

Archbishop Phillip Aspinall – Cathedral farewell address



Bishops and Archbishops from Queensland and other states gathered with the Anglican Church Southern Queensland community on 3 December 2022 to farewell Archbishop Phillip Aspinall at the ordination service during which he laid up his pastoral staff

Justice Mullins and Archbishop Mark, thank you for the kindness and generosity in what you have said. I deeply appreciate your remarks.

No doubt you are well aware of the aphorism “All’s well that ends well”. You might not be as familiar with the way in which Anglican dioceses have adapted it to mark the departure of a diocesan bishop: “All’s well that ends!”

Having reached my end, the one thing I want to say this afternoon as I effectively conclude my time as Archbishop of Brisbane is “Thank you”.

It has been a unique privilege to have been called to serve in this office, but I am very conscious of the enormous number of people alongside whom I have served and whom I count as valued colleagues, friends and co-workers.

It is indeed a great cloud of witnesses and impossible to mention each by name.

I am indebted to the hundreds of clergy who have served during my time here, and among them the many I have had the privilege to ordain. Deacons and priests and bishops, active and retired, honorary and stipendiary. Alongside clergy, thousands of faithful lay people have given generously of themselves to forward Christ’s mission in this diocese, province and beyond. And, I have greatly

appreciated the religious communities that enrich the life of the diocese, particularly the Society of the Sacred Advent and the Society of St Francis. This vast team of clergy, lay people and religious have been very ably supported by the Parishes and other Mission Agencies Commission, not least in dealing with more and more complex compliance obligations. Thank you.

Clergy and laity alike have served faithfully and sacrificially on Synod, on the Diocesan Council and on the Commissions, all of which have exercised prudent governance of a diverse and complex array of organisations. Thank you.

We can be justly proud of the services provided to those in need in our communities through Anglicare Southern Queensland. I acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the thousands of staff and volunteers. Thank you.

Equally we can be proud of our schools and the heads, chaplains, staff, councils and boards who make them such effective agents for good in our society. Thank you.

Over the years we have been blessed with more and more expert teams supporting the wider mission of the Church: teams in finance, IT, organisational development, property, professional standards, abuse response and redress, media, and more. These people have enhanced all our efforts to set forward Christ's kingdom in what have been increasingly demanding and challenging circumstances. Thank you.

Preparing, forming and supporting people to lead through these changing times is a particularly demanding area of ministry. I acknowledge with great gratitude the efforts of those who have worked at St Francis' Theological College, the broader Ministry Education Commission teams, those who have carried the load of vocational discernment and formation, including examining chaplains. Thank you.

Over 21 years, I have rejoiced in friendships with ecumenical colleagues in Brisbane and throughout Queensland and beyond. We face similar issues and share many opportunities to further the work of the kingdom and I rejoice that we do that together with deepening understanding and trust, one of the other.

There is a smaller group upon whom I have relied personally from day to day. I have been wonderfully supported over 21 years by two Executive Assistants and five Chaplains, currently Ann Joseph and Howard Munro.

I have relied very heavily on the expertise and skill of successive General Managers, none more so than the current GM Mr Tim Read, whose legal and governance acuity has been so valuable together with his encyclopaedic knowledge of the diocese and its history. I acknowledge him and his team in the Registry and GM's office.

In some difficult times I have been tremendously supported by the Chancellor, Her Honour Justice Debra Mullins AO, President of the Queensland Court of Appeal, His Honour Justice David Thomas and prior to his appointment as Governor of Queensland, The Honourable Paul de Jersey AC CVO, Chancellor Emeritus and former Chief Justice of Queensland, and Mr Bill Anderssen.

I have been privileged to work with wonderful episcopal colleagues over the years, within Brisbane, more broadly in the province and in the national church. Without exception they have been prayerful, committed to the Church and Christ's mission and courageous. Through occasional visits of episcopal colleagues from other parts of Australia and the Anglican Communion, here in Brisbane we have been

reminded that it is in fact quite a rare thing for bishops to work closely with each other, week by week, in an episcopal team. Having trusted colleagues who at once support you, challenge you and hold you accountable makes a world of difference to bishops themselves and, I think, benefits enormously those whom the bishops are called serve. I thank those bishops, one and all.

We gather in this Cathedral from far and wide, representatives of the vast diocesan family, we are here for this joyful ordination of deacons and priests. We are very mindful of the significant ministry of the Cathedral under the Dean's leadership and his team of musicians, organisers, pastoral staff, liturgists, guides, stewards and volunteers of all sorts. Thank you for your work today and always.

Last, but by no means least, I acknowledge and thank Christa. Christa has exercised a wonderful ministry in her own right, especially among clergy spouses, families and children, for which I am also grateful. Christa has also wonderfully supported me, especially through some difficult and dark days. She has also generously, and usually gently and kindly, pointed out a significant number of my blind spots, imminent mistakes and past errors, which has benefited us all. I publicly record my deep appreciation for Christa's unshakeable support and steadfast love over all our time here.

I am as conscious as you are of my shortcomings. It is self-evident, I suppose, that no bishop can satisfy all the expectations, hopes and aspirations of others. Inevitably there are misunderstandings, errors of judgement and human failings of all sorts that cause disappointments and hurts. I pray that we all might know the grace of overflowing forgiveness as this chapter closes and the power of the new life and renewal that God gives as another begins.

I am grateful that this farewell takes place in the context of the diocesan ordination service. A bishop has no greater or more profound responsibility than to send our workers into the Lord's vineyard. That I have the privilege to do so again today puts our focus firmly where it should be; not on me, but on the *Missio Dei*. Each of us is called to play a small part in the unfolding of God's purposes in the world God loves and saves. Be assured of my prayers for you all as together we take the next steps in that holy vocation we all share.

650 Bishops, 550 spouses and 10 calls



Bishop Cam Venables at the 2022 Lambeth Conference of Bishops

We gathered...

From 27 July to 7 August 2022, 650 Bishops and 550 spouses gathered at the University of Kent in England for the 15th Lambeth Conference. Our theme was “God’s Church for God’s World”.

Different to previous once-in-a-decade Lambeth Conferences, we operated in the following three phases:

- In phase one we developed a sense of walking together before the conference by meeting online in small groups for conversation, study and prayer.
- In phase two we met together in Canterbury for face-to-face listening, discussion and prayer.
- In phase three we plan to work together over the next 10 years to implement and develop specific intentions expressed in 10 documents called “Calls”.

During the 12 days of the Conference we:

- **Worshipped together** with a Eucharist most mornings and Evening Prayer most afternoons. We prayed together in the conference rooms, at Canterbury Cathedral and at Lambeth Palace. We prayed for each other in small groups and pairs daily. The highly-skilled worship team enabled us to sing in nine languages, and the virtuosity of the musicians was an ongoing joy!

- **Studied the Bible together** by systematically unpacking the [First Letter of Peter](#). An official conference commentary on 1 Peter was developed by an international group of 35 New Testament scholars from Anglican, and other, churches around the world. The scholars represented a range of Christian traditions and experience, hailing from Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Egypt, India, Ireland, Kenya, Nigeria, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, the UK and the US. It was good to study online together before the conference. It was good to have Archbishop Justin teaching before further discussion in small groups. And, it was good to be grounded in this study each day.
- **Reflected on issues together**, with the conference planning group identifying 10 areas that would be unpacked in plenary sessions and by small groups. To prepare for this work, 10 working groups were appointed, each led by an Archbishop, with five other Bishops from around the Anglican Communion, and experts from each field. These working groups prepared papers that gave thorough backgrounds and made specific recommendations called “Calls”. The 10 areas were Mission and Evangelism; Safe Church; Anglican Identity; Reconciliation; Human Dignity; Environment and Sustainable Development; Christian Unity; Interfaith Relations; Discipleship; and, Science and Faith. We read the papers before arriving. The 10 plenaries gave further background, which was then discussed by 84 small groups, with small group leaders documenting the feedback each evening to send back to the relevant working group.
- **Lived together** as we were all packed into halls of residence, sharing meals in refectories, and washing clothes together in laundries...so, there was much grace each day!

The entire conference was a blessing and I have a number of highlights. I am very grateful that my wife, Kate, and I had the opportunity to participate in the Lambeth Conference together – we both came away energised and encouraged.

There were times when it felt like we were “speed dating” for 10 days because at each activity you introduced yourself to someone and they introduced themselves to you and conversations would unfold about family and ministry context...and more! Old friendships were renewed, new friendships were made, and much respect developed for those serving in difficult and dangerous places.

The conference was intellectually stimulating, and I was particularly inspired by the Human Dignity call (in its uncomfortable naming of ongoing colonial legacy), the Environment and Sustainable Development call (drawing upon the work of Kenyan environmental activist Dr Wangari Maathai and the launching of the Communion Forest initiative), and the Science and Faith call (which calls for dialogue, education and research).

I left the UK in August with a renewed hope for the future of the Anglican Communion, and for the future of our Diocesan community.

Reassuringly, most of the conference’s 10 Calls resonate with existing areas of focus and ministry in our Diocese, including the ACSQ Mission, Vision and Values (the Mission and Evangelism and Anglican Identity calls); child-safe policies and procedures (the Safe Church call); Angligreen, our schools and parishes, Baroona Farm and the Justice Unit (the Environment and Sustainable Development call); Anglicare, the Domestic and Family Violence Working Group, chaplaincies and our Reconciliation Action Plan (the Human Dignity call); and, the Vocations Task Force, AYCF Ichthus camps, St Francis College, Roscoe Library, FormedFaith, *anglican focus*, schools, parishes and ministries, such as Mothers Union, Mission to Seafarers and GFS – An Anglican Ministry (the Discipleship call).

It would be good to share the relevant papers with each of these groups and initiatives to identify what resonates, what inspires and what may need inclusion! For example, one call that seems to need better addressing is “Science and Faith” and I think it would be initially helpful to share this paper with the Anglican Schools Commission’s Director of Mission, and those who lead our Anglican schools.

A key takeaway of the conference for me was the potential gift of partner church relationships. It seemed that most of the Bishops I met and shared with were in some sort of partner relationship with another Diocese and the recurring refrain was that each participating Diocese found the relationship missionally helpful. Consequently, I think it would be worth exploring the possibility of the ACSQ establishing a partner church relationship with another Diocese, or maybe more than one! Possibilities to consider include Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands – partly because of geography, and partly because we have growing numbers of seasonal workers from these countries worshipping in our congregations. Another possibility to consider is a Canadian Diocese because of a perceived theological alignment and a shared call to Reconciliation with First Nations peoples.

I was also struck by the gratitude expressed by South Sudanese Bishops. In our Diocesan community, we are blessed with five Dinka-speaking congregations, and one that speaks Arabic. To better work with these congregations, and other multi-cultural congregations, the ACSQ appointed Bishop Daniel Abot early last year to serve as a Resource Church specialist. Inevitably Bishop Daniel’s ministry extends (by phone and online) to other congregations around Australia and word of this has spread through the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and is clearly much appreciated.

ACSQ first church nationally to officially partner with referendum campaign organisation



On 23 November 2022, Anglican Church Southern Queensland community members, including senior clergy and staff, RAP Working Group representatives and Social Responsibilities Committee (SRC) members, gathered in the Cathedral Precinct to celebrate the ACSQ becoming the first church nationally to officially partner with From The Heart. Pictured is Archbishop Phillip Aspinall holding a letter from From The Heart, RAP Working Group Coordinator Aunty Sandra King OAM and RAP Working Group Chair The Rev'd Canon Bruce Boase, along with Sherril Butterworth (Executive Director, Anglican Schools Commission), Fiona Hammond (St Francis College RAP Working Group member), Tim Reid (ACSQ General Manager and RAP Working Group member), Peter Branjerdporn (Justice Unit Coordinator), The Ven. Bronwyn Pagram (SRC RAP Working Group member), Dr Stephen Hart (FDSC RAP Working Group member), Anna Zilli (Anglicare SQ RAP Working Group member), Dr Stephen Harrison (Executive Director, PMC and RAP Working Group member), The Rev'd Prof Rodney Wolff (SRC RAP Working Group member), The Very Rev'd Dr Peter Catt (Chair, SRC), Joanne Stone (Executive Director, FDSC) and Michelle McDonald (PMC RAP Working Group member)

The Anglican Church Southern Queensland is the first church to officially partner with From The Heart, the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament referendum campaign organisation.

From The Heart stems from the 2017 National Constitutional Convention where the Uluru Statement From the Heart was signed by 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander delegates.

In a [recent letter](#) to Archbishop Phillip Aspinall and Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ) General Manager Tim Reid, the From The Heart team thanked our Diocesan community for their support.

“We would like to express our gratitude for the leadership shown by yourselves and the wider Anglican Church Southern Queensland, especially the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group chaired by Uncle Canon Bruce Boase, in supporting the From the Heart campaign,” the letter said.

“The Anglican Church Southern Queensland is the first Church nationally to donate to and officially partner with us.

“Thank you for being trailblazers in the Reconciliation space.”

The Anglican Church Southern Queensland and Anglicare Southern Queensland logos are the latest additions to the [“Our Partners”](#) section on the “Our people” page of From The Heart’s website.

In the ACSQ’s 2021-2023 Reconciliation Action Plan, our Diocese declared its support for the Anglican Board of Mission’s 2017 call for a constitutionally entrenched First Nations Voice.

As a tangible response to this, Diocesan Council approved the ACSQ becoming an official partner of From The Heart in April this year.

The Indigenous Voice to Parliament included in the Constitution is the first of the Uluru Statement’s two key reforms.

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Working Group Chair and Wakka Wakka Elder The Rev’d Canon Bruce Boase said that the seminal Statement “is a gift”.

“The Uluru Statement From the Heart is a gift to all Australians – a roadmap to fairness,” Canon Boase said.

“So by voting ‘yes’, Australians will take another meaningful step forward towards Reconciliation because Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will then be properly heard on matters that directly concern them.”

Various commissions of the ACSQ pooled \$13,000 in donations for the campaign to help cover education, awareness and wage costs, with the bulk of the funds provided by Anglican schools.

Executive Director of the Anglican Schools Commission Sherril Butterworth said that Anglican schools are proud to support the Uluru Statement’s reforms, including the Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution.

“We now look back with pride on the 1967 Referendum when over 90 per cent of Australians voted ‘yes’ to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders being counted in the population and the Commonwealth, rather than merely states, being able to pass laws for them,” Ms Butterworth said.

“Like the wonderful 1967 Referendum result, I look forward to our First Peoples benefitting when the Referendum on the Voice is passed, especially with regard to education and health outcomes.”

The Voice has the support of all 144 Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations, which operate more than 300 clinics across metropolitan, regional and remote areas.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wellbeing worker and Saibai Elder Aunty Dr Rose Elu said that a Constitutional guarantee is necessary to close the health and life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

“A successful referendum is critical if we wish to see fair, practical and lasting change at the grassroots in our communities,” Aunty Dr Rose said.

“Time and time again it is shown that merely legislating change is not enough – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need the certainty of a Constitutional guarantee, especially across changes of government.

“As a social worker and Elder, I see firsthand on a daily basis how important it is that we close the significant health and life expectancy gap.

“I know that when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a genuine say on issues that affect them, we get much better results on the ground.”

Aunty Dr Rose is also a member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council and the ACSQ RAP Working Group, as well as a former Queensland Senior Australian of the Year.

The Voice to Parliament will be groundbreaking for Queensland’s regional and remote communities.

The state’s 77 local government councils, more than 65 of which cover regional and remote areas, have passed a motion in support of the Uluru Statement’s reforms.

Most of the nearly 250 delegates who signed the Uluru Statement From the Heart live in, and represent, regional and remote areas across Australia.

Executive Director of Anglicare Southern Queensland and registered nurse Sue Cooke said that the Voice will ensure that legislation passed by Parliament will deliver comprehensive health solutions.

“Anglicare Southern Queensland has always supported elevating the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and our support of the Uluru Statement From the Heart is an example of our commitment to social justice for the families and young people we work with and serve,” Mrs Cooke said.

“As a healthcare provider, Anglicare also acknowledges the evidence that tells us health is closely linked to social, economic, cultural and historic factors, and supporting the Statement will lead to health legislation that meets the needs of, and improves the health of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.”

Church leaders, both locally and nationally, are encouraging faith communities to talk about the Voice and the forthcoming referendum.

Archbishop Phillip Aspinall said that supporting the Voice is a significant step towards Reconciliation and unity for all Australians.

“100 years ago when Anglicans and Roman Catholics really first began conversations towards unity, Cardinal Mercier said something along these lines: ‘we cannot unite unless we first love on another;

and we cannot love one another unless we first know one another; and we cannot know one another unless we first meet together and listen deeply,” Archbishop Aspinall said.

“These simple yet profound words apply to unity and Reconciliation in Australia.

“Of course, how the Voice will operate will be clarified.

“At root though this is about heart and spirit – I pray the ‘Voice’ will help us listen more deeply to one another, that we might truly know one another and come to love one another. Then unity will be possible.

“This deep listening is important because the Voice to Parliament will provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and initiatives with stability and longevity, especially across election cycles and changes of government.”

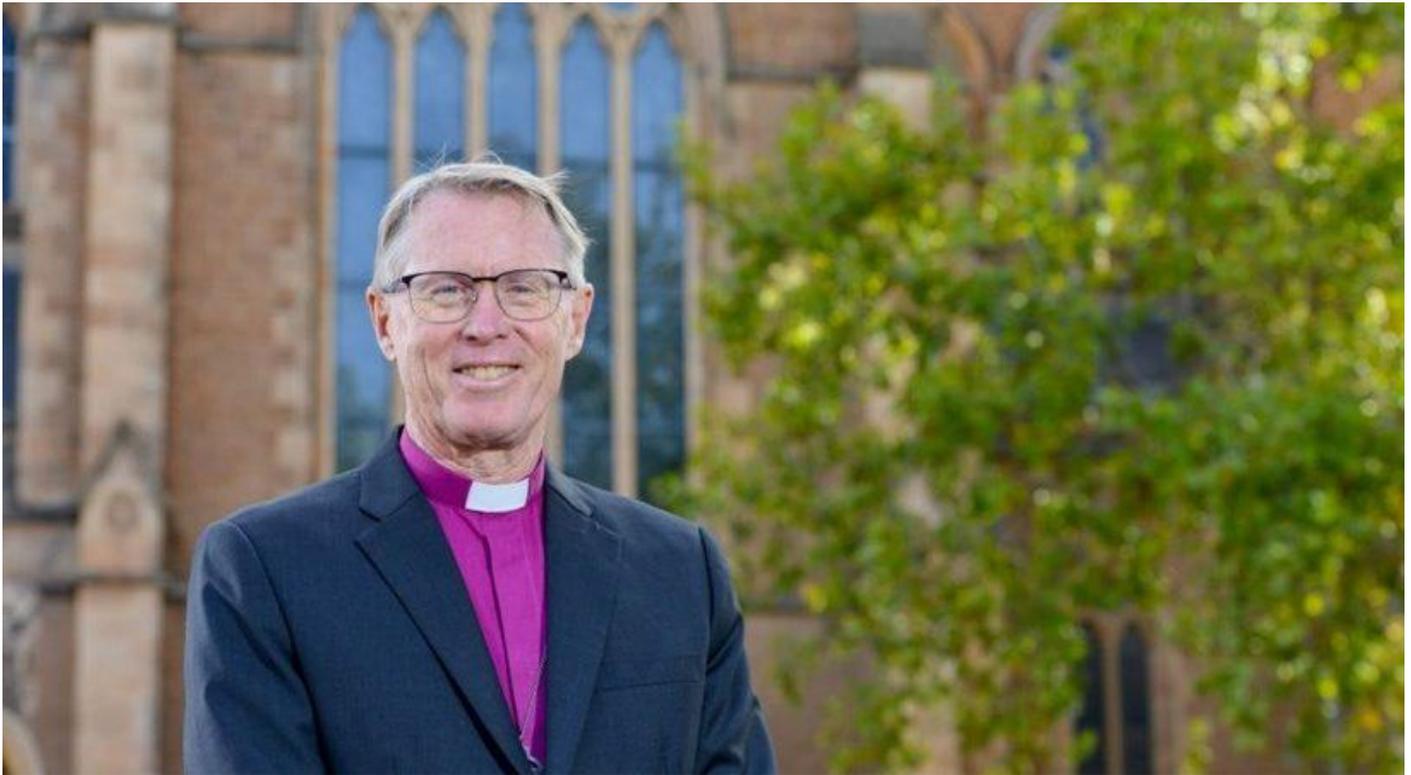
General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Australia Liz Stone said that Christian churches and other faith communities nationally are actively supporting the Voice.

“On the fifth anniversary of the Uluru Statement From the Heart, 27 May 2022, I worked to gather leaders of Australia’s religious organisations to sign a joint resolution of support for the Statement,” Ms Stone said.

“This public gesture was not symbolic – the joint resolution is a statement of intentional action signalling our support for the coming referendum on the Voice to Parliament with education and opening our spaces for discussion and listening.”

Archbishop Phillip Aspinall made a formal [submission](#) on behalf of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland in support of the Voice last year.

A letter from the Primate to Archbishop Phillip Aspinall



The Most Rev'd Geoffrey Smith is Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia

30th November 2022

The Most Reverend Dr Phillip Aspinall AC Archbishop of Brisbane

Dear Phillip,

At its recent meeting the Standing Committee of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia passed the following resolution:

The Standing Committee noted the resignation of Archbishop Dr Phillip Aspinall AC as Archbishop of Brisbane from 2 February 2023 and gave thanks for his commitment and long service to the Anglican Church of Australia and the Standing Committee of the General Synod and wished Archbishop Phillip and Mrs Christa Aspinall God's richest blessings in the future.

The resolution speaks of your commitment and long service to the Anglican Church of Australia and that is without doubt. You have been in Holy Orders for more than thirty-four years and in Bishops' Orders since 1998. You served as our Primate for nine years from 2005 to 2014. You have been a member of the Standing Committee of the General Synod since 1995, chair of the Ecumenical Relations Committee since 2016 and a member of the World Council of Churches Central Committee since 2013. This list is not exhaustive (I didn't think you'd want the whole thing rehearsed) but it is indicative of your service and commitment to our church.

Not only have you held positions of responsibility, but you have exercised those positions with great dedication even when that dedication has been at your personal cost. You have led the church

through times of significant challenge and your attention has constantly been on the mission of the church and the church's effectiveness in that mission.

The resolution of the Standing Committee thanks you for all you have done and I want to add my thanks for your service among us. I pray God's richest blessings for you as you complete your ministry as Archbishop of Brisbane and move into the next phase of your ministry as a disciple of Jesus.

May this next chapter be graced by family and golf and may you have the space to read and reflect, cook and tinker. Please keep us in your prayers as you and Christa will be in ours.

In Christ

The Most Reverend Geoffrey Smith
Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia

Spotlight Q&A • Saturday 3 December 2022 • By Margaret Abot

Q&A with St Bart's, Toowoomba parishioner, prankster, baker, dancer and plastic bottle recycler, Margaret Abot



Margaret Abot with Children's and Families Minister Bettrys Lowe at St Bart's, Toowoomba in October 2022

Where do you currently live and where do you worship?

I live in Toowoomba. My family and I worship at St Bart's, Toowoomba.

How long have you been involved in the Anglican Church?

My whole life. My whole family is Anglican. I was raised believing in God.



Margaret Abot with her siblings and parents, Rachel Jimma and Bishop Daniel Abot, on Christmas Day in 2020

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

My faith teaches me to care for people. I don't like seeing people being bullied.

Can you tell us about your bottle collecting initiative?

It started in 2019. My cousin Grace started it. She wanted me to join her. We put both of our ideas in it. We earn 10 cents per bottle. The money goes to South Sudanese orphans in Uganda. We have raised \$2,800 so far from the bottles and from people donating money after seeing us being interviewed on the television. We collect the bottles from our families, friends and schools. My mum and dad help collect the bottles at events. The orphanage was started by my dad. We store the bottles at my house. When we collect over one thousand bottles, we make trips in the car to get the refund.

It is also good for the earth, including for the animals. It helps stop pollution on beaches and in schools.

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

I am planning to come closer to God and to do better in school. I also plan to keep collecting bottles. Grace and I are also planning to do a sausage sizzle fundraiser with the Dinka community.

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

I remember when I went to Youth Group at church and there was a guest speaker. He spoke about how he saw a kid going through a lot and how he prayed for the kid. I was confirmed by Bishop Rob Nolan when I was eight. I really enjoy going to church, especially the music.

What is your favourite scripture and why?

“Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” ([Colossians 3.13](#)) This scripture reminds me that I need to love my neighbour as myself.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

My cousin, Grace. She is a very strong Christian. I see her writing Bible scriptures down in books. She is caring, generous and kind.

2022's Diocesan theme is “Being Together: Embracing Joy”. What are some practical ways that we can celebrate the way differences help to make us whole and the importance of diversity in our unity?

Learning about each other. Asking each other questions. Listening to others and hearing what they have to say.

Why is Reconciliation with Australia's First Peoples important?

It is really important because of what Aboriginal people have been through. They will never get back what they fully deserve. This is their country and we should treat them and their country with respect.

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

To treat someone the way I want to be treated. My religion teachers at primary school talked about this a lot.

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

I like going on walks, dancing and playing ball games with my little brother, Abot.

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

My phone, chips and a blanket.

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

“Please give me your bottles” because I am raising money for South Sudanese orphans in Uganda with my cousin, Grace.

What book do you recommend the most as a gift and why?

Wonder, which is about a kid with a rare facial disorder. He was bullied by a lot of kids at school. By the end of the book he had a lot of friends. The main bully apologised to him. The book is inspiring.

Where do you do your best thinking?

In my room.

What is your earliest memory?

I don't know how old I was. My dad had just come back from Africa, but we didn't know. It was a surprise. He was in his room. I opened the door and he was there.

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

I eat ice-cream. Mint is the best.

What is the funniest thing that happened to you recently?

It did not happen to me, but I did it. It happened just before I started this interview. My little brother really wanted a soft drink. I got a can and filled it with water. He went to the fridge to get it. He drank it. He was not happy. He said he would not never forget it. My parents were laughing.

What is your secret skill?

I like baking vanilla cakes. I can also make people laugh – sometimes by pranking, but mostly by joking.

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

Maybe my eleventh birthday because I had a lot of my cousins over and it was fun.

If you could only eat one thing for the rest of your life, what would that be?

Pasta, but only if I can eat different types.

What is your favourite Gospel of Matthew passage and why?



Bishop Jeremy Greaves preaching at the Anglican Schools Commission end-of-year celebration service on Tuesday 29 November in St John's Cathedral

Four priests from across our Diocese tell us about their favourite passage from the Gospel of Matthew, which is the primary Gospel read on Sundays during Year A of the Lectionary cycle.

Bishop Jeremy Greaves – Bishop for the Northern Region

There are plenty of riches to be found in the Gospel according to Matthew and I am tempted to include one of the parables in my list of “favourites”. However, my favourite passage from Matthew comes right at the beginning and it is those 17 verses that make up Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus. In the [King James Version](#) of the Bible it is all those “begats”: “Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren”... and so on.

It is my favourite passage because it contains some wonderful surprises. It is a passage that gets left out of the Lectionary readings for Christmas, but rewards us if we take a bit of time to notice just who is included. Especially, we might notice the “four shady ladies” (as some have called them) listed amongst all of the men in Jesus’ family tree: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba.

Now my family tree has some interesting branches, but Matthew wants us to know that Jesus’ family tree includes an incestuous relationship between Judah and Tamar, a sex worker named Rahab, an act of seduction on the part of an outsider named Ruth and an act of adultery that culminated in an act of murder in the life of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. No wonder we do not read this

passage to all the visitors in church for Christmas services. Otherwise we would have to give the Christmas services an MA15+ rating.

The 17 verses that include incest and prostitution, and seduction and adultery, and murder as part of the story of Jesus says to me that even these things cannot get in the way of God's love for the world. Matthew seems to be suggesting that no matter what you have done or what has been done to you, and no matter what you have been, the love of God can bring transformation and holiness and wholeness out of whatever mess we might find ourselves in. The love of God in Christ Jesus takes all of the stuff of our lives – the good, the messy, the ugly – and can transform it for good. And that is a pretty good starting point from which to hear the good news according to Matthew.

The Rev'd Ms Melissa Conway – Assistant Priest, St Anne's, Highfields

"And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'" ([Matthew 13.52](#))

Matthew chapter 13 is full of parables – stories that Jesus uses to illustrate the nature of God's kingdom, or sometimes to contrast God's kingdom with the way our world often works. After two short parables about finding treasures ([44-46](#)), Jesus turns his attention to what gets kept and what gets thrown away. Verse [52](#) reminds us that we have treasures already stored up. And that more importantly, we have both old and new treasures.

These are my favourite verses from Matthew because they remind me of two important things.

Often the treasure that we seek is already in our possession. Conversely, seeking externally to meet an inner yearning is often unsatisfying or of fleeting value. The advertising industry manipulates our inner yearnings to an extreme, so that it seems that what we deeply desire, such as love, belonging and acceptance, can be obtained through possessions and experiences that do not directly address that inner longing.

Secondly, the treasures are both new and old. From the moment we are conceived it is inevitable that we will be subjected to or faced with change. There is a balance to be struck between retaining that which continues to serve us – our values and God's kingdom – and adopting new things that will enhance our lives, faith and worship. Tradition needs to be balanced with growth and change.

These verses remind me that Jesus of Nazareth sees and understands our intrinsic worth as treasured children of God. At the same time, Jesus urges us towards continued growth, change and renewal so that we can be more fully who we are called to be.

The Rev'd Canon Bruce Boase – Priest-in-Charge, The Parish of Green Hills

There are so many passages in the Gospel of Matthew that I could have chosen. This particular passage from [Matthew 18.1-5](#) takes me back to my childhood:

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?' He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is

the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.”

On the wall of the old church, where I attended Sunday School as a child, was a picture of a small child. The child is the baby Jesus. He is sitting with a lion and a lamb, which is another story. It is the child that stirs my memory because of what Jesus says to his disciples in this passage. To get to heaven you must become like a child.

The child whom Jesus chose at random may or may not have been known to the disciples, but was and is known to Jesus – and chosen by him. All those listening to Jesus would have had a certain vision of greatness. In Biblical times, children would not have been part of that vision. But Jesus made it so. Suddenly the world was turned upside down and now the last shall be first and the first shall be last.

The Rev'd Canon Dr Jim McPherson – PTO, The Parish of Coolum

Matthew's Gospel opens the Christian Canon because it wonderfully bridges Jesus' own religious heritage to which he was controversially and unswervingly, if unconventionally, faithful.

I really connect with the [Sermon on the Mount](#). It is steeped in history and the eloquent, though often unheeded, ministries of God's faithful prophets. Jesus shows in his sermon how penetrating some of the Jewish laws really are, and then tightens the screws. I am in awe of his penetrating insights. It is not enough to avoid physically committing adultery because nurturing the desire in your heart is just as sinful. Loving your neighbour is good sense and prudent insurance, but loving your enemy? Praying for those who persecute you? This is what love and grace require.

Jesus' sermon adds even further depth and complexity to the extraordinary character of his humanity. In it Jesus is in sage mode: that is, one whose religious wisdom sees deeply into the ways of everyday life, into our human foibles and conceits. We also see Jesus' own personal joy in God's creation: "Consider the lilies of the field..." ([6.28](#)).

In popular thinking, I suspect many people think of the Sermon as a guide to good living in a nominally Christian society, a sort of Jesus moral update of the "Moses Big 10". I find it tougher than that. [The Beatitudes](#) thoroughly subvert our everyday of transactions, fulfilment and self-promotion. The rest of the sermon fleshes out the detail, so that the everyday may be deeply graced.

Every day.

Editor's note: If you are a member of the ACSQ community and you would like to share about your favourite scripture in *anglican focus*, please contact the Editor, Michelle McDonald, via focus@anglicanchurchsq.org.au for more information.

Holy Hermits Online makes gift-giving a piece of cake this Christmas



Priest for Holy Hermits Online The Rev'd Jamee Lee preparing for her digital community's 2022 Christmastide ministry

Christmastide is an important season for Holy Hermits Online community members, whether it is a joyful period or a challenging time.

One of the blessings that we celebrate at Holy Hermits Online is that our virtual space enables us to collaborate easily and work together in mission and ministry.

Some of the diverse initiatives we have collaborated on this year include the [70's Faith-Music Party](#), monthly [contemplative prayer services](#), [online retreats and spiritual direction](#), a new [Holy Hermits Online App](#), as well as weekly [Sunday worship services](#).

Holy Hermits Online members contribute a range of wonderful skills and talents to our initiatives, including reading, prayer writing, broadcasting and tech support, music curating, service preparation, proofreading, researching historic holy hermits for brief feature pieces, committing to regular prayer for those in need, and ministry task group leadership (for example in our Companion Animal Ministry project on creating [pet memorial gatherings](#) and other resources).

Recently the Holy Hermits Online community banded together to craft a beautiful Christmastide Subscription for other Anglican Church Southern Queensland community members and their loved ones.

Subscribers will receive 12 days of original uplifting devotions and stories from 25 December to 5 January.

anglican focus readers are invited to [purchase the subscription](#) for themselves or their loved ones online for \$10 by Monday 12 December. All proceeds will go to funding Holy Hermits Online ministries.

Editor's note: Thank you so much to Holy Hermits Online members Bob and Desley Randle for surprising the Editor, Michelle, with a Holy Hermits Online Christmastide Subscription. She was absolutely thrilled to receive the email – it really is the perfect gift.

News • Tuesday 6 December 2022

Bundaberg parish's health and well-being clinics help women at risk of homelessness



The Parish of Bundaberg and St Luke's Anglican School collaborated to pack 100 care packages for women at risk of homelessness at the parish's inaugural festival of health and well-being, with (L-R) Assistant Principal Matthew Hughes, Indie Hughes, Charlotte Hughes, Nathan Commens, Anna Nicolson, Shanae Oosthuizen, Reese Dart, Jo Leveritt, Councillor Tanya McLoughlin and Leonie Boreel

An inaugural festival of health and well-being clinics was recently hosted by the Bundaberg Parish Anglican Support Ministry, with a particular focus on caring for women at risk of homelessness.

The festival brought local community organisations and services together who provided pop-up clinics and stalls so women could access a range of free services and products, including legal advice, designer clothing, massages, hearing tests, vaccinations and housing advice.

Church Warden Jo Leveritt said that women over the age of 55 are the fastest growing group to experience homelessness in Australia.

"Women face some of the biggest housing affordability challenges in our community, with poverty, financial inequality and other structural barriers placing them at risk of significant housing stress and homelessness," Ms Leveritt said.

“The feedback from festival attendees was very positive and extremely appreciative for the efforts made by all.”

The festival was held as part of Jean Hailes Women’s Health Week 2022.

[Jean Hailes Women’s Health](#) is a national not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving women’s knowledge and understanding of complex health issues.

Parish Councillor Leonie Boreel said that the church and St Luke’s Anglican School collaborated to pack dozens of care packages for women.

“Jean Hailes donated 100 bags that, with the help of St Luke’s Anglican School student volunteers, were filled with donations of items suitable for women on the streets and distributed on the day,” Ms Boreel said.

The timing of the festival coincided with the Anglican Support Ministry soup kitchen operations, with women enjoying a free hot meal and dessert.

The annual Women’s Health Week campaign acts as a reminder for women to set aside time for their health and well-being.

Implementing our RAP in relationship with First Nations businesses and artists



Swathi, Rachael, Stephen, Michael and Neethu from the Finance and Diocesan Services Commission's Organisational Development team at Wiradjuri-owned Birrunga Gallery and Dining on Friday 25 November 2022

In our workplaces we are keen to make a difference and contribute meaningfully in the Reconciliation journey, but we can sometimes struggle identifying opportunities to do this.

One of the key ways we can practically make a difference is through our procurement decisions for both ongoing and ad hoc business and ministry needs.

For example, as part of our [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (RAP) our Diocese is increasingly supporting businesses registered with [Supply Nation](#), which is Australia's leading database of verified First Nation businesses.

Supply Nation promotes First Nations businesses because purchasing power delivers [positive social outcomes](#).

As part of their mission, Supply Nation verifies businesses through a [five-step](#) registration, certification and audit process.

Supply Nation offers a number of businesses that are relevant to our purchasing practices, including printers and graphic designers; stationery suppliers; caterers; cafés; and, event venues.

For example, the ACSQ's preferred printer is Snap Printing in Underwood, which is a First Nations business listed on [Supply Nation](#). The online portal for Snap Printing is currently under maintenance while we redesign our stationery; however parishes, Diocesan Operations and St Francis College staff

are welcome to email marketing@anglicanchurchsq.org.au to enquire about letterhead, business cards, envelopes, name badges and more.

Snap Printing at Underwood also offers graphic design services; corporate gifts and promotional items; and, retractable and flag banners.

Another Supply Nation business that we are increasingly using is [Birrunga Gallery and Dining](#), which is located on Adelaide Street. Our relationship with this wonderful café, venue and catering business commenced several years ago when the Parishes and other Mission Agencies Commission started hosting their *anglican focus* luncheons there.

Since attending these luncheons, Anglican Schools Commission staff have become regulars, with Executive Director Sherril Butterworth a well-known patron as she often holds informal meetings and purchases artistic corporate gifts at Birrunga Gallery and Dining.

An additional benefit of engaging with First Nations businesses is this kind of special relationship we build with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the wider community.

The ACSQ is developing relationships with the following First Nations businesses (among many others):

- [Birrunga Gallery and Dining](#) (café, venue and catering business)
- [Snap Printing](#) (for example, for [ACSQ stationery](#), graphic design services; corporate gifts and promotional items; and, retractable and flag banners)
- [Tribal Experiences Aboriginal Dancers](#) (for example, for Welcome to Country, Aboriginal dancing and smoking ceremony bookings – particularly Yuggera, Quandamooka, Kabi Kabi, Wakka Wakka and Yugambah peoples)
- [Wagga Torres Strait Islander Dance Company](#) (for Torres Strait Islander dancers and musicians)
- [Sylvia Nakachi](#) (for example, for Torres Strait Islander women's weaving workshops)
- [Dean Tyson](#) (for example, for men's cultural workshops)
- [Three Little Birds](#) (for catering)
- [Lalania Tusa](#) (for example, for dot painting commissions, dot painting and jewellery making workshops and cultural capability training)

[Tribal Experiences Aboriginal Dancers](#) conducted the smoking ceremony, Welcome to Country and dancing at the launch of our new Reconciliation Action Plan last year and Three Little Birds provided the catering.

Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owner Lalania Tusa has led dot painting and jewellery-making workshops and operated a stall at [On Earth festivals](#); facilitated a dot painting workshop for the St Francis College's team retreat; designed [Christmas cards for the Cathedral](#); and, painted [custom corporate gifts](#) for award-winning *anglican focus* contributors.

Young Kabi Kabi, Koa and Yuin artist Stevei O'Chin, whose works feature prominently at Birrunga Gallery and Dining, was commissioned by our RAP Working Group in 2019 to paint three stunning interrelated [Aboriginal dot paintings](#) representing our Diocesan Regions.

The First Nations suppliers and artists we recommend offer quality products and services, which is a win-win for our Church community and the supplier or artist.

By engaging First Nation businesses, we are supporting an important deliverable under the “Opportunities” pillar of our Diocesan Innovate RAP to “Develop commercial relationships with First Nations businesses and artists.”

Editor’s note: The Finance and Diocesan Services Commission has published a list of First Nations suppliers and artists on [The ARC](#). First Nations businesses will be added to this list in an ongoing way.

Dates & Seasons • Thursday 1 December 2022 • By The Rev'd Charlie Lacey

Tough Questions: Why Christmas?



Wise kings presenting their gifts to baby Jesus during the St Andrew's, Springfield Carol Concert and Nativity on 24 December 2020, featuring Toby Stephens, Caleb Lacey, Oluchi Egbuonu (Mary) and Annabelle Curtis.

People have mixed feelings about Christmas. For some, it is a magical and exciting time of year – for others it is stressful and draining. For some it is an opportunity to spend time with loved ones – for others a painful reminder of the brokenness of their family. Some enjoy shopping for gifts, while others are plagued by financial worries.

A huge amount of time and effort goes into Christmas. Much time is spent shopping, wrapping presents, cooking, eating and drinking, and there are streets in Springfield where almost every house displays an elaborate array of lights and decorations. But what is it all for? What are we celebrating and why?

In amongst the baubles, reindeer and wrapping paper, many people are vaguely aware of a story about a baby laying in a manger, but all too often that story is devoid of any real meaning. Christmas is a big deal in our culture, but most fail to realise that the story that stands behind it does in fact lead us to the most remarkable and important sequence of events in human history.

As it says in John 1.14: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

The Word is Jesus, who was and is God, therefore God took on human flesh. The fact that God entered into his own creation as a vulnerable human child is surprising and wonderful and his reasons for doing so are even more so.

The destiny of that defenceless baby laid in a manger was to suffer Roman crucifixion. God took on flesh, so that that flesh could be scourged and pierced by thorns and nails. God took on flesh in order that he might die. On the cross, Jesus bore all the world’s sin and wrongdoing, including yours and mine. Therefore, if we put our trust in Jesus, God will look at us as if we had never sinned and begin to transform our lives and character by the power of his Holy Spirit. Those who belong to Jesus, even though they die, will be raised to new and everlasting life, just as Jesus was. As it says in Romans 8.11:

“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.”

In the middle of the popular Christmas Carol, ‘Hark the Herald Angels Sing’, we find these words, “Born that man no more may die”, which is perhaps the simplest and most accurate way to answer the question, “Why Christmas?” The story of Christmas cannot be divorced from the purpose of Jesus and so we must look beyond the stable to the cross on a hill.

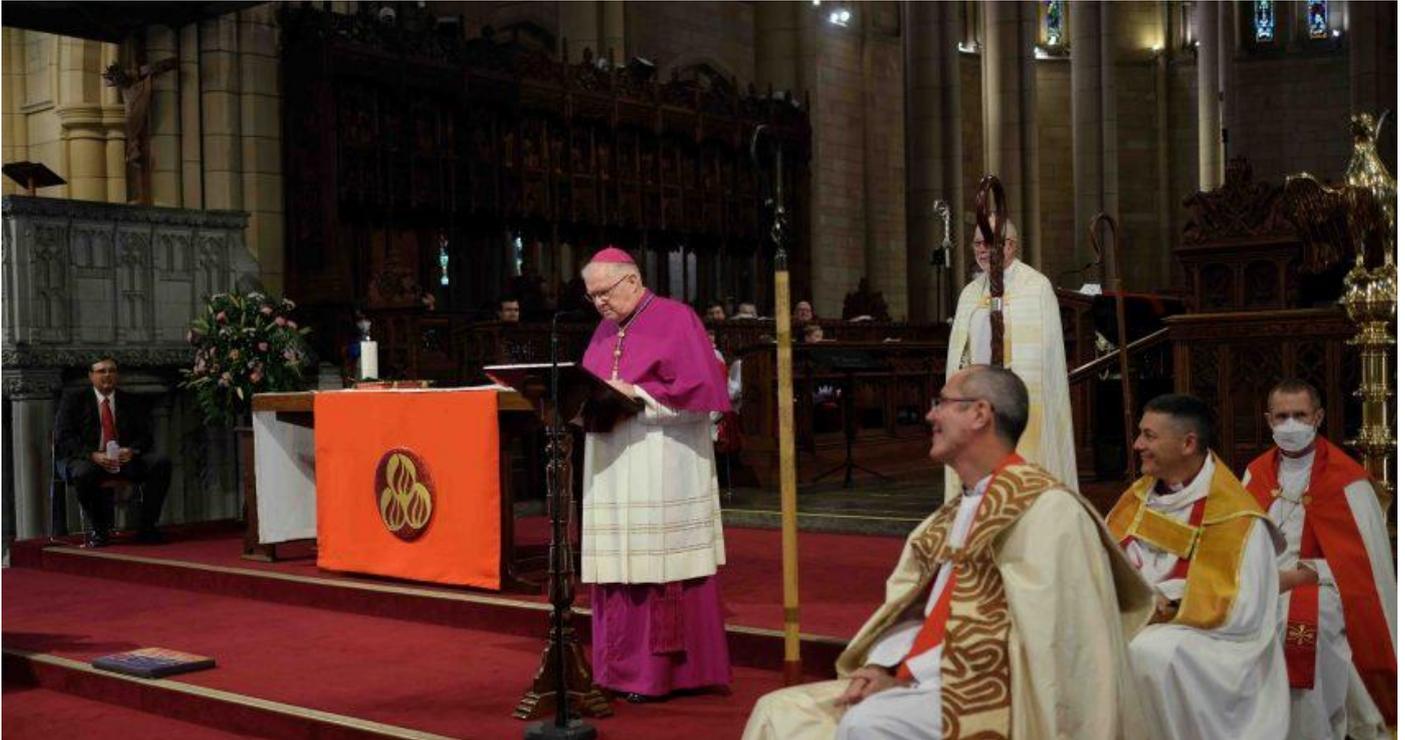
Christmas is so much more than the story of God being born (remarkable enough in itself) – it is the story of a loving God, who came to save his most beloved creatures. John 3.16 summarises it perfectly:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

The full implications of Christmas, properly understood, are not just potentially life changing – they are eternity changing. The wonderful news of Jesus’ birth should evoke a response of unsurpassed gratitude, praise, adoration and love. In the words of another well-known carol, “Come let us adore him”.

First published on the [St Andrew's, Springfield website](#) on 28 November 2022.

On the occasion of Archbishop Phillip Aspinall's farewell



Archbishop Mark Coleridge at Archbishop Phillip Aspinall's farewell on Saturday 3 December at St John's Cathedral

In the gerontocracy that I inhabit, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, Archbishop Phillip would have no right to retire at the tender age of 63. However, he was a child prodigy when appointed to Brisbane, and after 21 years in the job he's entitled to some consideration – not just because of long tenure, but because of the pressures those years have brought.

The shadow of abuse and its mishandling has loomed over all, to say nothing of tectonic cultural shifts in both society and the Church. Phillip has been bishop through a very turbulent time, which is why, I presume, he recommended to the Heads of Churches a book that bears the resounding title *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going*. In that sense, Phillip has been an Abrahamic figure, keeping his eye and ear steadily on the God who alone knows where we're going.

I say "steadily" because Phillip has shown himself a good driver in heavy traffic at a time when the traffic has been very heavy indeed. There's a wonderful word in Italian *confusionario*, which refers to someone who, under pressure or in a crisis, can only flap around and panic. Well, Phillip Aspinall is absolutely not a *confusionario*: he has been calm, measured and balanced through it all, honest, insightful and good-humoured to boot. He's a man who listens before he speaks, and that in a bishop tends to be unusual. He is in many ways quintessentially Anglican: no surprise there. But he has always shown himself open to all, certainly in relation to the other Churches. He's been a leading figure among the Heads of Churches, always modest and respectful, but authoritative as well, not just because he's been there longer than the rest of us, but because of his good sense, even his wisdom.

Phillip and Christa have been pilgrims in more ways than one. They've journeyed from Tasmania to Adelaide and on to Brisbane. But they've also been pilgrims of faith, and that has surely been the still point of their turning world. Now, however, the time has come to lay down the burden of office, even

if the journey continues. Thank you, Phillip, not only for all you have brought to the Anglican Church in Brisbane and far beyond. Thank you for what you've brought to our other Churches and to society at large. At a time when the Churches' voices have diminished, yours has been a voice of faith and reason that is heard and respected.

You remarked to me once that in a Roman Catholic vestry there's a picture of the Pope; in an Orthodox vestry there's a picture of the Patriarch; and, in an Anglican vestry there's a full-length mirror. Amusing yes, but in your case not true. I like to think that in the vestries you have entered there has been not a full-length mirror, but an image of Jesus Christ instead. Thank you, Phillip and Christa, for many things, and every blessing to you both as the journey takes another turn. The grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of the Father and the peace of the Spirit be with you always. Amen.

Features • Monday 31 October 2022 • By Chris Curtain

Learning the art of conversation



"At Matthew Flinders Anglican College, our staff team encourages students to develop their conversation skills in a range of informal and formal ways" (Head of Junior Primary Chris Curtain, 2022)

"A conversation is so much more than words: a conversation is eyes, smiles, the silences between words." – Author, Annika Thor

Life is about learning, and the art of conversation is certainly a skill worth learning from a young age and continually developing throughout our lives.

So when was the last time you had a great conversation? You know, the kind that has you actively engaged, with a chance to share information, give an opinion and perhaps even debate a hot topic. Learning the art of conversation is a valuable life skill that takes effort, empathy and practise.

What makes a great conversation?

Great conversations involve thinking and some kind of learning. The interactions are enablers for emotions, even if they are not expressed. A conversation is an opportunity to build connections and relationships, and a good conversation can make a person feel valued, contributing to a positive sense of identity and wellbeing.

Collaboration is a key element of conversation. It is often likened to a game of tennis, taking turns to speak and respond in ways similar to serving and returning in tennis. Learning to listen and taking turns are key skills to being a good conversationalist.

Listening is also closely linked to the development of empathy; listening to others in order to understand perspectives. Good conversation skills enhance social interactions and the ability to make and keep friends.

Learning conversation skills in the Flinders Primary School

At Matthew Flinders Anglican College, our staff team encourages students to develop their conversation skills in a range of informal and formal ways.

For example, in the Flinders Primary, from the first day of the Prep year and onwards, students learn the art of conversation through:

- daily class relationship-building activities
- letter writing projects, for example, to welcome new students and connect with elderly people in the community
- regular parent engagement sessions involving students sharing and showcasing work and learning with parents
- wellbeing lessons, including games such as *Socially Speaking*, a board game that role-plays a range of skills, such as turn taking, eye contact, compliments and greetings to reinforce effective social interactions.

Conversation-building strategies for families

For parents keen to support teaching children good conversation skills, here are some practical approaches to consider as part of daily home life:

- Model what it takes to have a good conversation. Give your full attention when speaking to your child. This may mean putting the phone down or away, looking at your child and really listening to what they are saying.
- Teach your child how to wait and take turns as you both “serve” and “return”.
- Play physical and vocal games that encourage turn taking, reinforcing the need to wait and being interested in what the other person is doing or saying.
- Be intentional when initiating conversations. Ask your child questions, particularly “why” questions that encourage thinking and elaboration and allow for the conversation to continue.
- Use books and reading as a conversation starter, sharing favourite parts, predicting what may happen next, discussing characters and events and making connections to their own life and experiences.

Conversation enables parents to learn about their child. At the same time, parents are contributing to their child's learning and construction of meaning. This language stimulation is part of the benefit, but parenting expert [Michael Grose](#) states another is the actual engagement in conversation. Conversation enables connection and reinforces the critical bond between a parent and child, reflecting the shared love and trust that contribute to a positive wellbeing. (*Talking to Kids Makes them Smart*, [Parenting Ideas website](#))

So what conversations will you initiate with your child today with “eyes, smiles, the silences between words”. Be assured that it will be well worth your time invested.

First published on the [Matthew Flinders Anglican College website](#) on 5 October 2022.

Books & Guides • Thursday 24 November 2022 • By The Rev'd Dr Ceri Wynne

Wild Goose series



The Rev'd Dr Ceri Wynne with a range of Wild Goose resources at the Roscoe Library on 23 November 2022

The *Wild Goose big book of liturgies* and its later companion *Wild Goose big book of worship resources 2* contain an abundance of rich liturgies, meditations and prayers. They were written by the Iona Community and are available in the Roscoe Library, along with a number of other *Wild Goose* publications.

As well as works of worship covering the expected seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost, there are some interesting gems in the contents of their pages. All are informed by the Iona Community's commitment to inclusive worship rooted in the Church and scripture – worship that

is contextual, with a strong justice and peace focus. The authors have given permission for non-commercial use in both worship and group work without requiring written permission from the publisher.

For example, Church of Scotland minister Norman Shanks contributes a powerful liturgy plunging the depths of a day on which the Church both remembers the dropping on the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima and the Transfiguration of Jesus experienced by his close followers – 6 August (Iona Community 2017, pp.55-61).

As someone who has struggled with how these two seemingly irreconcilable events could be included in the one worship, Shanks provides a space where the “cosmic Golgotha” of Hiroshima and the Feast of the Transfiguration spur us on the ever urgent imperative for peacemaking:

“Living God, whose very being is energy and light and love...we are complicit in the corporate sins of society...we seek forgiveness and pray for grace – that your transfiguring power may touch our lives...that weapons of war may be transformed into instruments of creativity...” (Shanks, Iona Community, 2017, p.59)

The two books contain quite a few resources for Advent (Iona Community, 2017, pp.7-42; Iona Community 2019, pp.193-210). At this time of year, and in our particular global context where so many are struggling to make ends meet, the re-imagining in these resources for our consumer-weary world is very welcome.

In particular I found the ‘Waiting in Darkness: An Advent liturgy’ by David McNeish and Sarah Anderson (Iona Community, 2017, pp 37-42) a great resource for an evening Advent service. The acknowledgement of how difficult it is for some at this time of supposed “joy and happiness” and the prayer that in community there is hope as we wait for Christ’s light are both very hospitable and good news. The Parish of Milton, where I serve, will be using this particular resource for its Sanctus service at the beginning of Advent this year:

“It is dark outside. But we carry into the night the light of Christ. May the light of Christ shine in our midst, keeping away all that would seek to harm, establishing all that God’s love demands, this night and always. Amen.” (Iona Community, 2017, p.42)

For an alternative look at Christmas, and one that both young and old would adore, one could not pass by the contribution of school chaplain Janet Lees, ‘The Gospel According to Sheep: An alternative look at Christmas’ (Iona Community, 2019, pp.215-220). This is a delightful worship tale of the creation of the world from various characters, including the Professor, God and of course...the Sheep. Interspersed with carols, music, silence, artwork, and a dance for sheep, the message of the Gospel is clear and loud. I am still musing on how I might adjust this liturgy for a Christmas Eve service with an Aussie spin – The Gospel According to Koalas/Kangaroos/Wombats? Any other ideas?

Looking for original, contextual and scriptural worship material is often very difficult for worship leaders. These two books are a wonderful resource – I can’t wait to use the ‘A Blessing for a New Car’ or the ‘A Litany of Laughter’ (Iona Community, 2019, pp.153-158 and pp.127-132, respectively).

There are many other resources that I aim to explore and use: meditations and reflections on taking action on homelessness, racial injustice, protecting the climate, shelter, hospitality and love, to name a few.

The Northern Hemisphere geography of the Iona Community means that not all the liturgies/prayers can be transplanted faithfully. I did have to work on Thom M Shuman's 'Companions on the Journey' (Iona Community, 2017, pp.213-220) for St Francis Day as there are not many 'Clydesdales with hearts bigger than the sky' in inner-city Milton!

But they are a great resource and I thoroughly recommend them for anyone involved in planning a liturgy, looking for inspiration or even just a single prayer!

Iona Community, 2017, [Wild Goose big book of liturgies](#), Wild Goose Publications, Glasgow, UK.

Iona Community, 2019, [Wild Goose big book of worship resources 2](#), Wild Goose Publications, Glasgow, UK.

Editor's note: Please contact the [Roscoe Library](#) via [email](#) for more information on these (and other great) resources.

Justice & Advocacy • Friday 2 December 2022 • By The Rev'd John Martin

Give the gift that gives twice this Christmas



"One of the Fair Trade suppliers featured in the catalogue is Sinerji, a clothing retailer that has a shop in Forest Glen on the Sunshine Coast and an online store" (John Martin, The Parish of Robina)

Gift-giving is a popular Christmas tradition around the world, dating back to the three wise men who followed a star to the site of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

[Matthew 2.1-11](#) tells us:

"When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."

As a keen supporter of Fair Trade products, I especially enjoy giving Fair Trade gifts to loved ones at Christmas because these gifts give twice.

This is because Fair Trade certification ensures that people in the supply chain are paid a living wage and work in good conditions.

Fair Trade views modern slavery and associated practices like trafficking as totally unacceptable, and thus Fair Trade organisations intentionally engage in sectors where these abuses are prevalent.

When farmers, workers and artisans in Majority World (developing) countries are paid a fair wage and work in good conditions, and when their children can go to school and housing and healthcare are adequate, families are less likely to be cajoled or tricked into letting their children go, thinking they will be employed.

Thus, Fair Trade reduces the supply side of trafficking and modern slavery.

The global Fair Trade movement was started by [Christian woman Edna Byler](#) from Pennsylvania in the mid-1940s.

After witnessing the poverty of people living in Puerto Rico's La Plato Valley while vacationing there in 1946, as well as the stunning embroidery created by the La Plato women, she helped create a market in the United States for the women to sell their products at fair prices.

With the support of her church, Edna's simple and effective initiative kickstarted a global movement.

Over the years a collective of Fair Trade businesses formed the World Fair Trade Organisation, with the [10 Principles of Fair Trade](#) forming the guidelines by which we can determine the legitimacy of Fair Trade claims.

The Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand recently released their latest [Christmas Shopping Guide](#) – a catalogue filled with gift ideas.

One of the Fair Trade suppliers featured in the catalogue is Sinerji, a clothing retailer that has a shop in Forest Glen on the Sunshine Coast and an [online store](#).

Sinerji products are designed on the Sunshine Coast, and are made using organic natural fibres and natural dyes.

With two production teams in Northern Thailand and India, Sinerji travels annually to work personally with the farmers who grow the organic cotton, the weavers who weave the fabric and the tailors who sew the garments.

I have it on good authority that the *anglican focus* editor, Michelle, is a Sinerji regular.

The [shopping guide](#) also features gift packs, homewares, jewellery, handbags and wallets, handmade toys, Christmas decorations, coffee and other consumables, and woven baskets.

So check out the stunning products created by talented artisans from around the world in the latest Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand [shopping guide](#), and give the gift that gives twice this Christmas.

World Café at school



"Earlier this year, as part of an RE program with Year 10, I decided to hold a World Café style event as a way of encouraging dialogue and communication" (The Rev'd Gillian Moses, St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School)

Earlier this year, as part of an RE program with Year 10, I decided to hold a World Café style event as a way of encouraging dialogue and communication. The whole program was designed around questions of Identity, Context and Purpose, and the World Café session fit admirably into the Context part of the plan.

World Café is one dialogue tool that is worth considering for a school setting. It enables the organiser to mix up students into unexpected groups, and to lead them into questions they may never have considered. For our session, I set up our assembly space with café style tables and four chairs, complete with butcher's paper tablecloths, and bouquets of colour coded writing implements. Each table came with its own question and participants were encouraged to write their answers, questions, ponderings and doodles on the tablecloth, where they could be read by subsequent groups.

After three rounds of questions, with groups switching tables each round, students had engaged collectively with around 24 questions about commitment, possibility, ownership, dissent and gifts. They had pondered the stories they tell about the school and themselves, shared what others in the room have done for them, asked themselves what they have said "yes" to that they really wanted to say "no" to, and thought about the risks they are willing to take for themselves and for the group.

Some of the questions generated great energy and conversation, while others clearly stumped the students. There was a lot of doodling. As with any method of encouraging dialogue, outcomes are less important than processes. Learning that it is okay and possible to talk seriously and to disagree, and to learn more about someone else through this experience, is the real outcome.

Dialogical tools such as World Café are really helpful in introducing students to ways of talking about serious topics, and for managing conversations where there may be different, strongly-held opinions. While we often hear that social media has dumbed down conversation and polarised opinions, I am interested in how we can equip students and staff differently, giving them a bigger and more nuanced toolbox for talking about the things that matter to them. Talking Circles, Open Space and World Café are all methods I have used with success, although they are not the only ones available to us.

There are many resources for hosting World Café available online, including at the [World Café website](#) and many opportunities for introducing this concept in schools, with both students and staff. We are looking forward to inviting staff to answer some of the same questions the students did at a future staff day.

First published on the [St Aidan's Girls' School website](#) on 18 July 2022.

News • Tuesday 6 December 2022

"Old people's home" for CAC teenagers



Year 8 CAC students are connecting virtually with residents of Magnolia Aged Care in Coomera to allow students and elders to communicate on a regular basis (2022)

Students from Coomera Anglican College and their new “grand-friends” are stepping outside their comfort zone in an intergenerational learning project.

Year 8 students are connecting virtually with residents of Magnolia Aged Care in Coomera to allow students and elders to communicate on a regular basis, providing students with an opportunity to build relationships and develop empathy and understanding within different generations.

This programme is provided by Intergenerational Learning Australia, which provides opportunities for interactions involving school students and senior adults discussing curriculum topics or cultural events.

These occurs via video calls or co-located settings, such as a classroom, community centre or “Old People’s Home” as per the popular ABC TV programme.

Service and Faith projects form an integral part of the Coomera Anglican College curriculum, and students are required to identify opportunities to give back to their community.

Head of Year 8 Katrina Lyons has been instrumental in driving this project forward.

“Our purpose is to create great people at Coomera Anglican College. We actively look at works to incorporate Service Learning into our curriculum, and the impact of COVID-19 and the inability to travel or visit direct locations has led us to a wider conversation around the concept and idea of service within the community and how this can be redefined,” Mrs Lyons said.

“The opportunity to build intergenerational learning into our curriculum and service learning was important to us to build and develop, as it serves older people in aged care facilities and builds relationships between students and people in our community, helps to dispels myths associated with ageism and improves wellbeing. It represents our faith in action.”

Year 8 students Petra Dennett and Jessica Lazenby were the first students to ask questions and engage with the residents.

“What were your hobbies as a teenager? Did that shape your career?”

“Sport!” said Bernie, their new “grand-friend”.

“Any kind of sport – tennis, football, baseball. I played football later on and became an international referee,” he said with a grin a mile wide.

“Wow!” Petra and Jessica said.

Coomera Anglican College’s Head of Learning Futures Bek Duyckers is driving the project within the College with a view to what learning looks like for the next generation of students.

This opportunity is a pilot programme that is being trialled with one Year 8 class, forming part of a wider project currently being implemented around Learning Futures.

Anglicare SQ is looking to on-board some of the 15,000 Deliveroo riders left in the lurch with no job



Anna Zilli is the Director of Organisational Development at Anglicare Southern Queensland

The recent news that online food delivery company, Deliveroo, has closed its services in Australia is heartbreaking for all its employees, and at Anglicare Southern Queensland we understand the impact and stress it can have on many families who rely on employment.

It has been reported that more than 15,000 people have lost their jobs and with many organisations struggling to retain employees and to recruit new staff, Anglicare Southern Queensland is putting a call-out to Deliveroo employees impacted by the closures to consider a career in aged care.

Anglicare Southern Queensland's Director of Organisational Development Anna Zilli said her heart goes out to all those impacted by the closures and encouraged those without a job to consider working within the Community Services sector and for Anglicare Southern Queensland.

"Change is never easy, and it can feel as though you have lost your purpose and identity, but here at Anglicare Southern Queensland, you can rediscover your purpose by helping those most vulnerable in our communities," Ms Zilli said.

"We have a number of roles available for people interested in starting a career in the sector, including as a Support Services Worker where you provide cleaning or household support to our clients living in surrounding areas including Brisbane, Logan, Cleveland, Toowoomba, Ipswich, Gold Coast, Moreton

Bay, Caboolture, Sunshine Coast, Gympie, Bundaberg and Townsville. It is a rewarding role where you make a real-life difference to our clients so they can live independently in their own homes.

“With more than 3,000 staff and 170 volunteers situated right across Queensland, our organisation is constantly expanding to ensure the needs of the community are met.”

Ms Zilli said there are lots of benefits of working for Anglicare Southern Queensland, including a great work-life balance, career pathways and options for those who find their passion providing care to the community.

“Just like Deliveroo works around their staff’s availability, Anglicare Southern Queensland also offers flexibility, but this is through a range of casual, part-time and full-time positions and they will be eligible for employee entitlements that will provide them with a sense of relief knowing that they have stable and fulfilling work,” she said.

“Anglicare Southern Queensland is committed to building a highly skilled workforce, assisted by a dedicated management team. We support our staff with learning and development initiatives, an employee benefits program and are recognised as a leading employer in the non-profit sector.

“All employees may salary package up to \$15,900 per year, paying less tax with an additional \$2,600 tax-free for entertainment purposes.”

If you are interested in applying for a role with Anglicare Southern Queensland, our Recruitment Team processes all Support Services Worker applications within 48 hours. You can apply via our [careers website](#).

Anglicare Southern Queensland have been assisting thousands of people with their everyday needs and we are one of Queensland’s most trusted community services and health care organisations. Founded in 1870 as the Brisbane Women and Infant’s Refuge, we have grown into an inclusive and diverse not-for-profit charity delivering a broad range of services, including aged care, foster care, homelessness support and mental health and family counselling. More than 50,000 Queenslanders are empowered by Anglicare Southern Queensland every year.

Advent candles: symbolism



The Rev'd Andrew Schmidt test lighting the first Advent candle in the St Margaret's, Nerang wreath in 2022

As we enter Advent, when we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth, we enter more deeply into the Church's symbolic language and liturgy.

You will notice that the liturgical colour changes to purple, which I always remember as:

"Purple, the colour of kings
And getting ready for things."

Of course purple is also a penitential colour, so we examine our hearts as we journey towards Christmas. In doing so, we release the burdens that we inflict upon ourselves and others.

This second part is an important component of Advent preparation that is often overlooked – the making of peace for the birth of the Prince of Peace.

You will also notice, no doubt, the arrival of the brightly coloured Advent candles this weekend, usually arranged in a wreath. There are [several traditions](#) about the meaning or theme of each candle. One of the most common of these is:

- Advent candle 1: The Patriarchs
- Advent candle 2: The Prophets
- Advent candle 3: John the Baptist
- Advent candle 4: The Virgin Mary
- Christmas Day candle: The Christ

Each of the four Advent Sundays [thus reminds us](#) of those who prepared for Jesus' coming.

"The Patriarchs" are typically Abraham, our father in faith, and David, the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born.

"The Prophets" candle gives us an opportunity to reflect on the way the birth of the Messiah was foretold.

John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin who proclaimed the Saviour, and Mary, who bore him in her womb, complete the Advent picture.

And then on Christmas Day the final candle is lit to celebrate Jesus' birth.

However, my favourite theory about the candle themes is that we started using the candles historically to mark time, and then gradually started to add meanings to them because we have both a sense of the impending incarnation mystery and a desire to make meaning.

Justice & Advocacy • Wednesday 30 November 2022 • By Nils von Kalm

Helping to fight famine in Kenya this Christmas



Anglican Overseas Aid is working with its partner in Kenya to restore dignity to women like Consolata as they face severe famine (Photo credit: Anglican Church of Kenya, 2022)

Can you imagine being so hungry that you faint? That is what is happening in primary schools in Kenya where Anglican Overseas Aid's partner, the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), is working with communities who are undergoing severe and continuing drought.

One of the people in this community is Consolata. She is a wife and mother who is struggling to feed herself and her young family. She has a garden to grow vegetables, passionfruit and pumpkin, which

all grow well when the rains come. But in this part of Kenya, the rains have not arrived for the last two and a half years.

While most of us prepare to feast this Christmas, an estimated 4.1 million people in Kenya urgently require access to food and water.

Predictions are that the October – December 2022 rains will also fail to come. In September 2021, the then Kenyan president declared drought a national disaster and called for a humanitarian response. The situation worsened this year with massive loss of livestock and livelihoods, especially in the 22 most affected counties.

Although the region where Consolata lives is between two water towers, most of the rivers have dried up and vast parts of the region lie in arid and semi-arid areas. She says that “the drought is affecting our gardening. We only have two rivers that are now dry for most of the year.”

As communities mainly depend on rainfed agriculture, it is a dire situation indeed, and with the last five seasons recording no harvest, the nutrition of community members has significantly deteriorated.

Consolata’s family is just one that is facing this enormous struggle. Nearly a million children aged between six months and five years are acutely malnourished. School teachers are reporting a significant drop in student attendance, as well as cases of children fainting in schools due to hunger and malnutrition.

With Anglican Overseas Aid’s support, the Anglican Church of Kenya is running a school feeding program. The program is working with 77 schools in the area, providing a nutritious porridge with a combination of high-protein grains for a three-month period from November 2022 to February 2023. This is helping children to become well-nourished again, so they can continue to attend school.

Parents are supporting the program by contributing a small fee to pay the cook and buy firewood.

The Anglican Church of Kenya is also working with 900 of the most vulnerable families in the region to provide rice, green beans, porridge flour and cooking oil.

In these months around Christmas, they will also be following up with families to start small income-generating activities, ranging from Indigenous poultry keeping to beekeeping.

Anglican Overseas Aid seeks to be the hands and feet of Jesus in a broken world, recognising the face of Christ in Kenyans during this time of drought. We are working for a world where all people can live with their God-given dignity restored, so mothers like Consolata can feed their children.

You can donate to Anglican Overseas Aid’s ‘Kenya Hunger Crisis’ Christmas Appeal by visiting the [AOA website](#) (choose “01a. Kenya Hunger Crisis Appeal” from the “Donation” drop-down menu), calling 1800 249 880 or sending a cheque made payable to Anglican Overseas Aid to:

**Anglican Overseas Aid
PO Box 389
Abbotsford, VIC 3067**