“Sharing our stories was like watering each other’s trees”

“I observed the generosity of people like Kate and Sue who saw how lost the Dinka village women were in such a big city. Their care made me think about Matthew 25.36” (Rachel Jimma, 2022 Lambeth Conference)

On the first day of the Lambeth Conference during a Bible study group for Bishop spouses, I noticed that there was another South Sudanese woman at a table who was unable to understand what was being said. I asked Bishop Cam’s wife, Kate Venables, if I could bring her to our table so that I could translate for her. Of course, Kate agreed that I could go and get her.

So I went to her table and spoke to her in Dinka. This is what we said:

“Are you able to hear what is being said?”

“I hear nothing.”

“Are you happy to go to our table with us.”

“Yes. This is what I want.”

As I started translating for her in Dinka, more Dinka women were brought to my table so I could translate for them also.

In the middle of the Bible study, we found out that some of the Dinka women had toiletries and medication thrown out at the airport.
So Kate, an English woman in our Bible study group, named Sue, and I bought the toiletries and pharmacy medication they needed.

Kate also bought eye glasses for seven people, so they could read the study resource.

I observed the generosity of people like Kate and Sue who saw how lost the Dinka village women were in such a big city. Their care made me think about Matthew 25.36:

“I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me…”

Translating for the Dinka women at the Bible study and assisting them with buying what they needed led me to spending most of the conference translating for them.

I translated at events, including at the Bible studies and discussion small groups.

I translated for the Worldwide President of Mothers Union, Sheran Harper, when she preached. I also introduced the Dinka women to her, so they could thank her for the preaching and for visiting South Sudan a few years ago.

I also walked around with Caroline Eaton, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s wife, as she met and organised people.

Mumma Caroline, as everyone called her, opened the Bible study daily.

The Bible study sessions were focused on the Book of 1 Peter.

In one session a recorded interview between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of Kenya was played. In the video, the Archbishop of Kenya spoke about how, as part of his initiation to become a man, he fought a lion.

So the two Archbishops spoke about 1 Peter 5.8, which says:

“Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour.”

After the video finished, the Archbishop of Canterbury got up and spoke to us all. He asked everyone in the room to discuss two questions:

1. What is the lion in your life?  
2. How do you kill the lion?

Our group facilitator, Kate Venables, led us in the conversation, asking the group how we experienced lions in our lives.

So I translated the stories of two Dinka women from the same village in our group who said that when they were young girls, they used to look after the cows. In Dinka families, if there are no boys, the girls have to look after the cattle. They spoke about how they protected the cows from lions, even from the age of six to 14.
One of the Bishops' wives shared about how she protected a cow from being eaten by a lion as a young girl. The lion jumped from a tree onto the back of a cow. She banged tins together and jumped up and down and yelled to scare the lion. The lion ran away.

The woman then shared the Dinka proverb that says, “A silent lion is dangerous because you don't know which direction it is coming from.”

The moral of the woman's story is that we have to always be prayerfully prepared for what we don't know is coming.

Rachel Jimma (far right) translated a story for one of the Bishop's wives (far left, back) about how she scared lions away to protect cattle as a young girl. They are pictured with Jane (far left, front), who is married to the new Anglican Communion General Secretary Bishop Anthony Poggo, and the President of the Mothers Union in South Sudan (next to Rachel)

Towards the end of the conference, Sue thanked me in tears for helping to make sure the Dinka women were included and able to share their stories. She said that I helped make the group special so both Dinka and English speakers could understand each other.

Sometimes in life you think you are the only one experiencing something difficult. Hearing other people's stories gave me hope and showed me how good it is to come together as a family of believers. Sharing our stories was like watering each other's trees.

The way I see it is that we are holding each other's hands as we keep walking together.

We shared a boat with Archbishop Welby and Mumma Caroline, along with hundreds of other people, towards the end of the conference. On the boat I thought that if he was a political world leader, we
would not have been able to share a boat with him. We would not have been able to be that close to him. But because he is family, we were able to share a boat with him.

The whole Anglican Communion is a true family.
A hunger for hope: nine-day fast for refugees

"I have decided to keep a nine-day fast as a lament for the nine years of suffering experienced by people caught up in our offshore processing system. The nine-day fast will take place on the steps of St John's Cathedral" (The Rev'd Nicholas Whereat, September 2022)

Around 10 years ago while serving at The Parish of Waterloo Bay, I met former refugees at a kayaking day organised by SAILS, which is an outreach of Anglican bayside parishes. The 14-year-old lass who was paddling beside me said, “This is the water that took my mum.” She had fled her homeland with her parents as a young child, seeking safety and freedom. It is hard to describe the sadness that I felt at the time. I think of her often and wonder how she has settled into her new home since. This conversation was a turning point for me.

It is easy for us to ignore the reality of what it is like to be a person seeking asylum. The majority of us get on with our lives while thousands of people – all made in the image of God – are stuck in our immigration system, either onshore or offshore, waiting in limbo for a real solution of permanent protection. Even though we share a common humanity, fear of the other has been intentionally used to divide us by elected representatives and much of the mainstream media. As a Christian, loving my neighbour means doing what I can to be in solidarity with them.

Award-winning Kurdish-Iranian journalist Behrouz Boochani is one of the many people who suffered in our offshore processing regime. He was detained in the Manus Regional Processing Centre for more than four years before spending another two years stranded in the offshore processing system on Papua New Guinea. Since late 2019, Boochani has been residing in New Zealand where he has been granted refugee status and is currently employed as a Fellow at the University of Canterbury. His critically acclaimed masterpiece, *No Friend But The Mountains: Writing From Manus Prison*, written while detained on Manus, broke my heart. There, people seeking asylum were routinely called by their ID number, rather than by name. The physical hardship, humiliation and psychological trauma they endured led him to cry out, “Oh God, do something, take us to a nice place.”
I believe we are Jesus’ hands and feet, and that we can all do something to help our brothers and sisters seeking safety. After much prayer and in consultation with my health professionals, I have decided to keep a nine-day fast as a lament for the nine years of suffering experienced by people caught up in our offshore processing system. The nine-day fast will take place on the steps of St John’s Cathedral starting late on Saturday 3 September and continuing until Monday 12 September.

I will keep the fast conscious that many refugees and people seeking asylum still live in limbo with no permanent solution. My hope and prayer are that we as a community, along with our elected representatives, will urgently seek a real and lasting solution for the 1,380 people still stuck in our offshore processing system.

I will be praying for Christ-like compassion to be shown to the people who are simply looking for a place to rebuild their lives in peace and safety. We have acted humanely toward people seeking asylum before, and we can do it again.

As part of the fast, I will also be asking supporters to sign a petition addressed to the Minister for Immigration, Andrew Giles, to grant Permanent Protection Visas as quickly as possible for the 19,000 refugees in limbo onshore who are on recurring three-year Temporary Protection Visas or five-year Safe Haven Enterprise Visas. They have a right to be able to rebuild their lives in stability and freedom.

I will also be calling for the Refugee and Humanitarian Program to be progressively expanded to 27,000 places per year and for the building of a community sponsorship program of 5,000 places, which the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce is working on.

Australia continues to be enriched by the nearly 900,000 refugees who have integrated into our communities over the past 75 years. Let us continue to support policies that humanise people seeking asylum. As Christ welcomes us, let us welcome refugees so they can help us to build the vibrant and thriving multi-cultural community we hope to be.

Here are simple ways you can support my nine-day fast at the Cathedral:

- People living locally can drop in and join me in person, keeping a fast with me for a few hours during the nine days at the Cathedral. Joining me at night is possible by prior arrangement. Please email contact@doingjustice.org.au to be added to the night roster and for more information.
- Those further afield can join me each day via the links below from Sunday 4 September for:
  - Morning Prayer at 8am
  - Evening Prayer at 5pm
- Join in the community vigil on Wednesday 7 September from 7pm to 8.30pm at St John's Cathedral. Please come along, inviting others. People of all faith backgrounds (and none) are welcome to attend. More information on Facebook.
- Contact your Federal elected representative asking that those stuck in limbo in our offshore processing system be granted a permanent solution.
- Sign this petition to The Hon Andrew Giles, Minister for Immigration, asking for people onshore on recurring three-year Temporary Protection Visas or five-year Safe Haven Enterprise Visas to be given Permanent Protection Visas.
“It has been a unique privilege to serve as your Archbishop”

God willing, on 2 February 2023 I will mark 21 years as Archbishop of Brisbane. I think that will be an appropriate time for our Diocese to begin seeking a new Archbishop.

Therefore, pursuant to the Archbishop Election Canon s.2, I have today tendered to the Registrar my resignation as Archbishop of Brisbane to take effect from 5pm Thursday 2 February 2023.

I think a convenient time for me to lay up my crozier (“pastoral staff”) will be when the Diocesan family gathers in the Cathedral for the ordinations on Saturday 3 December 2022. I then plan to take a period of accrued long service leave and annual leave leading up to 2 February 2023, during which period the Diocese will be overseen by my Commissary.

It has been a unique privilege to serve as your Archbishop. Thank you for your support, prayers and collegiality as we have furthered Christ’s mission in our Diocese and beyond. Some of this ministry has been difficult, painful and demanding. At other times, we have been filled with peace and joy in Christ’s service. In it all there has been a pervading sense of God’s grace.

I am extremely proud of what has been achieved by our community members in parishes, schools, Anglicare, St Francis Theological College and other mission agencies. A great deal has been achieved over the last 20 years. Much more remains to be done in a new chapter.

Our Diocese has a very important place in the Anglican Church of Australia. The vision we have embraced to foster, articulate, embody and promote a comprehensive Anglicanism has never been more important in the life of the national church and in the international Anglican Communion. May you all go from strength to strength in that mission.

I assure you all of my prayers for the future and in the search for my successor.
"Key to becoming allies for the disabled community is accepting and celebrating disability as a deliberate part of God’s creation and celebrating the diversity of gifts that come with disability" (Mel Maddox, Parish of Freshwater Synod Representative and Equitable Access Working Group member)

When I first heard about this book – before it was even published – I knew I had to read it. I first came across it soon after a conversation I had expressing my annoyance with ableism within the Church. I was specifically frustrated with the ableism I encounter in every aspect of my life. And, the one place I at least hoped would be free of ableism, that is the Church, wasn't.

I have a number of “invisible” disabilities, so people typically aren’t aware that I am disabled until I tell them. I can’t count the number of times I’ve been in conversation with a parishioner or priest, when it has come up that I’m autistic or that I have postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), and their reaction is to say that they will pray for me, or that if I pray enough my autism will be cured, or other responses along these lines.

I stopped disclosing my disabilities after one conversation when I said I was autistic and had been having a hard time with sensory issues, and the person responded by saying that this was happening to me because I wasn’t praying enough. I saw this book, and my immediate thought was, “Yes! Someone gets it!”

The author, Amy Kenny, writes:
“I am hurt that I must justify my own existence at church. Belonging shouldn't have the admission price of assimilation” (p.3).

Dr Amy Kenny is a disabled scholar. Her research focuses on medical and bodily themes in literature. In this book, she draws upon her experience as a disabled Christian to explore ableism within Church communities. Her experiences of often unintentional ableism are discussed alongside Biblical reflections to highlight that disability should be something to accept and celebrate:

“Disability acts as a method for revealing the living God to the community, not something that always needs to be prayed away to showcase God's power” (p.7).

The thing that drew me most to this book is her reflections on the often insistent “need” to “cure” disabled people within faith communities, and how harmful this can be.

Dr Kenny starts off by describing an encounter with a woman she'd never met before who was adamant that she pray to cure her. This woman was bewildered when Dr Kenny said she didn't need to be cured. The woman pushed harder, with the woman telling Dr Kenny that:

“...I have given up, that God wants more for me than life in a wheelchair” (p.2).

Dr Kenny goes on to write that:

“This woman is an echo of every prayerful perpetrator before her. They have many faces, but they always approach me with the same paternalistic confidence, eager to rid me of my wheelchair or cane. On repeat, they applaud the stories where Jesus healed a disabled outcast like me, without stopping to consider that curing bodies and healing lives are not the same thing” (p.2).

Encounters such as this follow disabled people everywhere, and not just in churches. While they are often well-meaning, they come with the assumption that disabilities need to be fixed, along with other sentiments that much of the disability community strongly opposes.

In the latter half of her book, Dr Kenny discusses how abled-bodied people can be better allies, highlighting the importance of inclusion:

“God doesn't see me as disabled, yet communities gathered in God's name disable me from fully participating. When a group of nondisabled people make all the decisions for a community, they unwittingly perpetuate practices that exclude disabled people” (p.131).

She invites readers to consider the perspectives of disabled people by listening to them in order to better understand their experiences.

Key to becoming allies for the disabled community is accepting and celebrating disability as a deliberate part of God's creation and celebrating the diversity of gifts that come with disability.

I found this book really validating of my experiences as a disabled woman within the church community. It serves affirms that my disabilities are not the result of a lack of faith or lack of prayer.

It also challenges the reader to rethink the often ableist attitudes held by church communities and to reflect on the benefits of an inclusive and accessible church community.
Clergy Conference highlights and learnings

Four chaplains and parish priests from our Northern and Southern Regions share about what they will take away from the recently held clergy conferences and how they will implement these insights into their ministries, including The Rev'd Melusi Sibanda, The Rev'd Tania Eichler, The Rev'd Rebecca King and The Rev'd Canon Ann McGuinness.

The Rev’d Melusi Sibanda – Chaplain, Canterbury College

During Stephen Harrison’s first “Missional Imagination” session that covered values, it hit me that we can be complacent if we become, as Stephen described it, “conceptually stuck” and “imaginatively gridlocked”.

What I am taking away from this conference is the importance of values. I will be taking away with me the relationships between personal values and operating values, which Stephen explored with us.

The Rev’d Richard Browning from the Anglican Schools Commission is working with schools to explore the idea of “Our story in circle”. As part of this, Canterbury College has put together an Anglican Schools ethos group of staff.
I intend to return the group to discuss the school's values, including how we are living them and living up to them. The group is currently exploring whether the school's current values are the most relevant to who we are now and the culture we wish to shape.

Values are important to culture because if they don't get reviewed they can end up speaking to an outdated context and address past issues, rather than present-day concerns.

**The Rev'd Tania Eichler – Rector, The Parish of Maroochydore**

The Rev'd Dr Ruth Mathieson's session on “Being in the Wilderness: Living, Learning and Loving in Liminal Spaces in the In-between Times” was a conference highlight. The main insight I took away from Ruth's presentation is about transitioning as God's people. Ruth's session was complemented by the excellent “Missional Imagination” session run by Dr Stephen Harrison the following day.

She spoke about the “fleshpots of Egypt”, the “golden calves” that we mold, and our need to discern “the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night”. In today's context, this means that we need to look forward and discern the Holy Spirit's call in mission, rather than in our rearview mirror at the “good old days”. The liminal space happens when a season ends and a new thing is yet to begin. This liminal period is exciting, with the promise of a new beginning that creates space for energy, renewal and potential.

Our world is full of VUCA – volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity – as identified in the leadership space in the late 1980s. Embracing vision, understanding, clarity and adaptability is a proactive response to VUCA and its impacts.

I preached on this the Sunday after the clergy conference, encouraging my faith community to pray and seek the Holy Spirit's guidance as we discern our way forward. The whole community needs to pray and discern God's call. As I write this, I am preparing for tonight's Parish Council prayer and study evening of missional imagination, which will focus on “the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night”, so we can continue discerning the Holy Spirit's path for us.

**The Rev'd Rebecca King – Priest-in-Charge, The Parish of Yeronga**

The main learning I will take away from the clergy conference is from The Rev'd Dr Margaret Wesley’s presentation on “The Light of Revelation in the Darkness of Misinformation”. The learning is about different leadership styles. The leadership style that spoke to me is that of the “shepherd”.

For me leadership is about accountability, humility, sharing and caring for the flock. Margaret spoke about how Jesus is the shepherd and that all clergy, including Bishops, are shepherded by Jesus. By being shepherds we clergy need to be like Jesus in whatever we do and say.

When I return to my parish after the conference I want to help shape the parish into an even more sharing community. I want us to share everything more, including ideas, insights, the workload and resources. I intend to approach Parish Council to discuss needs and the barriers we have to break through to meet these needs. I also intend to plan for the parish's future with the whole community of faith, including exploring what we can change, remove and bring in, so we can become a more sharing community.
The Rev’d Canon Ann McGuinness – Chaplain, All Saints’ Anglican School

A striking wander through the liminal spaces of the wilderness, the conference evoked reflection on how we are nourished during challenging in-between times. As a school chaplain, it is sometimes challenging to translate content from a largely parish-based conference, but Stephen Harrison’s insightful presentation encouraging us to find new metaphors for established structures and concepts to forge a cultural wake up, immediately piqued my interest. Seeing “cathedral” described as a “construction site office” on a group activity card was an illuminating start.

The story Stephen told of the baby fish needing to pop her head out of the water to understand what water is resonated strongly with me as I pondered the wilderness of working in a missional Anglican school whose community is largely unchurched. We inclusively embrace members of our community on our terms, expecting them to participate in Chapels, Eucharists, Easter services and Christian classes despite most having a different or no faith.

The challenge to understand the context of our broader community beyond the culture in which the school “swims” urges us to move from the familiar, so we may wake up to our own culture in a vibrant new way, blessing the whole community. I sense that a raft of respectfully curious conversations over our canteen tables might be entirely nourishing.

News • Monday 5 September 2022 • By Michelle McDonald

The Rev'd Nicholas commences nine-day Cathedral fast for refugees left in limbo

The Rev'd Nicholas Whereat from the Anglican Parish of Aspley-Albany Creek with Cathedral priest The Rev'd Dr Gemma Dashwood and Cathedral community members, Delroy, Eve, Angie and Carol, praying for the release of people stuck on PNG and Nauru on Sunday 4 September 2022
The Rev’d Nicholas Whereat has commenced a nine-day Cathedral fast to pray for the more than 1,300 refugees left in limbo in the offshore processing system, and is inviting community members to join him.

During his nine-day “Hunger for Hope” vigil, Parish of Aspley-Albany Creek rector, The Rev’d Nicholas Whereat, will only be consuming tea, coffee, water and electrolyte drinks, while in the confines of a cage-like enclosure outside the front of St John’s Cathedral.

The Rev’d Nicholas said that he is calling for our nation’s leaders to implement a humane and common sense solution for the refugees who have been stuck on Papua New Guinea and on Nauru for nine years.

“This isn't a hunger strike where I keep going until there is a specific outcome — it is prayer and fasting for nine days to help remind the nation that people have been stuck in limbo in the offshore processing system for over nine years on PNG and Nauru,” The Rev’d Nicholas said.

“I am also praying and fasting that the hearts of stone in our elected representatives, across different political parties, become hearts of compassion.

“One of the stories that shocked me when reading award-winning No Friend But The Mountains: Writing From Manus Prison, by former refugee detainee Behrouz Boochani, was that of a man detained on Manus who was unable to make a phone call to his dying father because it wasn't his rostered day to make a call.

“By the time he called his father, it was too late.

“Successive governments have created a hideous mess with the inhumane policy of ‘warehousing’ people offshore, with people suffering needlessly as a result.

“They need to address the mess they have created by treating these people in a way that they would want to see their own family members treated.

“It is within their power to solve the problem they have created.

“After being detained on Manus for four years, before spending another two years stranded in the offshore processing system in Papua New Guinea, Kurdish-Iranian journalist Behrouz Boochani has been granted refugee status and is currently employed as a Fellow at the University of Canterbury.

“Boochani fled Iran in 2013 after 11 of his journalism colleagues were arrested by government authorities.

“He is now rebuilding his life in freedom, which shows that humane and common sense solutions are possible.

“I don't think most people here know how safe and free it is here compared to much of the world.

“You don’t have to go far to realise that many nations don’t have the safety that we take for granted.

“People flee their homeland because they are frightened.
“On the whole our politicians are dedicated, yet their fear often inhibits them from implementing meaningful change, including for these vulnerable people.

“I am inviting community members to drop by the Cathedral to join me in prayer or for a conversation, as well as to attend a community vigil we are holding at St John’s Cathedral on the evening of Wednesday 7 September from 7pm.”

Since the end of World War II, Australia has welcomed nearly 900,000 displaced people who have rebuilt their lives and enriched our communities.

Under the post-war Displaced Persons Program, Australia accepted 170,000 displaced people over five years, including 17,000 Jewish people.

This is the largest number of non-British migrants in that timeframe in the history of our country's migration.

The Rev'd Nicholas said that he is also fasting and praying for the people living onshore who have been given refugee status, but only temporary visas.

“I am also praying for the people here who are living in limbo in our capital cities and regions who are on temporary visas, including three-year Temporary Protection Visas and five-year Safe Haven Enterprise Visas,” he said.

“Safety and stability are the priorities for these people, so they can rebuild their lives in peace.

The Rev'd Nicholas is calling for people to sign a petition addressed to the Minister for Immigration, Andrew Giles, to promptly grant Permanent Protection Visas for the 19,000 refugees in limbo onshore.

He is also calling for the Refugee and Humanitarian Program to be progressively expanded to 27,000 places per year and for the building of a community sponsorship program of 5,000 places, which the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce is working on.

The Rev'd Nicholas will be supported by Cathedral honorary assistant priest and intensive care unit doctor, The Rev'd Dr Gemma Dashwood.

“I will be assisting Nicholas pastorally with lots of prayer, popping past as frequently as I can to check in and see how he is going and ensuring that Communion is taken to him when a service is happening in the Cathedral,” The Rev'd Dr Gemma said.

“Nicholas and I are both Third Order Franciscans, so we pray for each other regularly.

“I have been sent messages of support from the Franciscan community throughout the Asia-Pacific, which I will give him throughout his nine days of fasting.

“From a medical perspective, I'm not his formal doctor, but I will be keeping an eye on things.”

Dr Gemma said that it is important for wider community members to support The Rev'd Nicholas during his Cathedral fast.
“Until you physically see what Nick is doing, I don’t think you truly appreciate what is involved,” she said.

“It’s actually very hard to watch someone sit in a confined space – let alone fast for nine days – because the instinct is to want to help them.

“There has been a very supportive response to Nick’s vigil, and he is highly admired for what he is doing."

Features • Wednesday 31 August 2022 • By Sean Higgins

Rough sleeper chews the climate cud

"Take it from me, you do not need a lot to be happy. I have my clothes, my books, a little radio, my glasses" (straight-talking Sean Higgins, pictured with the anglican focus editor, Michelle, on 30 August 2022 outside St Martin’s House)

I think I have some unique insights about the climate because I have been sleeping in it for nearly 30 years in Queensland.

I have noticed that there is less rain than before, but when it does rain, it rains a lot. And, the storms are much more severe.

And, winters? What winters? Locals think our recent winter was cold, but it was not. The winters 30 years ago were much colder. Back then the winters were also much longer. I do not need as many warm clothes as I used to.

The summers are hotter. It is more humid. I would not know about the glare though because I have always had to wear sunglasses.
Fellow long-term rough sleepers also often say that it is not as cold as it used to be and that it is hotter in the summer.

In the late 80s I worked as a station hand in the Northern Territory. Because of this and because I have been sleeping rough for nearly 30 years I am not exactly soft when it comes to the weather.

We all know that the main cause is the emissions going up into the atmosphere.

Compared to the 80s, there are a lot more cars on the road now. For sure our electricity demands have also increased, which means more pollution in the atmosphere.

On top of this, we are cutting down forests, which means that carbon dioxide is going through the roof. This is happening here and in the Amazon, which is known as the "lungs of the Earth". Our desire for palm oil products – it seems to be in nearly everything – is a main reason why the Amazon is being cut down. I think I read that it was another record year this year for deforestation in the Amazon.

Bushfires are definitely made worse by climate change. I worry about what this does to the families out on the land – those living on the land – and to native animals, such as kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, koalas, birds, native bees, other insects. I read in the paper that at least 1 billion animals were lost in the Australian 2019-2020 bushfires. That is shocking.

We have brought in wooden cutlery to reduce plastic, which is good, but then other things take its place – like vaping tubes. I see them everywhere.

Take it from me, you do not need a lot to be happy. I have my clothes, my books, a little radio, my glasses. I did have some of my own bedding, but it got pinched inside the 7/11 at 5am one morning last week – I walked over to get my coffee and the paper. I went to pay for them, then looked down for my bag and it was gone. It was that quick. I have a sleeping bag now – I am very happy with it.

In the 80s on the tellie, I saw an interview with an Australian inventor of a bench saw. He made hundreds of millions of dollars. He spent a lot of this money helping people out with their inventions – to help get them off the ground. The interviewer asked him why he was giving away so much money. I remember him saying, "How much food can I eat?" That has always stuck with me.

Look at food prices now. I think about families and how they are going to feed their kids. We all know that foods like meat – meat's a real big one – vegetables and fruit all go up when there are droughts and cyclones. The other day I paid $1.80 exactly for a tomato in Coles – I remember how much I paid because I was shocked. Everyone should be thinking about how people are going to feed their families in the future.

We have to have sport, especially for the kids. They cannot be on their computers day and night. It would take something drastic to stop sport, but I think climate change could in the future.

People need to wake up. It will only get better if people pull their heads out of the sand. We need to buy less because it is not a material world, walk more, use less electricity obviously, recycle plastics and buy less plastic products. We should just buy only what we need.

I think most people have a good idea about what we have to do. We really need to start thinking more about future generations.
Oh, the Places You'll Go (in a 4x4)!

“Something has to be done about that delivery.”

This was the cry of frustration that opened a local Meals on Wheels meeting. The cry was echoed passionately.

Initial solutions included ensuring that only those with a four-wheel drive should make this delivery.

I was at the meeting as one of the newest Meals on Wheels volunteers. I was so new that I did not yet have a route.

In our Meals on Wheels group there is a dearth of four-wheel-drives, so my Meals on Wheels partner and I were allocated the difficult delivery in question.

My first delivery was very challenging. The road access was narrow, rough, awkward and definitely unsuited to conventional vehicles.

The couple appeared to be living in severe hardship and in dilapidated housing. We started chatting about the usual things that are discussed when people meet for the first time and engage in simple, polite small talk.
On our delivery second run, we spoke some more.

“What do you most need?” I asked tentatively.

“A car!” was the reply.

We all laughed together at the impossibility of this.

However, out of that question came some simple, but significant achievable help.

On our third visit, we offered some practical help and some hope. The couple even asked me, “What church are you with?”

Another group I have joined since arriving in the Brisbane Valley is the Bush Bashers. This band of musicians has been providing entertainment to visiting groups fortnightly for 35 years. They originally emerged from the Esk Uniting Church, and have evolved into an ecumenical group using our hall for performances. Whilst initially visiting out of curiosity, I have slid into the role of “audience encouragement” and look forward to spending time with the Bush Bashers each fortnight.

In true community style the Bush Bashers’ immediate response upon learning of the couple's situation was, “How can we help?” I had not realised that the Bush Bashers’ ministry extended beyond music and into both pragmatic and pastoral care. I realised the value of becoming a link between Meals on Wheels and the Bush Bashers.

This is the kind of community engagement that I had been dreaming of. The Bush Bashers provided practical help. Brisbane Valley Anglicans contributed what they could, including hands-on help.

We adjusted our original plan when the Uniting Church offered accommodation assistance for the couple.

The collaboration was complete when a collective of Bush Bashers, Brisbane Valley Anglicans and friends were able to assist in the move to this accommodation.

Things have not gone miraculously smoothly for the couple. However, being in town and having a broadened support network of Meals on Wheels, Bush Bashers, our parish and the Uniting Church have offered hope. A helping hand is now closer when previously they experienced frustration, confusion and hopelessness by being isolated.

Engaging in conversation, building relationships and working in partnership with like-minded groups remain a cornerstone of faithful discipleship.

The Bush Ministry Fund’s ministry in Brisbane Valley is hope filled and flourishing. Thank you to our Diocesan community for making it all possible.

Editor’s note: The Bush Ministry Fund money boxes are a fun and easy way for individuals, families, parishes and schools to donate to bush ministry in our Diocese. Order your BMF money box today by emailing Helen Briffa in the Western Region office via hbriffa@anglicanchurchsq.org.au or by calling 07 4639 1875.
Spending time with other young stewards from different Dioceses around the world was the highlight of the Lambeth Conference for me. Stewards came from more than 30 different countries, including from Barbados, Ghana, Argentina, Panama, Madagascar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, South Africa, South Sudan, the United States, and more. There were also a number of First Nations peoples represented among the stewards, including from Australia and Canada.

While I was at the Lambeth Conference, I joined in an Anglican Communion Youth Network (ACYN) meet-up in the pub. During the gathering we shared about reconciliation from the point of view of young people in our own contexts. The focus of the conversations was on stewards naming issues rather than finding solutions. The idea is that ACYN would help with supporting ministry to address some of the issues raised.

A steward from Scotland, for example, shared about how there are a lot of drug deaths among middle-aged men where she is from. This is impacting youth, many of whom are losing their fathers at a young age and who are growing up in a culture where addiction is prevalent.

Another steward from Barbados shared about how there is a fundamental lack of conflict resolution education in Barbados. Consequently there is a high-level of violence among young people in parts of his country.

A steward from Myanmar talked about how the ongoing conflict in her home country is impacting things that young people often take for granted, such as being able to attend school or university. I was struck that despite the turmoil in Myanmar, she took time out to volunteer as a steward. I was
unable to comprehend the fact that I was chatting so “normally” to someone whom I knew would be returning to a revolution after the conference.

The main thing I took away from these conversations is that what seems like a big issue to us is small in comparison to what some people have to contend with. Sometimes I might complain that I had to stay up late to finish a university assignment when there are people whom I now know fighting for the right to attend university.

After the conference the stewards participated in a one-day retreat, which was led by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Archbishop Welby talked about how young people are the champions of reconciliation. He said that the word “reconciliation” can be tricky because the purpose of reconciliation is not about creating a single and same group, but about being reconciled as people of faith and as human beings. We talked about how worshipping together as the Anglican Communion fuels us to go out into the world and do the tough work of reconciliation. We shared about how there are a lot of deep wounds and how important it is not to rush through painful feelings. I learn that it is important to be able to share pain and engage in truth telling in order to move forward.

During our conversation Archbishop Welby spoke about the importance of reconciliation with First Nations peoples in all countries. For example, he shared about how his trip to Canada earlier this year when he apologised to Indigenous Canadians for the “grievous sins” of the Anglican Church against Indigenous Canadians, including the church’s involvement in the removal of children from their families into residential schools.

This meant a lot to the stewards because we are all passionate about helping to bring reconciliation and healing in our own contexts.

I am keen to get involved in some of the organisations I learnt about at the conference. For example, in the Mothers Union tent an organisation named Days for Girls focusses on menstrual equality and dignity. One of the issues that Days for Girls addresses is the exploitation of girls in some countries where pads are used as a barter for sexual favours. I found this horrific. The women running the stall were amazing – they travel between England and other countries to empower and educate girls and women.

During our one-day retreat, Archbishop Welby reflected on how he and other Bishops were concerned about the unity of the Anglican Communion. He kept saying that “God showed up” at the conference, especially during worship times. Worship is about coming together in joy or celebration or lament. It was definitely unifying and uplifting.

Stewards were run off their feet during the conference, but we were able to join in the worship, even if that meant singing and dancing from our fire exit posts. Every morning service was a joyous pick-me-up. Services were said and sung in different languages. I enjoyed learning new songs and singing familiar songs in different languages. So the Lambeth Conference has inspired me to be more mindful of including different languages in worship.

The conference theme was “God’s Church for God’s World – walking, listening and witnessing together”. As a steward, I experienced this through the pub gathering, the one-day retreat, finding out about organisations like Mothers Union, in the worship, as well as in the daily camaraderie of working together.
Toowoomba Symes Thorpe centenarian celebrates in style

It was a big week of celebrations for Mervyn Dowzer who celebrated his centenarian birthday with his wife Maureen, daughter Helen, son-in-law Russell, granddaughter Katelyn and great-grandchildren Ella and Max.

Mervyn Dowzer was treated to a delicious morning tea at his Symes Thorpe Residential Aged Care home in Toowoomba on Tuesday 30 August and was elated to spend quality time with his family and friends.

He received a letter from Her Majesty The Queen, and letters from The Prime Minister of Australia Anthony Albanese, The Governor of Queensland Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Premier of Queensland Annastacia Palaszczuk, the Federal Member for Groom the Honourable Dr Garth Hamilton MP and Toowoomba South MP David Janetzki.

Symes Thorpe Lifestyle Lead Toni Kelly said Mervyn really enjoyed the celebration.

“It worked out perfectly,” she said.

“We had Merv's daughter and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren from Melbourne here and it was a beautiful morning tea with all the residents and his fellow friends.

“Merv has a good personality. He loves to laugh, and he loves to sing with you. He is a fantastic man. Happy 100th birthday, Merv.”
His daughter Helen said her dad has always had a “calming presence” throughout her life.

“He was the one who took me down the slippery slide, he’d take me fishing, we’d garden together, and we did lots of things together,” Helen said.

“It has always been the simple things in life are the things that make you happy and that is how our lives have always been. Simple but happy together.

“I really appreciated my childhood. I appreciate all the fun things we did. Mum and Dad would always go fishing, so we lived on fish. Dad would grow veggies and strawberries. We had strawberries every night, it was lovely.”

Mervyn met his wife Maureen while they were working at Queensland Country Traders at North Quay in Brisbane’s North. Merv was a store-person and Maureen was a packer. They worked packaging all sorts of boiled ginger and sugars.

After getting married in Brisbane’s Methodist Church in Albert Street on 16 October, 1948, Merv and Maureen became business owners running a little corner store in Paddington. A few trips in the caravan later and Maureen gave birth to their lovely daughter Helen.

Merv and Maureen set off on another trip to Adelaide with Helen in the caravan. Maureen remembers going at Melbourne Cup time, so they made the decision to stop in for the day and watch the cup race. This was one of many trips over Australia.

On 16 October Merv and Maureen will celebrate their 74th wedding anniversary.

Maureen’s advice for a happy marriage is “consideration for each other, always talking things through,” she said.

Granddaughter Katelyn came all the way from Melbourne with her two children, Ella and Max, for the celebration of her grandad’s 100th birthday.

“It was a lovely celebration for my grandad,” Katelyn said.

“My husband and I often talk about the simplicity of my grandparents’ life where they semi-retired when they were young and really, they lived such a frugal life, but they didn’t want for anything else.

“My grandad, in particular, never let anything bother him. He would have gone through so much, but he’s always remained calm throughout his life.”

Merv and Maureen have two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Happy 100th birthday, Mervyn!
Q&A with Member of the Order of Australia recipient, internationally known scientist and active Kenmore parishioner, Dr Rachel McFadyen AM

“I like to re-read my favourite novels by Jane Austen, Mary Stewart, Dorothy Sayers, or detective stories by PD James” (Dr Rachel McFadyen AM is pictured working in the Kenmore Anglican Second Harvest bookshop in September 2022)

Where do you currently live and where do you worship?

I live in Fig Tree Pocket, Brisbane, and worship at Holy Spirit Anglican Church in The Parish of Kenmore-Brookfield. I also own and spend time in a house in Lamington National Park on the road to O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat.

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

I was christened at age five into the Scottish Episcopal Church in Edinburgh. I have been an active worshipper all my life, but first took on active “role” in the late 1970s and 1980s when I was elected to Parish Council and then served as a Liturgical Assistant and occasional preacher at Holy Spirit, Kenmore. Since then, I have taught religious education in schools and served on Parish Council, as treasurer, church warden, parish Synod representative, examining chaplain and in hospital chaplaincy. I was elected to Diocesan Council and to General Synod. From 2014 to 2017 I was a pastoral assistant at Christ Church, St George in our Western Region, where I took services, including funerals, prepared children for Confirmation, and undertook pastoral visiting.
What is your current role, and what does your role involve?

Currently I am treasurer and lay reader at Holy Spirit, Kenmore. The treasurer role includes the bookkeeping and preparing monthly and annual returns for quite a large parish, so this takes up a lot of time. As lay reader, I participate in services as a liturgical assistant, and also preach and take Morning or Evening Prayer, depending on need.

Congratulations on being appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to biosecurity, and to entomology. Can you tell us about your work in these fields?

Thank you. It is great to see Biosecurity recognised. The problem with all risk management is that if you do the work well, nothing happens! So I could show you paddocks full of all the weeds we do not have – but it lacks punch! All my life, I have worked in biological control of major weeds, bringing in insects and diseases to control them, while making sure these same insects do not damage other plants. Over the years, I have been involved in the successful control of harrisia cactus, parthenium weed, annual ragweed, and rubber vine. I was instrumental, with others, in getting the laws changed to prevent new weedy plants coming in legally – until 1984, the law only blocked importation of plants already present and weedy in Australia, but this was progressively changed to the current more sensible system, where importers have to demonstrate that the proposed import will probably not be invasive.

“Me at the Latin-American Entomology Conference in November 1975, with my then boss Dr FD Bennett and two eminent Argentinian entomologists. I was based in Tucuman, north-west Argentina, from May 1973 to May 1976, working on harrisia cactus insects” (Rachel McFadyen)
Your Church work and wider community service were also mentioned in the Member of the Order of Australia citation. What has been one of the highlights of your time in the Anglican Church so far?

Studying Education for Ministry (EfM) with a Kenmore Parish group led by Rod and Kay Murry in the late 1990s. It was a demanding course – two to three hours weekly for four years – committing year by year, but it was wonderful. I learnt so much about myself, about God and the Bible, and about other Christians, too.

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

I will continue as parish treasurer while planning to simplify things for the next treasurer; be a loving grandmother; visit family in the UK and the West Indies if possible; and, maintain my current good health.

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

After my mother died when I was four, I was brought up in Edinburgh by my Christian grandmother, who taught me her deep faith in a loving forgiving God. For high school, my sister and I moved to live with my atheist father in Exeter, but my close friends at school were Christians and I worshipped at my local parish and was confirmed through my school. At university, I had a group of Christian friends who read the Bible and discussed faith, and services at the university church and organ recitals at King’s College Chapel were inspirational for me. When I moved to Trinidad in the West Indies for work, I worshipped at the Anglican Cathedral, but found true Christian fellowship with a group of post-Vatican II Roman Catholics. My faith was further deepened by life in north-west Argentina from 1973 to 1975, worshipping with a small house church led by an Anglican missionary family, and going on retreat to a Benedictine monastery in the hills nearby. Since 1976, various study courses including EfM and chaplaincy training have extended me in different directions, while my involvement in Diocesan Council, Anglicare and Synods has taught me of the difficulties faced by the institutional Church.

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

Essentially, most of my life I have believed, “if God is with you, who can be against you?”, and have tried to put major life decisions into God’s hands. In my work, I believe in doing the best I can in any job I do, leaving the outcomes to God, and accepting praise or criticism as they come. This has given me great peace of mind in often difficult and sometimes life-threatening situations.

What is your favourite Bible scripture and why?

When first appointed as a manager of a science unit within the Queensland Government, I took the Micah 6 line as my guide – “Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God” – especially the “Do justice” part.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

Probably Archbishop Desmond Tutu for his courage and determination through the very difficult years, and for his joy, humour and humility even when he became famous throughout the world.
Why is it important to support the Uluru Statement From the Heart’s reforms, including the Voice to Parliament enshrined in the constitution?

Simply put, it is of major importance to the First Nations peoples, and therefore the country should accept and action this.

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

Hard to say – I have received a lot of kindness in a long life! But the ones I remember are a man who went out of his way to find and take me to a hotel when, owing to train strikes, as a 21 year old I was stranded at mid-night in a small British city. And a woman who stopped for me on a lonely road in central Queensland when I had run my car off the road, waited for me in Taroom while I telephoned to make all the necessary arrangements, and then drove me to Toowoomba where she was going.

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

In 1989, I was considering enrolling in a Masters in Public Administration at UQ, which was a two-year course taught in evening classes. My husband and I both worked full-time and my children were nine and seven years old, and I was thinking that I should wait until they were older. Our rector at the time, Jeff Roper, advised me to do the course while they were young, saying young children are in bed in the evenings while teenagers needed their parents more. He was quite right.

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

Read, garden, walk, and play solitaire and sudoku.

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

_The Screwtape Letters_ by CS Lewis. It is getting dated, reflecting attitudes of the day towards women, but in my opinion it still offers valuable insights into practical Christian living.

Where do you do your best thinking?

Looking out on the garden or walking in the bush or along the sea-shore.

What is your best childhood memory?

Eating fresh-caught mackerel, cooked rolled in oats, on a beach in the western Scottish highlands, where the family used to holiday.

What is your earliest memory?

I was 20 months old. The family was on the beach in Madras (now Chennai) in India, when my three-year-old brother fell down in the surf and a man rushed past me to pull him to safety. This was just before my father was demobilised and the family returned to the UK. This is my only memory of India where my brother, younger sister and I were born.
If you are having a bad day, what do you do to cheer yourself up?

Re-read my favourite novels by Jane Austen, Mary Stewart, Dorothy Sayers, or detective stories by PD James.

What is your unanswerable question – the question you are always asking yourself?

Why does a loving God permit so much suffering, especially when I meet people whose lives and potential are cut short by major illness?

Features • Tuesday 6 September 2022 • By The Rev'd Charlie Lacey

Tough Questions: If there is going to be a "new heaven and a new earth", why care for the environment?

The Bible begins with two beautifully crafted Hebrew poems about creation. The first poem expresses God's delight in his creation, culminating in the statement, “God saw all that he had made and it was very good.” As the pinnacle of God's creation, human beings were made in God's image and given the task of ruling over creation on God's behalf. This does not mean that they were given carte blanche to exploit creation, rather it is a mandate to rule over it responsibly and compassionately as representatives of a loving and benevolent Creator God. In Genesis 2, we see that God placed the first humans in a garden to “work it and take care of it”. This is a wonderful image that captures our responsibility to nurture creation, live in harmony with it, and, in a sense, even improve on it.

The Old Testament repeatedly emphasises that the earth belongs to the Lord; it is not ours to do whatever we like with. For example, Deuteronomy 10.14 says, “To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.” Some will be surprised to learn that the Torah (the first five books of the Bible, containing the Law), includes a great many laws that are designed to protect the integrity of God's creation and our relationship with it. For example, by
commanding that the land be left fallow every seventh year, the Sabbath laws promote sustainable agriculture and prevent surplus production. Wanton acts of environmental vandalism are prohibited, particularly the destruction of trees. There is an intriguing law in the book of Deuteronomy that states, “If you come across a bird’s nest beside the road, either in a tree or on the ground, and the mother is sitting on the young or on the eggs, do not take the mother with the young.” This indicates that we are not to act in a way that could hinder a species from thriving, in this case by preventing the mother from producing eggs to replace the ones that were taken.

The Old Testament makes it clear that we are to be good stewards of God’s creation, but what, if anything, does the New Testament have to say on the subject?

Jesus summarised the Old Testament law in these terms, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” and “Love your neighbour as yourself.” We understand from the Parable of the Good Samaritan that the whole of humanity is, in a sense, our neighbour. There is a significant body of scientific evidence pointing to the reality of climate change as a result of human activity. Further, it is well documented that climate change is having a much greater adverse effect on the populations of developing countries. If we are to love our neighbours on a global scale we must, I believe, take action to mitigate the effects of climate change.

An alarming number of Christians hold to the erroneous belief that when we die, our souls will be whisked away to a place called Heaven, where they will float about in disembodied ecstasy (albeit that is a bit of a caricature). However, that is far removed from what the Bible actually has to say on the matter. Many religious adherents believe in some kind of afterlife, but only Christians believe in resurrection life. Following the pattern of Jesus, believers will be raised with real physical bodies to inhabit a real physical world. God has already created a real physical world and it is “good”, albeit marred and corrupted by human sin. Romans 8 tells us that creation itself is waiting to be liberated from its present state of decay. Therefore, when we read of a “new heaven and a new earth” in Revelation 21, we should in fact imagine a renewed and restored creation that is permanently conjoined with heaven. God is not planning to destroy this world, as that would signify the failure of God’s great creation project, rather, the intention is to perfect it.

Christians are called to be heralds of the new creation, by pointing forward to the future hope that we have in Jesus. This means living today as we will live in a renewed and restored creation, where heaven and earth are one. We look forward to the day when God’s people will live in harmony with God, one another, and creation itself. Our interactions with creation in the present should point forward to this future reality.

Author’s note: If you have a question that you would like me to attempt to answer, please email me at charlie@standrewsspringfield.org.au. To sign up to receive our newsletter, please email us at office@standrewsspringfield.org.au

First published on The Parish of Springfield website in August 2022.

Editor’s note 7/9/2022: For Season of Creation events between 1 September and 4 October, please keep an eye on the anglican focus Events page.
Shifting the conversation from “decline” to “possibility”

I participated in the Adapting Ministry in Complex Times pilot last year, along with three Parish Council members. The Adapting Ministry in Complex Times pilot is a co-learning community of different parishes that is facilitated by Resource Church, St John's Cathedral.

The co-learning community engages in a series of practice-based workshops designed to support parishes navigate future ministry using tools drawn from complexity theory. Being present and open to what is emerging in our communities helps a church to discern the Holy Spirit's leading and to identify new possibilities.

Before I was appointed to Holy Trinity, Woolloongabba, the whole parish had prepared a Mission Action Plan (MAP). The MAP identified five areas of focus, these being worship, “Being Together”, community and outreach, change and growth, and stewardship.

I worked alongside the Parish Council to form working groups, with each focussing on one of these five areas of interest.

One of the concepts covered in the pilot was the importance of giving people the freedom to try, and even to “fail”. Inspired by this, each working group was allocated $1,000 to use in whatever way that particular group thought was best.

This sense of freedom that emerged from being encouraged and resourced to give something a go helped change the narrative in our church. It shifted the conversation from “struggle” and “decline” to...
“opportunity” and “possibility”. This narrative shift is the most valuable outcome of our Adapting Ministry in Complex Times pilot participation.

The working group focussed on worship connected in with a community group – a vocal school – that uses the church regularly. This opened up the creative possibilities for our worship. For example, our Christmas carols event last year was enhanced by its eclectic mix of an all-in traditional Christmas carol singalong, which was followed by a time of prayer and reflection with singing throughout, and closed with informal Christmas karaoke.

Having a strong music group to build the event around pulled the whole experience together.

The event was very well attended, with more people joining in from the wider community, including the friends and family members of the vocal group.

Running such a successful event with the freedom just to “try” and see what happened, gave parishioners confidence and has inspired us to try more this year. Our parish has continued to benefit from what we learnt in the pilot. The event also inspired other working groups, which has led to increased activity across the board.

We encourage other parish priests and Parish Councils to participate in this year’s Adapting Ministry in Complex Times program.

Editor’s note: Resource Church St John’s Cathedral invites parishes to participate in this year’s Adapting Ministry in Complex Times co-learning community. The initiative is offering a series of six workshops designed to support parishes as they navigate their future ministry using tools derived from complexity theory. The workshops are led by expert facilitators. For more information or to register your interest, please contact Angie Mooney, Cathedral Resource Church Reference Group Coordinator via amooney@stjohnscatheral.com.au. This brochure may also be downloaded for more information.
Flinders students host first environment summit for Sunshine Coast Schools

Students with a passion for a greener, cleaner planet gathered for the inaugural Sunshine Coast Schools Environment Summit, which was recently hosted by Matthew Flinders Anglican College.

The student-led summit was a great success, bringing together more than 40 like-minded, eco-conscious students from schools across the region to share ideas for more sustainable schools and communities to help protect the natural environment.

The summit was held on Tuesday, 23 August and involved students from Flinders, as well as visiting students and staff from Sunshine Coast Grammar School, Burnside State High School, St Andrew’s Anglican College and Coolum Beach Christian College.

The event was held on campus at Flinders and hosted by the Flinders Environment Authority (FEA), a student-led co-curricular club with a mission to achieve net-zero emissions for the College.

The FEA also strives to help Flinders achieve long-term sustainability goals on campus, such as introducing charge points for electric vehicles and a whole-College recycling program, the removal of single-use plastics in lunch boxes and the tuckshops, and to promote educational awareness on major environmental concerns.

Summit attendees heard from guest speakers from Sea Shepherd Australia and the Sunshine Coast Council, as well as Old Flinderian James Linfoot (Class of 2015), who is an environmental engineer student at RMIT University in Melbourne.
Mr Linfoot shared his work researching mining impacts on the seafloor.

The program also involved activities, workshops and tours that highlighted exciting environmental projects the students, staff and community have been working on at Flinders over the years.

FEA Ambassadors Charlie McMahon and Abi Foster said it was great to see the next generation of environmentalists connecting with one another, actively contributing to the climate conversation.

“It was really good to meet students from different schools who are also passionate about the environment, and finding out what they are implementing, environment-wise in their own schools,” Charlie said.

“A great idea we learnt from one school was to provide more opportunities for environmental elements in the curriculum.

“The presentations were super interesting and taught us about what our Sunshine Coast region is doing to make itself more environmentally sustainable, and how the effects of climate change will impact us on the coast in the future.

“On a personal level, the Summit has inspired me to aim to use less single-use plastics, and more reusable and sustainable materials when possible."

Summit sessions included a tour of the half-hectare Flinders Farm with Farmer Jeff to learn about the importance of growing food, composting and irrigation, and how future generations can mitigate damage to the climate using regenerative farming methods.

There was also a visit to the Flinders Primary School’s Edible Garden Project to meet with the Senior Primary students and teacher Paul Anderson.

A showcase of the Flinders eBeast highlighted the student-led journey to upcycle an old diesel into an electric car of the future.

And, attendees went on the Flinders Eco Experience, a one-kilometre self-guided walk through the Flinders campus using “tree caching” technology to identify the amazing plant life and trees on the College property.

The Flinders Eco Experience was created in 2019 by FEA students, as well as staff and experts in the wider community.

FEA Ambassadors thanked all students, staff, guests and volunteers who contributed their time and expertise, and the attendees for a wonderful first summit event.

Flinders Secondary teacher Sheree Bell, who runs the FEA co-curricular club, said the event was an empowering opportunity for students who want to make a positive impact.

“Students who care about the environment are becoming increasingly aware that our world is under stress, and this awareness can often make them feel powerless,” Mrs Bell said.

“The Sunshine Coast Schools Environment Summit provided our students with an opportunity to develop their ideas and learn new ideas from peers from other schools.
“It was also a chance to share the wonderful projects our club has been working on at Flinders over the past few years.

“The keynote speakers and guests shared their environmental passion projects and challenged our students to move past their comfort zones and get involved.

“The visiting schools were rightly inspired to return home and make a difference in their communities.

“They left with glowing praise for our students and the wonderful team at Flinders who made the summit possible.”

Editor’s note: For Season of Creation events between 1 September and 4 October, please keep an eye on the Anglican Focus Events page.

Features • Wednesday 7 September 2022 • By Helen Rainger

“Each morning you must wake up and find your own hope”

"The boys lived amongst such destruction, but they had not lost their hope: a hope that things could be "normal". For them that day, hope lay in being with friends, a lively conversation with a stranger and hopefully food to eat" (Helen Rainger)

Areej Masoud, a Palestinian Christian, came to Australia in 2018 on a speaker tour hosted by PIEN. Many of her stories and her words have stayed with me. I recall her words about hope:

“Each morning you must wake up and find your own hope.”

But these are not magic words. How is this done? Hope lies in various places and in ways of thinking and doing and being.
First, a small but powerful recollection from when I visited Gaza in 2015. Israel's war on Gaza in 2014 left many homeless and many buildings destroyed. In the first photo, above, which the young boys wanted me to take, you can see the remains of a multi-storey hospital. The boys lived amongst such destruction, but they had not lost their hope: a hope that things could be “normal”. For them that day, hope lay in being with friends, a lively conversation with a stranger and hopefully food to eat.

So hope can lie in daily life. Again, not a sure-fire formula. The odds can be stacked against you. I awoke this morning to news of a rocket strike from Gaza into Israel, in response to a missile strike from Israel that killed ten people, a child amongst them (fatalities will have risen as you read this piece). The cycle of violence continues. Only peace with justice will bring new life to Israelis and Palestinians; without that there can be no hope of peace and “security”, an oft-spoken word.

Daily life all over the world often revolves around work and food. Looking at the second photo, we see the work that this man does, growing strawberries for all to eat. Taken in Ramallah, this photo captured for me that element of life going on. But what I would never know was how hard it had been for this man. Often Palestinian farmers are cut off from their land by the Separation Barrier, a stark feature of occupation, which can go between town or village and fields. Agricultural gates can be closed at random and permits denied or delayed.

"Taken in Ramallah, this photo captured for me that element of life going on. But what I would never know was how hard it had been for this man. Often Palestinian farmers are cut off from their land by the Separation Barrier" (Helen Rainger)

For the Palestinian people, hope lies in not being bowed down, but attempting to live life with dignity. And, the strawberries were delicious.
Finally, as has been expressed to me, hope for the Palestinian people, and hope for peace for all, lies in the telling of the story. That is what we as visitors were asked to do.

“Go back to your home and tell our story.”

If you are pray-er, pray; a writer, write. Talk to your friends and to politicians. Hope lies in us being impatient with the status quo, which allows violence to go unchecked and could cause hope to die. Palestinian Church leaders issued the well-known Kairos Document in 2009, titled “A Moment of Truth”, issuing a cry of hope, within a (seemingly) hope-less situation. Hope in action...

Editor’s note: First published on the UCA website on 26 August 2022 as part of a series of reflections for the World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel, which will be observed between 15-22 September 2022. Reflection amended for anglican focus with additional links.

News • Tuesday 6 September 2022 • By Philippe Coquerand

Anglicare SQ says more resources needed to keep children safe

As of March 2022, the number of children in care in Queensland was over 11,000, and growing. During Child Protection Week (4-10 September), Anglicare SQ is focusing on raising awareness of the needs of Australian children in care.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Foster Care Practitioner, Liesa Henderson, says that child protection is a global concern, and that everyone needs to be accountable.

“I don't think child protection should sit with only child protection workers. If anyone sees or hears a child is in a bad situation, they need to be proactive,” Ms Henderson said.
Community members are encouraged to support one another as child protection is everyone’s responsibility and we should all be focused on the best outcomes for children.

“Foster care is about providing a safe home for children who can't live with their families. And our agency that supports foster carers to ensure that we keep the placements stable and reduce children moving to other placements,” she said.

“We do some great work, but I feel there is more children coming into foster care than the system can manage.”

Henderson says that child protection services need more funding and resources to support families before their situation devolves enough to require foster care intervention.

“There are a lot of families out there that could benefit from extra support. Early intervention and more funding to give parents the skills they need to keep their children at home,” she said.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Foster Care Practitioner, Maureen Baxter, says that the first part of making children safe is to raise awareness in the community.

“There are a lot of children in foster care, and we need more people to care for them. Children need more organisations that will advocate for them,” Ms Baxter said.

Julie Green, another Anglicare Southern Queensland Foster Care Practitioner, who has been navigating the foster care system for many years, shares Baxter’s sentiment.

“If there's one thing that could make a difference, we could have more advocates,” Ms Green said.

“An advocate is important so that children are comfortable enough to express their needs.

“Foster care plays an important role in child protection. It is an opportunity for adults to demonstrate to children that says they are important and it's also about that awareness of healthy connections.

“Healthy connections can make a huge difference in a child's life. It's about being present in a child's life. I see you, I hear you, I understand you.

“Child Protection Week is a great opportunity to provide an awareness of the needs of children, that some children aren't particularly safe in the community.”

Child Protection Week runs from 4 September to 10 September and promotes the value of children by focusing attention on the issues of child abuse and neglect.

“Child Protection week is important to raise community awareness and it's an opportunity to showcase what stakeholders do in this sector,” Ms Henderson said.
Prof. Anne Pattel-Gray urges: “include ancient wisdom and knowledge of First Nations people”

What spoke to you during this pre-assembly?

Prof. Pattel-Gray: The importance of recognising Indigenous people speaks to the integrity of the WCC [World Council of Churches] to ensure a continuing platform for the voices of First Nations People – to not only be heard but to also participate, and to have the opportunity to share our theological views and social-political struggles with each other.

What is the main message Indigenous people will carry to the assembly?

Prof. Pattel-Gray: The message from the Indigenous peoples to the WCC 11th Assembly is to make clear how imperative it is to the WCC’s integrity and salvation to fully resource a solely dedicated Indigenous Desk in the WCC so we can collaborate and coordinate with all other WCC desks. It is critical – more than ever – that our Indigenous theological perspective is embraced in every aspect of the WCC.

Would you like to comment on the Indigenous contribution to solutions to the climate crisis?

Prof. Pattel-Gray: The solutions to the growing concern of global climate change must include the ancient wisdom and knowledge of First Nations people as we have and continue to live with the whole of creation since time began. This is a resource that has not been recognised or embraced. The healing of creation must come through the First Nations people. Indigenous people from all over the
globe bring a rich insight and theological perspective that have not been given the respect and credit that they should. We hold an ancient knowledge and relationship with the Creator that the western churches need to listen to.

What are your hopes and prayers for the assembly?

Prof. Pattel-Gray: That the WCC assembly recognises the importance of Indigenous peoples’ participation, and values them, and that the assembly ensures the independence and longevity of an Indigenous Desk.

Indigenous Peoples Pre-Assembly

WCC 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany

First published on the World Council of Churches website on 30 August 2022.

Editor’s notes:

For Season of Creation events between 1 September and 4 October, please keep an eye on the anglican focus Events page.

Aunty Prof. Anne Pattel-Gray is based in Brisbane, and St Francis College, which is joining the University of Divinity, looks forward to working with her.
Bristol Cathedral display tackles slavery past

A new exhibition was launched at Bristol Cathedral last week, as part of the cathedral’s effort to understand its links with the transatlantic slave trade. The intention is to “inform a wide-ranging conversation” about the past and to help to “repair and restore damaged relationships”.

Research commissioned for the exhibition “All God's Children” found that, of the thousand or so people buried or memorialised in the cathedral and its grounds between 1670 and 1900, about 20 per cent had a close connection with the slave trade.

Two memorials are viewed as particularly challenging: the Edward Colston memorial window (News, 19 June 2020), and the memorial to Robert Codrington, described in the display as “one of the most powerful symbols of the Church of England's willingness to profit from slavery”.

The exhibition has two parts. Inside the cathedral, a series of panels explores the cathedral's connections with the slave trade through its memorial and grave-markers. Outside, on College Green, a series of portraits by the photographer Garfield McKenzie features comments and questions from Christians in Bristol, some of whom live with the legacy of slavery and experience racism today.

The exhibition is framed as a consultation. Visitors are asked to leave their feedback about what the cathedral should do next. For example, should the cathedral have a permanent exhibition? Should problematic monuments be removed or replaced with something new? A list of FAQs, information on modern slavery, and a prayer card are on hand to facilitate reflection.
“For hundreds of years many of the men and women who gathered in this Cathedral enslaved, bought and sold their sisters and brothers of colour,” an introductory panel says. “They exploited, raped and murdered them, and the exploiters did not see their actions as being incompatible with the Christian faith.

“We know that [the Cathedral] cannot be truly welcoming until the story of the painful legacy of slavery is told within these walls and until the contribution of all our sisters and brothers to our shared life is recognised.”

The Dean, the Very Revd Dr Mandy Ford, said last week that the need to address the legacy of the slave trade had become pressing after the toppling of the Colston statue in 2020 (News, 12 June 2020). “It became really clear that we had to do something. We had to do it now — and we had to get it right.”

There has been soul-searching in the city in the past two years: the city council has a legacy steering group, which ran a two-year initiative called Project Truth.

The cathedral exhibition has been in the planning for a year, helped by sponsorship from the Cathedral Trust and the Society of Merchant Venturers, which also has clear connections with the slave trade. “They, too, are on a journey,” Dr Ford said, “and a lot of our research will benefit them because they're trying to understand who their members were.”

The Chapter commissioned a historian and museum consultant, Dr Katherine Prior, to conduct the research that forms the content of the display. “We've been hugely blessed by Katherine's expertise, because not only is she very familiar with the Caribbean sources, but she’s also highly attuned to the sensitivities of what she's doing,” Dr Ford said.

“And one of the things that I was determined was that, in doing this research, we wouldn't just be researching the dead white people. What Katherine's done . . . is to give story and dignity to those who were enslaved. That's been really important.”

The issue went far beyond the infamous names, Dr Ford said. “I wanted us to be really clear that this isn't about one or two bad boys. It's just not all about Colston. No middle-class person in Bristol is untainted.”

The Colston window depicts the story of the Good Samaritan and includes the words: “Go thou and do likewise.” “There are one or two people who have said to me that they find that really offensive, and I can understand that,” Dr Ford said.

But whether the memorials would stay was an open question, she said. “We are taking a stance against racism, but we’re not taking a stance on memorials — because that's what the whole purpose of the consultation is. I think I'm trying to be as undefended as possible, and to help our volunteers and staff to be able to inhabit that space.

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