



Bishop Mark Writes ...



'Standing as I do in view of God and eternity, I realise Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone.'

These words, spoken by British nurse and Anglican Christian Edith Cavell on the night before her execution in 1915, are poignant and searching. At one level they affirm the reality of loyalties that connect us to a particular place and history. However they also remind us that such loyalties can become idolatry if they blind us to deeper realities, including our common humanity before God.

Many of you will have been as appalled as I was to see the Christian symbolism and language surrounding the storming of the US Capitol building on January 6. Closer to home I was disturbed that the suggestion that we spend a minute's silence on January 26 to recall the sufferings of our Indigenous compatriots was dismissed as mere 'woke-ism'. I am deeply concerned about the rise of nationalisms that are toxic to true faith and community.

What then is the alternative? I'm sceptical about the idea that we can or should simply declare

ourselves 'citizens of the world'. Broadly, this mindset risks falling into what Pope Francis has called 'the false universalism of those who constantly travel abroad because they cannot tolerate their own people'. For Christians in particular it risks obscuring the fact that our true citizenship is not found in this world but in the kingdom of God coming from heaven.

'Being human inevitably connects us to time and to place ... What does it mean to be Australian and Christian today? At the very least it means that we are placed in this land to engage with its history honestly, to love its people generously and to care for its beauty wisely.'

Being human inevitably connects us to time and to place. One of my predecessors as Bishop, Ernest Burgmann, wrote a book called *The Education of an Australian*. What does it mean to be Australian and Christian today? At the very least it means that we are placed in this land to engage with its history honestly,

to love its people generously and to care for its beauty wisely. It is here and now that we are called to witness to the rule of God that transcends all human government, and which depends on no human government for its progress and preservation.

In preparing these thoughts I found myself reflecting on Paul's words in 1 Timothy 2:1-4: 'First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight

of God our Saviour, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.'

Paul's instructions are sometimes dismissed as lacking in social vision, of being too accommodating to the status quo. To the contrary, I believe they are profoundly helpful. Here we have a model for engaging with the world that lays aside the quest for coercive power in favour of dependence on God through prayer. Here is a longing for peaceful social order that is as indiscriminating as God's desire for the salvation of all.

If we can pray and live these words we will have done enough to serve our Lord and this country well.



WHAT ST MARK'S STUDENTS ARE SAYING



BY CECILIA SYMONDS

I undertook the Diploma of Christian Ministry and Theology in 2020. It was an incredible experience, and helped bolster and strengthen my existing skills in Ministry, and deepen my understanding of Theology.

The course empowered me by providing tools and resources with which to better understand

scripture, which has made me a better Bible study leader. The course also had practical components, such as leading services, and doing these practical elements within the course helped me to take on these roles in my Church community. The structure of the course, being mostly online, was fantastic for me, as it helped me balance work and

Church commitments with my units of study, as I work full-time in the Australian Public Service (APS).

I wanted to do the course because I had always wanted to study Theology and learn more about the Bible and Christianity, but I didn't want to commit to a full Bachelor of Theology while working full-time. My expectations were that I would strengthen my existing Ministry skills and understanding of the Bible, but I was surprised by how the course also assisted me to increase the breadth of my Ministry skills, including doing things like preparing a talk on the Bible, and writing the prayers for my weekly service at St John's, Reid.

This course has helped me follow Jesus by helping me identify the skills and gifts I have in serving God, and giving me the tools to utilise these skills more effectively. In the past at my Church I had been involved with music ministry and leading a Bible study, as well as being a member of Parish Council. The course helped me identify that leading a Church service was something I would really enjoy, and gave me helpful prompts to assist in being effective when I led the service.

The course resources were also

fantastic, with both online resources and an excellent syllabus of textbooks which were assigned for the course. These resources provided an opportunity for me to deep dive into subjects I have always been interested in, such as how the Nicene Creed was developed, and what the Eucharist means for different denominations of the Christian Church.

The support that the staff provided me throughout the course was excellent. Staff at St Mark's were available to talk through any difficulties I had with assignments, and when work commitments increased for my APS job due to the COVID-19 pandemic, St Mark's were flexible and supportive with deadlines.

The Intensives for the course were a lovely way to connect and learn from and with other students in the course, and were a rich learning experience. I would encourage anyone who is thinking the course might suit them to just go for it! Applications for this year close on the 15th of February. More information on the course can be found on the St Mark's website: <https://stmarks.edu.au/course/diploma-of-christian-ministry-and-theology/>.

CLERGY MOVES

The Reverend Gavin Krebs will be inducted as Rector of the Parish of Woden on February 11.

The Reverend Phil Rademaker has been appointed Rector of the Parish of Yass. Phil's induction will take place at a date to be confirmed in April.

The Reverend Tim Narraway has been appointed Rector of the Parish of Bodalla/Narooma. Tim's induction will be on the evening of March 1.

The Reverend Dr Ben Edwards has been elected by his peers to serve as Area Dean of Central Canberra.

AnglicanNews

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COMMENCEMENT EVENT

- Chapel service
- Public lecture
- Prize-giving ceremony

Join us as Senior Lecturer in Old Testament, Rev'd Dr Jeanette Mathews, applies her unique triad of Creativity, Commentary, and Connections to several Old Testament prophets, focusing on how performance can be used as a method to understanding these ancient texts.

Tuesday 23 February | 6pm to 9pm

Chapel of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture

Full event details + RSVP on our website

→ [STMARKS.EDU.AU](https://stmarks.edu.au)



GENEROSITY AND KINDNESS: A NEW CONVERSATION IS STARTING



BY MONICA SHORT

The beautiful St John's Anglican Church, Young.

Could COVID-19 be brightening Christian generosity and kindness, making them more visible? The COVID-19 normal is impacting ministries, and the question 'How is COVID-19 changing Christian generosity and volunteering?' is a recurrent conversation in our diocese. My daily Bible reading is illuminating for me the beauty of Christian generosity, kindness and volunteering. Day-to-day acts of generosity, kindness and volunteering are becoming visible to me, in a new way. I'm beginning to perceive actions that I missed noticing before COVID-19.

Most mornings, I share breakfast with my dear heavenly father – that is, I read my Bible and pray to God about my day. Right now, I am reading Galatians. Galatians 5: 22-25 states: 'The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.' I consider that the fruit of the spirit expressed in a community is central to ministry. This passage is challenging me, today, to esteem all

beautiful acts of Christian generosity and kindness.

At this moment, I am remembering wonderful people who have been future-focused during 2020 and now 2021 and who are faithfully caring for local church/ministry grounds/buildings during lockdown and times of social distancing. Your faithfulness is an inspiration. Thank you for generously gifting your time, so that we all continue to have beautiful places to assemble and worship collectively – and to express joy together.

For example, in the second half of 2020, Mark and I were thrilled to visit St John's Anglican Church, Young. We loved congregating with everyone in prayer and reflecting on the Bible. Sitting in the mowed church grounds after the service, gently sharing life was delightful. We also laughed as a small group of us attempted the simple version of the COVID-19 international Christian line dance challenge to the gospel song 'Jeruselema'. (For those interested 'Jeruselema' started in South Africa in 2020 and is a prayer that has gone viral. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbnCb-E5alc> for the Cape

Town Philharmonic Orchestra & Jazzart Dance Theatre version and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6efHtpJK-Ns> for the instructions on how to dance it.)

Christian generosity and kindness is an ancient and contemporary concept. We know that the Bible heroes James, Peter, John and Paul proactively remembered others such as the poor (see Galatians 1: 10). Further, in his 1906 book *The country town: A study of rural evolution*, Wilbert Anderson wrote about how church engagements with people are dependent upon a heavenly vision that incorporated generous and friendly theology, the vitality of the church, the activity of the church, generous deeds, tireless diligence and steadfast patience.

by sharing Christmas cheer during the 2020 COVID-weary end of the year.

Day-to-day acts of generosity and kindness, inspired by the love of Christ, are encouraging me to strive to do 'good'. These acts highlight for me that Christian goodness and kindness are grounded in God's grace and that they can extend beyond technology, policy, checklists or resource scarcity (Galatians 6: 9, 14 & 18).

Thank you to those who asked me this helpful question: 'Is COVID-19 changing Christian generosity, kindness and volunteering?' In response, I do not think that the foundations of Christian generosity, kindness and volunteering are changing. Each kind act continues to be beautiful, inspired by God's love and precious. I believe Christian acts of generosity, kindness, and volunteering cheer us and are actively helping – at a minimum helping Mark and I – overcome the COVID-19 weariness. Thank you!



Beautiful Christmas decorations at Holbrook Anglican Church.

As I am praying, I think that these observations are still relevant. Loving acts of kindness, pastoral care and visitation encourage us and help us deal with the realities of returning to general society post lockdown. For example, the wonderful people who decorated Holbrook Anglican church for Christmas encouraged us



The wonderful congregation at Holbrook Anglican Church following the COVID distancing rules.

All Photographs by Monica Short. Used with permission



Laughing and joining in the fun of the Jeruselema Dance Challenge at Young Anglican Church. Notice the dance fashion accessories inspired by COVID-19, which are the crosses on the floor and people dancing in family groups.

UNDER PRESSURE THE BLESSING OF FACING THE SQUEEZE IN THE WORKPLACE

Life@Work Conference 2021

Register now to hear **Eddie Woo, Dr Jenny George, Rev Dr Sam Chan, Stephen McAlpine**, plus other workers just like you, as we consider the topic *Under Pressure: The blessing of facing the squeeze in the workplace*. Your conference ticket includes full-conference stream, plus Conference Pack which will be mailed to you (so be sure to leave your address when you register).

<https://plus.citybibleforum.org/civcrm-event/2437>

ST NICK'S ANGLICAN CHRISTMAS HAMPERS



St Nicholas Anglican Church was busy bringing some help to needy Goulburn families last Christmas. In the lead up to Advent church members brought items in and placed them at the front of the church. A mix of food, treats and toys covered the communion table and overflowed onto the ground around it. After St Nicholas Sunday, this was packed into boxes and given to the parish's three local primary schools for distribution to families in need.

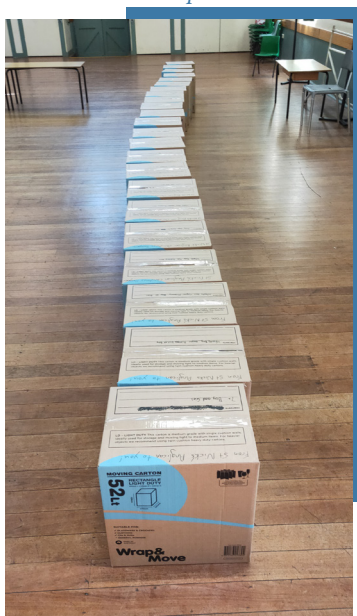
'It was a tough year for many local families due to the downturn caused by the pandemic', said Reverend Paul Davey. 'Even families who would normally be okay were finding it tough last year and Christmas is a particularly stressful time financially. It was great to be able to help some locals at this time. The Bible calls us as followers of Jesus to be generous to the poor. But it's especially appropriate as St Nicholas is the patron saint of giving gifts to needy children at Christmas.'

By working with local schools to help local families the parish has found it is being effective in helping the poor. 'The local schools know who the needy families are in their community because they see the kids who come without lunch or proper uniforms or who can't afford excursions. So the giving is very targeted to those most in need ... and there's a lot of need here in the northern part of Goulburn', said Reverend Davey.

The parish has also found that

this has built bridges into the local community. The hampers were marked as St Nick's Christmas hampers so that those who received them knew it was given to them by local Christians. And the schools are delighted that a local church is helping them help local families and are keen to partner in other ways. One of the schools even put an article in their school newsletter about it. 'In an age where many people don't even know their local church exists this is a simple and effective way to build links between church and community', said Reverend Davey. 'This is something that any parish in the diocese could easily replicate in order to effectively help the poor and

The boxed hampers in a line.



build links to their local community?'

The church originally aimed to provide 15 hampers. But the response was overwhelming with many people bringing in multiple shopping bags crammed with groceries and toys. In the end they were able to provide 23 hampers with each hamper being approximately 52 litres. This meant over 1100 litres of Christmas goodies. 'I'm blown away', said Warden Stan O'Donnell. 'I'm just so pleased at the response.'

It certainly was a huge response by the parishioners of St Nicholas' as they responded to the example of their patron saint and the example of Jesus.

by Reverend Paul Davey

ESSENTIAL SERVICING: THANK YOU FOR COVID CLEANING

The COVID-19 new normal is both a challenge and an opportunity for humble service. Recent and compulsory COVID-19 changes have imposed a review of cleaning and other generous acts by ministry units and churches.

After speaking at a Christmas event at the beautiful St Matthew's Anglican Church, Wanniasa, last year, a couple of people reminded me of the immensity of the task of cleaning in 2020 and 2021.

Approximately 29 years ago, Mark and I washed the windows, and we steam-cleaned the carpet at St Matt's. We were in our early twenties and very proud of our cleaning achievements. Our youthful and clumsy approach to church cleaning is now antiquated. The essential service of cleaning and maintaining ministry properties has morphed.

Today, Mark and I are humbly counting our blessings and are immensely thankful for the generous people who skilfully COVID-19-clean as per the COVID-19 plan at their church. Thank you for keeping us all healthy and coronavirus safe! Bless you.

by Monica Short



Pastoral and Spiritual Care Training

Is your New Year's Resolution to try something new? Maybe it's to get more involved in the community?

Then why not combine both by enrolling in a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Introductory Course. This 5 day course is a great way to get a feel for pastoral and spiritual care and includes topics such as: What is Pastoral/ Spiritual Care; empathy, grief and loss, spiritual reflection and self-care.

It runs on 5 Wednesdays from Feb 17 to Mar 17, 9-5pm in Queanbeyan and costs \$400. It is followed by a longer CPE unit for those interested in more in-depth training in spiritual care. Enrolments close soon. Please contact Susanne Schmidt for enrolment on 0431 243 486 or at susannecpe@gmail.com.

OVERCOMING THE COVID-19 GRINCH: CHRISTMAS 2020 IN THE DIOCESE



BY MONICA SHORT

Nativity scene at St Paul's Manuka. Photo provided by Manuka Parish.

Did the COVID-19 Grinch curtail Christmas 2020? I think our Diocese graciously overcame the COVID-19 Grinch during Christmas. Consequently, the question might be: Did COVID-19 remind us of the preciousness of celebrating Advent, Christmas and Epiphany in a community? I think so.

There were monumental changes to 'doing' Christmas in 2020. Booking to attend church is a 'new normal'. Several of our family members booked in early to attend St Paul's Anglican Church at Manuka on Christmas Day so we could hear Mark preach. On midnight, the 20th December, the ACT border closed to Sydney and our booking to attend church had to be modified. Nevertheless, The Reverend Ben Edwards and the team running the Christmas services at St Paul's Anglican Church Manuka were exceptional, making everyone feel welcomed and comfortable. The beautiful church service on Christmas Day gave Mark and me

a chance to rest spiritually from our sad feelings regarding not spending time over Christmas with our family. Thank you St Paul's!

Another new aspect of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany is having a COVID-19 safety plan – such as sanitising hands and when required wearing face masks. Holy Cross Anglican Church jointly hosted with St Margaret's Uniting Church and Blackfriars Holy Rosary Parish, Watson, the North Canberra Nativity Festival from the 10th to the 13th December. We carefully followed our COVID-safe plan. The celebrations started with an impressive exhibition of over 200 nativity displays from around the world, set up by Keith Linard and team. During Advent, school children and other community members visited the impressive exhibition. The exhibit provided a culturally rich understanding of the nativity.

A fun community carols by candlelight was the festival's finale, on the 'holy roundabout' at Hackett.



The Reverend Dr Tim Watson.

'Gloria in Excelsis Deo' and many other traditional community choral songs were heartily sung in and out of tune. The encore was by the much loved The Reverend Dr Tim Watson who sang a crowd-pleasing rendition of 'I wish you a merry Christmas from the bottom of my heart'. Thank you for a great Christmas Festival!

A third aspect of the new normal is our churches, including our Cathedral, now smell of disinfectant. I am very thankful for this aroma and for all the cleaning in churches as I do not wish to catch or pass on the virus. Smelling disinfectant is a small sacrifice to pay so that we have the opportunity to meet together during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Thoughtfully, Dean Phillip and Sue Saunders and a team of diligent people ably ensured that our precious Cathedral stayed COVID-clean

over the Christmas period. They fastidiously sprayed disinfectant everywhere in the Cathedral. Thank you for keeping us safe!



Christmas tree at the Cathedral.

To conclude, it was sweet freedom to be allowed to attend the Cathedral and the other churches in our wonderful diocese during the Advent to Epiphany period, despite COVID-19. I have been thinking during Epiphany that it is immensely humbling to know Jesus is Lord, to be part of our beautiful Diocese and to enjoy the privilege of celebrating Advent, Christmas and Epiphany in community. I am so thankful for God's gift of Jesus and for our Diocese.



Photo provided by Manuka Parish.



Nativity scenes from around the world at the Nativity Festival. All other photographs in this article by Monica Short and used with permission

ST MARK'S AND THE ACCC SHARE CHRISTMAS CHEER WITH ADS



St Mark's Director Rev Dr Andrew Cameron sharing about the bible garden.

St Mark's National Theological Centre shared Christmas cheer with the Anglican Diocesan Services (ADS) staff at the end of 2020. The Director of the Centre, the Reverend Dr Andrew Cameron, and staff were generous hosts. The smell of a delicious barbeque greeted the ADS staff and guests as they arrived at St Mark's National Theological College. Andrew was a superb guide, leading visitors on the Pilgrim Walk and sharing stories about the beautiful Barton site, including the impressive Bible Garden.

The Bible Garden layout symbolises the burning bush – where God tells Moses that He is going to save His people from suffering and bring them to a land flowing with milk and honey (Exodus 3). The Garden contains around 90

of the 148 plants mentioned in the Bible, such as wheat, hyssop, pomegranate trees and wormwood.



ADS Staff on the Pilgrim Walk.

Information about the Bible garden can be viewed at www.csu.edu.au/special/accc/biblegarden.

www.csu.edu.au/special/accc/biblegarden.

An extra treat was hearing about the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture. The Executive Director of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture and Canberra and Goulburn Assistant Bishop Rt Rev'd Professor Stephen Pickard pointed out the



Early miniature bibles.

mural wall and told its story as a representation of the Holy Spirit, then shared the vital work happening in connecting the Christian faith with Australian Society.

The site tour then went on through the library to view some of the historic bibles and hear about the large and valuable book collection held at St Mark's.

Find out more about the Pilgrim Walk here: about.csu.edu.au/community/accc/get-involved/pilgrimage.

by Monica Short and Alison Payne

You can find out more about St Mark's and the ACCC as well as sign up for news and events at: stmarks.edu.au/ and about.csu.edu.au/community/accc



The mural wall at the ACCC

MENTAL HEALTH UNWRAPPED DURING COVID



BY REVEREND ANDREA DE VAAL HORCIU

When a Zoom workshop run by Dr Louise Gosbell, of Luke 14 Program, and facilitated by Embracing Ministries was offered on November 1, we at St Paul's Narooma felt that

more might attend if we opened up a 'Physical Zoom Group' in our hall, and so it proved! You can imagine our surprise and blessing to actually meet with Louise face to face, when

she Zoomed the Nov 15 follow-up from our hall! Which brings us to say 'Thank you so much' to all who had a hand in bringing this to pass!

The workshop was very informative, and those taking part were very open about some of their struggles, and how they coped.

After going through the horrors of last summer's bushfires, followed by everyone being affected by COVID and in lockdown, this workshop was a timely reminder that all can be affected by mental health issues to some degree and that breaking down the stigma around this subject and opening up the conversation is a very important part of healing, and of moving forward.

Another important reality to come out of this workshop was the necessity to protect one's own mental health when trying to help others by creating and maintaining clear boundaries with people, and

by keeping ourselves from unwise actions and involvement, and ultimately, of course, burn-out.

It was a strong reminder that it is one thing to come beside a person, and walk some of the way with them, but we are not the professional help they ultimately need.

Truly a workshop timely for the circumstances, and a great follow-on from this year 2020, which was like no other for so many of us. It was also very worthwhile being reminded of the need to be much more sensitive and aware when seeking to help, encourage, support and be welcoming of those in mental-health need, both in our churches and also in our wider community.

So keep an eye out for the next Mental Health Unwrapped Workshop, and 'tune in' either as an individual, or as a Physical Zoom Group – it will be so worth your time, we reckon!

OPINION: DOES FAITH MATTER IN 2021?



BY MONICA SHORT

As the trauma of 2020 overshadows the dawning of 2021, increasingly I am convinced that the Old Testament book of Genesis can assist us with transitioning into the New Year. It gifts us with secrets about resilience, as found in relationships. This is because narratives of trauma and people's responses to trauma saturate Genesis.

Genesis is the first book in the Bible. If read through a trauma-informed lens, we note that the pain of unhealthy relationships thickens Genesis – for example, Adam and Eve's pain of living with the knowledge that their son Cain killed his brother Abel; Noah and wife witnessing the obliteration of life through flood; Isaac, Rebekah, Esau and Jacob's destructive rivalry over an inheritance; Jacob's complex relationship with a scheming father-in-law; and Joseph, who is human-trafficked by his brothers.

During 2020, I reflected a few times on the Joseph in Genesis and how he faced trauma. Who is this Joseph? Genesis tells us that Joseph was born to Jacob and Rachel and is the 11th of 12 children in his family. At 17, he was sold by his brothers to slave traders and then on to Potiphar. He was sexually harassed by Potiphar's wife, who persecuted him, and he was jailed. At 28, he interprets a dream for fellow prisoners, who promise to help him – but forget him. At 30, he interprets a prediction for Pharaoh. He becomes the most senior public servant in Egypt, and manages Egypt's seven years of economic expansion. There was a drought and the boom busts. In his late thirties, whilst managing Egypt's economic downturn and implementing their food-security project, Joseph faces his traffickers – his brothers – who request emergency food assistance. Joseph is understandably distressed but warily decides to help his birth family. Genesis 50:20 records Joseph

as saying, 'You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.'

Now it is true that Christians are not the only group reading Genesis. For example, the scholar, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks – who recently passed away – in his book *Covenant and Conversation: Genesis The Book of Beginnings v.1* presents an analysis of human-to-human relationships and the human-to-God relationship. Buber, a philosopher, understood the importance of relationships highlighting them in his book *I and thou*.

Why does Genesis attract readers? Genesis' power is its honesty – presenting stories of humanity, narrations of human struggle. Genesis reminds us that life is dynamic, not static, and not defined by trouble. Similarly, the multiple traumas of 2020 do not have to define us in Australia. Yes, I believe that the traumas of 2020 will affect 2021. However, a faith perspective challenges me to engage an alternative and authentic narrative which recognises trauma as a part of life. In 2021, I have the opportunity to continue to be defined by Jesus and my relationship with Him.

As we turn the pages of our own life stories from 2020 to 2021, we have a unique chance to review the past 12 months and contemplate what has happened to us and those we love. Many in Canberra and surrounds are marvellous front-line public servants or know someone who is an essential worker. The Australian Bureau of Statistics in their Employment and Earnings, Public Sector, Australia July 2019-June 2020 website reports that the public service alone employed 2,041,200 people. I thank our politicians and the many public servants and other essential workers for all you did in 2020 to help Australia navigate the disasters.

Further, much of what happened in 2020 felt unfair, and the complexities of 2020 are already spilling into 2021. As we Aussies individually faced the complexities of life – drought, fires and smoke, hail, flood, coronavirus, injustice, and mental health challenges – and as we scream out, 'When will it stop?', we can rest in the knowledge that this scream is an ancient anguish.

Additionally, the Joseph story in Genesis tells us that the contraries of existence parented Joseph. For example, Joseph experienced family life and aloneness; freedom and slavery; exclusion and social inclusion; injustice and power; trauma and reconciliation; and abundance and famine. Regardless of what happened, Joseph was resilient because of his relationship with God; God knew life was unfair for Joseph. This Joseph-God relationship, the I-Thou relationship where God is the ultimate Thou, defined Joseph as a public servant, family member and individual. Yes, Joseph had his own personal dark thoughts, yes, he had to deal with his family-related trauma, and yes, he faced injustice and the stress of spending time in jail due to a trumped-up charge. However, his relationship with God defined Joseph, and this informed his actions.

Can we engage with the Joseph story today? Joseph's experiences are a timely reminder that God remembers us and knows our situation. When times are hard during COVID-19, we can reach out to others for professional and personal help. Additionally, we can engage the option of praying and remembering the greatness of Jesus. What is this greatness? The Apostle's Creed describes Jesus this way: Jesus is God's 'only son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into the dead; the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and He will come to judge the living and the dead.'

As we continue to deal with the disaster, COVID-19, and as 2020 ceases and 2021 starts tick-tocking, we have the option of leaning into Jesus and letting Jesus journey with us through our trauma. How do we know we have this option? Buber posits that people can bear witness regarding their experience of God. I met Josephine (details anonymised as per ethics approval) through

a research project that has been published: 'Three rural Anglican Churches engaging with people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.' This project was a partnership between Charles Sturt University, Bush Church Aid and The Anglican Diocese of Bendigo. Josephine was an overseas student. On arrival to Australia, Josephine was alone and lonely. She suffered the traumas of culture shock and being isolated from all dear to her. Josephine also felt she was at risk of failing her course. Josephine stopped eating and began losing weight fast. Around this time, she started thinking about Jesus and attending an Anglican church. A person at the church encouraged her and cooked food for her. Josephine explained to me that she very much appreciates her faith in God through Jesus, belonging to an Anglican church, and the resilience that Jesus and her church community gives her.

So what does all this mean? Genesis, the Joseph narrative and Josephine's story all testify: God is with us. In 2021, faith will still matter. The Bible explains that God sent Jesus and that because of who Jesus is, complexity, difference, and trauma do not have to define us. The Bible also explains that Jesus and his enabling make us resilient. People have the option to remember and celebrate Jesus' birth and to role model Jesus' actions of blessing others.

Recently, I shared with friends connected with CBM Australia Luke 14 Program and also with a group at a church with the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn these thoughts: 'As 2020 ends and 2021 starts, I am aiming to remember, that we have a yesterday that makes us resilient; a today to engage with Jesus and bless others; and a tomorrow for which we can plan to do good things for our neighbours.'

At this most unusual time in history, my prayer is that you and I will not be defined by trouble, and that we will not journey the next stage of the pandemic alone. We have the option of nestling into Jesus, connecting with a church community and knowing the resilience that faith and healthy relationships can bring.

Affiliation: Lecturer and Social Science researcher at Charles Sturt University. Proud member of the Anglican Church of Australia. Please visit <https://researchoutput.csu.edu.au/en/persons/mshort07csueduau> for a list of publications.

DEACON PROFILE: JILL ELLIOT



It was St Matthias Day, 24 February 1996, when a vision was finally realised for Jill, as this was the day she was ordained a deacon at St Saviour's Cathedral by Bishop George Browning, the first vocational deacon to be ordained in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn. After pursuing and waiting for many years Jill's desire to be deaconed was finally fulfilled and the words from Psalm 37:4 came to life: 'Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this.'

Along with Bishop George Browning, and his vision and understanding of the distinctive diaconate, two other people who inspired and understood Jill's desire to be ordained were Deaconess Mary Andrews and Father Michael Cockayne.

Jill was born in the Blue Mountains and prior to her training at Deaconess House she was a kindergarten teacher in the Blue Mountains. Deaconess House is now called MAC-Mary Andrews College. Mary Andrews was an inspiring woman who had been the principal of deaconess house in Sydney, but

she had spent her childhood years in the parish of Cooma and always took an interest in the diocese of her birth.

Deaconess Mary encouraged and supported Jill in her time of study at Deaconess House and assured Jill of her prayers when she moved to work in the diocese of Newcastle, and later to work in England with the Bible Reading Fellowship. Deaconess Mary was a strong advocate for the recognition of the ministry of women and had a clear understanding of the servant ministry of the deacon.

Father Michael Cockayne, who is the leader of the Celebration Community in Queanbeyan, was a true mentor, teacher and friend, and along with Mary Andrews and Bishop George had an understanding of the diaconate as that of servanthood - 'having a place amongst the people of God, but living beyond the gathered community so as to point to the burning bush in the community' (Bishop George's Synod address 1994).

Jill's specific diaconal ministry has been in aged care, where she was involved in a number of facilities in the area of pastoral care and diversional therapy. Between 2012-2019 Jill was the chaplain at

Bill McKenzie Gardens (formerly Ginninderra Gardens), and with the help of an enthusiastic and committed pastoral care team she saw God working amongst residents, family members, friends and staff.

Along with the weekly church services it was always thrilling to hear lots of energetic people make a joyful noise at the hymn sing-alongs. There were many touching moments when a person living with dementia who hadn't spoken for a long time would join in singing a hymn. Other times a family member would be moved to tears as they would hear their loved one recite a familiar prayer or verse of scripture.

Sunday afternoon was always a very joyful time when residents and family members would meet with pastoral volunteers for afternoon tea. Heaps of delicious food was consumed and there was lots of fun and laughter, but it was also a time to share the message of the gospel and listen to those who were hurting and had deep needs. It was a time to give hope and peace, and the assurance of God's love. Neither the pastoral care team nor Jill would tire in seeing someone who had previously shown no interest in God respond to the Christian message through these gatherings.

As an associate member of the Celebration community, Jill still has close contact with Father Michael Cockayne who continues to be an encourager and friend. Although now retired from full-time ministry, Jill still loves her servant ministry with the Celebration community in having a heart that notices the poor, the broken and the vulnerable. The joy of bringing the gospel of Jesus to people through word and action still brings enormous excitement.

by Reverend Jill Elliot

How can the church engage its world? How can the ministry of the Church in the world be modelled to the laity? I believe the answer in part will come through the recovery of a diaconate marked by that servant character and engagement with the world with which the order began.

Putting it simply, if the presbyterate has its place in leading the Church gathered, it is the diaconate which has its place in leading the Church scattered. The call of the deacon is to be the boundary rider of the Church, the opportunist for the gospel, the emissary, addressing the story of the world with the story of the gospel, having a place amongst the people of God, but living beyond the gathered community so as to point to the burning bushes in the wilderness.

~ Bishop George Browning, 1994 Synod Presidential address on the establishment of a vocational diaconate in the Diocese

A TRIBUTE TO LORD JONATHAN SACKS



Photo from commons.wikimedia.org

At the end of 2020 we heard of the death of Lord Jonathan Sacks,

the former Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, and a remarkable scholar. I was very pleased that our Bishop paid tribute to him in an Ad Clerum.

For many years I have admired and profited from his writings. The list of his honours and awards is quite remarkable. The article about him on Wikipedia will give the reader further details.

I would particularly like to draw attention to his book *The Great Partnership: God, Science and the Search for Meaning*. Lately I have been reading it again on my Kindle

Fire Reader, a few pages each evening. One leading atheist commented that this was the most powerful argument in favour of the existence of God that he had ever read.

Rabbi Sacks tackles those who say that in the age of science there is no place for religious faith. One of Sacks' most memorable quotes is that science takes things apart to see how they work, and religion puts them together to see what they mean. Speaking of religious faith, he said: 'I believe that faith is not certainty but the courage to live with uncertainty.'

I often meditate on his comment about the test of faith. Rabbi Sacks

said: 'The test of faith is whether I can make space for difference. Can I recognise God's image in someone who is not in my image, whose language, faith, and ideals are different from mine? If I cannot, then I have made God in my image instead of allowing him to remake me in his image.'

Your Internet search engine will give you a glimpse into the riches of the mind and spirituality of one of the finest Jewish thinkers of modern times. He has so much to say to Christians. Look out for the books of Rabbi Sacks.

by Reverend Robert Willson

AN INVITATION TO JOIN EFM (EXPLORING FAITH MATTERS)



End of year get-together of the St Paul's Manuka and Holy Covenant Efm groups.

Exploring Faith Matters (formerly Education for Ministry) challenges us to begin a journey of exploration of the Christian faith — to make sense of our own faith journey in light of scripture and Christian tradition; to build a coherent theology or understanding of God;

to reflect theologically; to discern what it means to follow Christ.

We do Efm in small reading and discussion groups led by trained mentors. It is open to people of all denominations. Through individual study, sharing our discoveries, and exploring our faith together, we

learn to think theologically. We connect what we come to know of the Christian tradition with our ordinary daily activities.

Efm offers a four-year program where participants commit to one year at a time. Being an Efm participant involves: completion of

the set readings for the week (Bible and other texts) and reflection in preparation for the weekly meeting; attendance at and participation in the meetings; preparedness to share experiences, ideas and questions in a small group where norms of confidentiality, respect, diversity and trust are observed. The group develops through discussion and shared fellowship.

There are several active Efm groups in Canberra. We are taking applications from new students now, and weekly meetings will commence 8 February with a 'taster' meeting for people to see whether Efm might be for them.

For further information, please contact Kay Pendlebury (0409 313 153 or kay.pendlebury@ozemail.com.au). Details of the 2021 Efm curriculum are at <http://efmaustralia.org>. Please check it out.

by Kay Pendlebury

BOOK REVIEW: THE BISHOP OF TASMANIA THAT NEVER WAS

WHO IS THIS VERNON CORNISH?



CHRISTINE LEDGER

As the pandemic took hold, 2020 became a year for leaders to show they cared about more than themselves.

Whether in church or in society, serving is an expression of morality.

Biographer Dr Christine Ledger paints Reverend Vernon Cornish, who died aged just 50 in 1982, as a leader and communicator (often heard on the ABC) who served honestly and humbly. And he could laugh at himself.

Cornish was an aspiring actor who joined *The Queensland Times* as a

cadet before following his father into the Anglican priesthood in 1958.

He seemed destined to tell stories and to tell the truth. In one sermon he called the nuclear bombing of Japan an expression of human sin.

After Toowoomba, Cornish moved to Perth with his family of three boys and wife Dell, a self-described 'family feminist' who was actively involved in youth ministry as a theology graduate.

As Dean of the Anglican cathedral, he rebuilt a congregation mired in conflict and financial crisis.

Derek Nimmo, the British actor famous for his television parodies of English clergy visited Perth in 1976 and spoke at the press club. Cornish was asked to deliver an impromptu vote of thanks. It was hilarious and proved so astounding, Nimmo exclaimed, 'Who is this Cornish?'

Ledger, who knew the Cornish family and spent seven years researching and writing the text, uses Nimmo's words (including the question mark) as the modest title of a book that doesn't assume anything.

Toward the end of 1981 Cornish turned 50 and was chosen to be the Bishop of Tasmania. He had told Dell he had a premonition he would die young. Within days of arriving in Hobart he died of a brain haemorrhage on Australia Day 1982. He had been due to be commissioned in nine days' time.

Although naturally theatrical, he had given precise instructions for his funeral: that it have Holy Communion and be low-key.

Anyone engaged in the messiness and gentle diplomacy of resource-limited church life will register the everyday complexities in this humane and well-illustrated biography. There are the stresses of rectory family life and the challenges and little triumphs of Kingdom building. Ledger should be proud of a faithful account of a diligent disciple.

Reviewed by Toni Hassan.

Toni Hassan is an author and artist. She is an adjunct research fellow with *The Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture*, Charles Sturt University. For a copy of the book contact the publishers at: geoff@geoffandchris.com

GRADS, ENJOY A FREE BRUNCH ON US!

Grads Welcome Brunch

Workers from across Canberra, representing many churches, wish to welcome you to Canberra!

10.30am Sat 13 Feb
15 Blackall St, Barton - Durie Room

Info & rego:
citybibleforum.org/GradsWelcome



BIG STUFF IN THE DIOCESE - A COMPETITION!

Do you know where the following are located or were located in our beautiful diocese?

Please email your answers to Anglican News alison.payne@anglicands.org.au for a book prize. The first correct answer will win a Timothy Keller Book or Meredith Lake's *The Bible in Australia*.

Additionally, do you have a photograph of an unusual landmark that is located in the Diocese? Please send your photos to Anglican News alison.payne@anglicands.org.au for a book prize.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Make 2021

Soul Refreshing

It's a brand new year, but you might still be feeling rather flat after the year we've just had. You wouldn't be alone.

With over 40 years walking alongside Christians, we've seen how the study of God has replenished hearts and minds, built supportive communities, and refreshed spirits so faith is revived and renewed.

So come take a long, cool drink. We offer courses in **theology, ministry, pastoral counselling, ageing and pastoral studies, and professional supervision**. Our courses are flexible and designed to work around busy lives, and we're always here to support your learning journey. You can even start small by taking up a single subject — just ask us how.

Make your 2021 a good one.



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