha’ moment is when I heard of the rumour about St Augustine’s in Brisbane,” he said.

“I thought, ‘Okay St Augustine’s…that would explain why we have St Augustine of Canterbury depicted in one of our windows – we could be onto something.’

“I got the contact details for St Augustine’s and passed our story on to Marian who said she knew of stained-glass windows which went missing back in the 1920s.”

An article published in a local New Zealand newspaper in 1934 confirmed their suspicions describing, “five Bavarian stained-glass windows of exceptional workmanship and admirable design stored on behalf of a disappointed Australian importer in the dusty recesses of the Fraser Art Glass Works in Dunedin.”

Four of the five windows began being installed in St Barnabas Church in 1935 after being held in storage by a local arts dealer for over a decade.

With contact established between Warrington and Hamilton, and a common desire to ‘crack the mystery’, Marian decided the story required some first-hand investigation.

Fortunately, she was due to travel to New Zealand on other business and decided to make the long trek to see the church.

Once she saw the windows, she was almost certain that they were the missing windows.

The Rev’d Barker said that fifth window is still missing, and its location is the final piece of the puzzle, remaining unsolved today.

“I haven’t put a lot of energy into finding the fifth window; however, I contacted some of the local churches where I have seen similar windows, but none that I could be sure are the same,” he said.

“While we haven’t combed every inch of every church in New Zealand, we haven’t tracked it down and it could’ve gone anywhere really, even assuming that it’s survived all these years.”

The Rev’d Barker and current priest, The Rev’d Dr Jeremy Nicoll, said that they value the connection the windows have given them with Canon Marian and St Augustine’s Church in Brisbane.

And although Canon Marian is more than happy with the current windows at St Augustine’s Church, the parish at St Barnabas is adamant that the controversial windows are there to stay.

“They’re our windows and we’re very proud of them – they’re part of the atmosphere and it really is a beautiful little church,” The Rev’d Barker said.

St Augustine’s bells also have their own intriguing history. The original bell also came from Europe – church historians believe it was originally installed in a Christian church in present-day Romania in AD. 320.

The bell was installed in 1964, but incredibly it was stolen in 1978 and was only recovered by police in 2000.
St Augustine’s Church celebrated its 100-year anniversary on the weekend, with a festive ‘Music on the Green’ event at Hamilton.

Canon Marian said that the event was attended by around 200 members of the parish, family members, friends and the local community.

“I think that it’s good to celebrate, especially when church attendance is declining. It’s easy to feel a bit overwhelmed rather than saying, ‘Well, it’s been 100 years and wasn’t it amazing that we built it in the first place,’” she said.

“But I also think it’s an opportunity to reconnect with the community. While that may not get people to come to church, I really just think that a building like this belongs to the community.

“Church is a family, so let’s have a family reunion and if you decide to keep worshipping that would be great. But in any case, we’ll catch up, have a chat, get to know you and have those connections strengthened.”

News • Tuesday 18 February 2020 • By Bishop Philip Huggins

Making 2020 a transformative and wonderful year for all God’s creation

2020 is such a big year as we try to prevent further climate change and also protect our biodiversity in God’s wonderful creation.

What are the key goals?

A first is that Australia set a strategy to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

In doing this we would join more than 80 other countries that have already made this commitment. Because of the urgency some churches are already encouraging faster targets. For example on 12 February the Church of England Synod recommended that the UK reset their target for net zero emissions to 2030.

Towards reaching net zero emissions, and secondly, we need to have a national conversation now which leads to our best possible contribution at the UNCOP 26, which is to be held in Glasgow this November.

The ‘Nationally Determined Contributions’ (NDCs) of all nations to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are expected by August to be presented in November. So time is tight.

We made a start last week with our NCCA open meeting at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture (ACC&C) with Australia’s Ambassador for the Environment. The Ambassador, Mr Jamie Isbister, will lead our diplomatic delegation in Glasgow as he did in Madrid at UNCOP 25.

Last week’s meeting with him made clear that much good work is being undertaken by local and state governments, as well as by the business sector.

Part of the task now is to integrate all this good initiative into our NDC. The other part of the task is evident in the discourse we hear currently in our Federal Parliament.

How do we give people affected by the transition to an economy of net zero carbon emissions real confidence as regards to their employment, income security and reliability of energy supply?
This needs transparent planning and communication in a less fractious and, hopefully, bipartisan process of nation-building.

The model for this is still vivid from the wonderful national cooperation we are still seeing in response to the bush fires and now, the floods.

Building on this we can bring together at the UNCOP 26 our best contribution to the goals of the Paris Agreement and help the global family contain the rise in temperatures to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

In 2020, we also need to take account of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which is being renegotiated this year and finalised at a Conference of the Parties (COP) in October.

A concern is that without strong public advocacy, we may see a reduction in effective targets at a time when targets must address declining biodiversity (with estimates of 1 million species heading for extinction), as well as address issues of food and water security and plastics pollution, etc.

Relatley, here in Australia, our submissions are needed in the review of our own primary national environmental law, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Without question, there are new pressures on Australia’s biodiversity and heritage conservation.

One of these pressures is climate change.

So 2020 is a very big year for all who want to be good stewards of God’s wonderful creation.

Walking with my four-year-old granddaughter by the beach, watching a butterfly, she suddenly said, seemingly out of nowhere: “Everything is connected!” “Yes, it is,” I said. And we walked on...

We need to act with childlike wonder and our best adult wisdom in 2020.

**Sunday Devotions • Monday 24 February 2020 • By The Rev’d Scott Windred**

**Sunday Devotion: 1 March 2020, First Sunday in Lent**

Forgive me Lord, for I have sinned

**Main Readings:** Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5.12-21; Matthew 4.1-11

**Supplementary Readings:** Psalm 91; 2 Corinthians 10.1-7; Exodus 24.1-11; Psalm 51.1-17; Matthew 26.1-35

“Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,’ and you forgave the guilt of my sin.” (Psalm 32.5)

I once asked my grandfather how he thought we could understand spiritual maturity. His response was that “spiritual growth has to do with knowing who God is, and knowing who we are.” We went on to talk about how regular repentance is part of this knowing God and knowing self. God is God – perfect, almighty, eternal, Creator and King. We are not perfect, but we are still loved as his children. We may enter his throne-room confidently – but with reverence and awe.

When we begin to understand these truths, it makes living this Psalm possible. We sin against our all-powerful and all-knowing God, but there is no need to be afraid of acknowledging our sin to Him. In this Psalm, it seems that repentance has not come easily to David. Before David came before God, he was
“groaning all day long”. But then he stops wrestling and decides to let go and declare his iniquities. David now willingly confesses his transgressions.

In Lent, we come before God in humility, reverence, and with a deep sense of awe – but also as God’s children whom God loves, cares for, and showers with grace and mercy. This Lent, let us acknowledge our sin against God to God, as well as to our brothers and sisters for our transgressions against them.

Through God’s perfect grace and mercy, anything is possible.