

TMA

The Melbourne Anglican

April 2020, No 590



The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen ... go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you ...'".

Matthew 28:5-7

He is risen by Robyn Davis, Wadi Wadi woman, priest and artist
Acrylic on canvas 50 cm x 70 cm

Faith films offer hope, connection in time of isolation
page 5

Summer of contrasts exposes best in people
page 18

All churches close but streaming, creative ministry take off

by Stephen Cauchi

ALL WORSHIP AND GROUP ACTIVITIES HAVE been suspended within the Diocese of Melbourne as government restrictions in response to the coronavirus pandemic tighten further, and many churches are responding by switching to online streaming of worship and small group activities, and other creative ways of ministering.

And as the local and worldwide Church deals with the worst global pandemic since the 1918-19 Spanish Flu, the 18th Session of General Synod, which had been planned for June, has been postponed until next year, while Sydney Archbishop Glenn Davies has also delayed his retirement until 2021.

Other conferences and meetings across the worldwide Anglican Communion, including the Lambeth Conference which had been scheduled for July and August, have also been postponed.

The developments cap the end of an extraordinary month, which began with Australian churches oper-

Continued on page 3

Vote for Archbishop Freier's successor as Primate deadlocked

by Mark Brolly

THE ELECTION of a new Anglican Primate of Australia to succeed Melbourne's Archbishop Philip Freier is unresolved, with Archbishop Geoffrey Smith of Adelaide reportedly falling only one vote short in the House of Clergy in four of the seven ballots held by the Primate Board of Electors in Sydney on 14 March.

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PLUS: Maintaining social connections (p15); seeking an Australian expression of Easter (p19)

Even in worst times, Easter proclaims new life

EASTER IS A POWERFUL season for Christians. The events of Easter, Jesus' death and resurrection are at the heart of Christian identity and what it means to be a follower of Jesus. In Jesus' death, Christians reflect on the reality of the fact of our own mortality and in his resurrection on the promise of life eternal with God. The unexpected crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has brought this reality to the forefront of awareness.

Imperial Rome was harsh and relentless in its conquest and then occupation of the people and territories it claimed for the Empire. Even though he was not a Roman citizen, Jesus was tried and condemned to death by the leading Roman authority in Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate. That alone suggests that Jesus, in his short life and even shorter public ministry, had become a person to be reckoned with. Many believed that he was the Messiah promised in the scriptures; others rejected that possibility as outrageous and even blasphemous.

Pilate's questioning of Jesus



"The Christian celebration of Easter speaks of new life in Christ."

shows an apparently genuine desire to get to the truth of what was being told to him about Jesus, the one over whom he exercised the power of life and death. It is always the role of the Christian Church to proclaim the truth about Jesus. I hope that this Easter will be the occasion for fresh pondering about this truth as people weigh these claims and come to a convinced faith in Christ.

Jesus' death on the cross was both cruel personal torture and a public sign that the same fate would follow for any who disturbed the Empire's rule. For Christians his death on the cross quickly became a sign of the depth of his sacrificial love. In ordinary times Christians gather on Good Friday to meditate on

Jesus' trial and crucifixion in church services and through following his way of the cross through the streets of Jerusalem and countless other cities throughout the world. I personally find that walking the "Way of the Cross" through the streets of Melbourne's CBD on Good Friday is a powerful focus of the spiritual importance of Jesus' death on the cross. It will be a personal sadness that this won't be possible this year.

Easter Day and the discovery of the empty tomb where Jesus had been buried exceeded the expectations of Jesus' closest followers. They went to the tomb in mourning and came away amazed and energised with the news that the tomb was empty. Jesus was alive and all doubt

removed in their minds that he really was the Messiah of Israel. Many of those first Christians encountered Jesus in his resurrected body. He told them that they would be transformed too and would share in his resurrection. They soon found that they could be more alive than they thought possible as they carried the message of this Good News throughout the world.

No wonder symbols of new life are at the fore in the celebrations of Easter. Even in the worst of situations, and the COVID-19 pandemic is one of those, the Christian celebration of Easter speaks of new life in Christ. Jesus' death and resurrection open the same possibility of new life in Christ for us all today, in our time. Let us hold fast to our faith at this testing time. Even though Easter will be a solitary time for many because of the lockdown let's keep its truth alive in our hearts and in our remembrance.

Have a blessed celebration of Easter.

See the Archbishop's Easter message at <https://www.youtube.com/AnglicanMediaMelb>

Our Easter cover painting, 'He is risen', by Robyn Davis



ROBYN IS a Wadi Wadi woman and has been painting and drawing for as long as she can remember.

"Painting is part of my life, my nature, my being and my spirit, it is inseparable from my Christian faith and Indigenous heritage," she says.

Her paintings are often of a spiritual nature and tell the stories of life, relationships and culture.

Her clan totem is the platypus and her personal totem is the sand goanna, so she is truly a woman of the land and water.

You will find a small gold cross in each of her paintings to acknowledge the true creator.

Email: robyndavis@bigpond.com
Mobile: 0431 155 456



Clergy Moves

Vacant Appointments as of 30 March 2020:

St Michael & All Angels Beaumaris; St Barnabas, Balwyn; St Edward's, Blackburn South; St Stephen, Belmont; St Mary's, Caulfield with St Clement's, Elsterwick Darebin South; St James, Glen Iris; Holy Trinity, Hampton Park; Hume Anglican Parish; Holy Trinity Lara with Christ Church, Little River; All Saints, Lorne; St Nicholas' Mordialloc; All Saints Newtown and Geelong West (from May 2020); St Philip's Mt Waverley; Anglican Parish of Yarraville

Appointments:

BOWLES, The Revd Andrew Zachary, appointed Incumbent (from Priest-in-Charge), St Mark's Emerald, effective 5 March 2020

BREAKEY, The Revd Elizabeth Breakey, appointed Area Dean, Deanery of Bellarine, effective 27 March 2020

CLAYTON, The Revd Colleen, appointed Priest-in-Charge, St Matthew, Cheltenham, effective 28 April 2020

HALE, The Right Revd Stephen John, appointed Victorian Director of Overseas Council Australia, effective 20 February 2020

HITCHCOCK, The Revd Jordan Roy, appointed Priest-in-Charge, St Matthew, Prahan, effective 22 April 2020

LANGMEAD, The Venerable Howard Henry, appointed Incumbent extension, St Paul, Caulfield North, effective 1 April 2020

PARSONS, The Revd Conrad Trent, appointed Priest, Melanesian Wantok, effective 1 March 2020

PEDERSEN, The Revd Kevin John, appointed Incumbent extension, Parish of Ormond, effective 1 May 2020

TAYLOR, The Revd Neil William, appointed Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, Melton, effective 24 March 2020

Permission to Officiate:

GREAVES, The Revd Clifford Cedric, appointed Permission to Officiate as Priest, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 26 March 2020

RUAN, The Revd David Jian Sheng, appointed Permission to Officiate as Priest, Diocese of Melbourne, effective 23 April 2020

Resignations:

The Revd Christos Kastaniotis, Assistant Priest, St Paul, Caulfield North, effective 12 April 2020

Clergy Moves is compiled by the Registry Office. Correspondence should go to registrar@melbourneanglican.org.au



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Interim Manager (TMA and Online)

– Emma Halgren
editor@melbourneanglican.org.au

TMA Journalist – Mark Brolly
mbrolly@melbourneanglican.org.au

TMA Journalist – Stephen Cauchi
scauchi@melbourneanglican.org.au

Digital Journalist – Chris Shearer
cshearer@melbourneanglican.org.au

Advertising
ads@melbourneanglican.org.au

Subscription Enquiries
tma@melbourneanglican.org.au

Design & Layout – Ivan Smith
ads@melbourneanglican.org.au

Communications Assistant
– Jessica Meegama

Printing – Rural Press

Published by:
Anglican Media Melbourne
209 Flinders Lane Melbourne VIC 3000
ph 9653 4269
www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au

All churches close but streaming, creative ministry take off – p1

ating normally, and ended in almost complete shutdown.

At St Paul's Cathedral, all public worship and other activities were suspended from 23 March, but the Dean of Melbourne, the Very Revd Dr Andreas Loewe – who oversees the Cathedral – told *TMA* in late March that the Cathedral was preparing to close entirely in anticipation of State Government stage four restrictions and would film worship services for streaming from the homes of its clergy.

“Any live content ... will be from our homes I will suspect.

“We're literally planning for next week, and the weeks after, for worship to be delivered from home.”

All Easter services were being pre-recorded at the Cathedral, he said.

“We obviously want to make sure the Archbishop is able to preside at Easter so we're pre-recording that at the moment.”

Dr Loewe said there were no choirs at the Cathedral's worship – just a video operator, two clergy, a singer and an organist.

The Anglican Centre adjacent to the Cathedral, which contains the offices for diocesan staff, moved to a working-from-home arrangement for all staff in March.



St Paul's Cathedral.

In his *Ad Clerum* of 23 March, Archbishop Philip Freier emphasised that the changes in the diocese were not “a closure of ministry”.

“The need for Christian ministry is only likely to be

He urged clergy to be conscious of the fact that “many vulnerable people will be self-isolating”.

“We are entering a very difficult phase where the necessary measures to prevent the

infection to others, he said. He urged clergy to keep in touch with their episcopate bishop and to share “plans and creative ideas” with them, particularly for Easter.

“It is certain that there will be profound disappointment that services of worship during Holy Week and Easter will not be able to proceed.”

There was a “general mood of anxiety and powerlessness”, said Archbishop Freier. He suggested reading Jesus' words in Matthew 11:28-29: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

A new page has been set up on the diocesan website with regularly updated information about coronavirus. Visit www.melbourneanglican.org.au/elementor-785-new-home/covid-19-guidance-for-churches.

See article on page 6.

See messages from Archbishop Philip Freier and Dean Andreas Loewe at www.youtube.com/AnglicanMediaMelb

“The need for Christian ministry is only likely to be heightened ...”

Archbishop Philip Freier

heightened over the [next few] weeks and months but it will need to happen in new forms.”

Dr Freier said he was “very conscious of the responsibility that we have to elderly, disabled and other vulnerable groups”.

pandemic exploding in the Australian population will push some people to more isolation and despair.”

At the same time, clergy should also ensure they did not spread the COVID-19

Dr Freier supports deferral of Lambeth Conference until 2021

by Stephen Cauchi

THE LAMBETH Conference – a meeting of the world's Anglican bishops – has been postponed until mid-2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The conference, last held in 2008, was due to be held this July and August at the University of Kent in England.

The then Anglican Primate

of Australia, Melbourne Archbishop Philip Freier, said he understood and supported the decision, given the dangers of the coronavirus pandemic. He urged prayer for people suffering illness or financial hardship because of the pandemic and also for those affected by postponement decision.

The Lambeth Conference is not a governing body and

resolutions passed have no legal effects. Nevertheless, they are perceived to have moral and spiritual authority and influence.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, made the decision to postpone the conference on 23 March. A statement from the Lambeth Conference organising group said that its teams had been prayerfully thinking through

the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on plans and preparations for the event.

“This significant meeting of Anglican bishops and spouses will continue to be planned – with an exciting and engaging program, being held in the same venue at the University of Kent and Canterbury Cathedral – just one year on,” the announcement said.

STREAMING SERVICES at St Paul's Cathedral

PALM SUNDAY

10am Sung Eucharist and Blessing of Palms
2pm Mandarin Service
華語崇拜

MAUNDY THURSDAY

6pm Thurs 9 April
Sung Eucharist of the Last Supper

GOOD FRIDAY

9am Fri 10 April
Good Friday Liturgy



EASTER DAY

8am BCP Eucharist
10am Sung Eucharist
2pm Mandarin Service
華語崇拜

EVERY SUNDAY

10am Sung Eucharist
2pm Mandarin Service
華語崇拜

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/StPaulsCathedralMelbourne

YOUTUBE: www.youtube.com/c/StPaulsCathedralMelbourne

Chinese revolution leads to thriving ministry

by Mark Brolly

IT'S A TWIST OF HISTORY that the couple who established the first Anglican ministry to mainland Mandarin-speaking Chinese in Melbourne just over 20 years ago would not have met if not for the Cultural Revolution, which convulsed China in the 1960s and '70s.

But the Revd David Ruan and his wife, the Revd Esther Ruan, overcame that and the differences in their own backgrounds – David is a fifth-generation Christian from the port city of Tianjin and Beijing-born Esther grew up in a Communist family – to become Christians in Australia and to accept an invitation from Holy Trinity Doncaster to start a Chinese ministry there in 1999.

In that time, more than 1100 people have been baptised, they have planted three other congregations – one of them at St John's Blackburn – three generations are now served by the ministry and 12 full-time ministers have come out of Doncaster, working in the Anglican Church from Melbourne's Chinatown to Hobart.

The vicar who brought them to Holy Trinity, the Revd (now Bishop) Paul Barker, wrote in a book marking the 20th anniversary of the ministry: "God's astonishing provision of David and Esther Ruan, with a small, committed and wonderful team of co-workers, was an amazing



The Revs David and Esther Ruan: "God's astonishing provision".

gift ... I count it a rare privilege to have been a colleague with them for nearly 11 years."

Mr Ruan's grandfather was a Wesleyan elder and prosperous businessman in Tianjin, the port of Beijing and a major city in its own right, but David was born in 1950, only a few months after Mao Zedong led the Communists to power in China. Churches were closed and the family's property seized by the regime.

Between the ages of 18 and 25, he was sent to labour in the countryside in northern China for almost the entire Cultural Revolution. Unable to return to Tianjin, he worked in a truck parts factory for four years before studying photography.

He was working as a medical photographer when he was introduced to Esther, a nurse at a hospital in Langfang, halfway

between Beijing and Tianjin. They married in 1979 and had a son, Andrew.

"... This church prayed for one year to start a Chinese ministry ... All in God's plan."

"... If there were no Cultural Revolution, we would never have had the chance to meet each other because we belonged to different social classes," Mrs Ruan recalled.

Mr Ruan came to Australia in 1988 and was here for three-and-a-half years before Esther

and Andrew, who was then seven, were able to join him in Melbourne. Life was hard and he struggled to find meaning in it until he attended the Church of Christ in Swanston Street, the first congregation for mainland Chinese.

After undertaking an intensive course in the Christian faith, Mr Ruan was in the first intake of students at the Bible College of Victoria's Chinese department in 1994.

"One of David's lecturers (the Revd Rick Cheung) was a minister of the Anglican Church," Mrs Ruan said. "He had the burden to start a Chinese ministry but at that time his congregations were very small and he felt he was not able to start another ministry, so he let David and me come to this church to meet Paul Barker.

"Then, later we (found out that) this church prayed for one year to start a Chinese ministry ... All in God's plan."

In 2002, the couple were ordained together.

"When we started working here, we opened our house and David cooked a lot of meals," Mrs Ruan said. "In just three-and-a-half months, we got 40 people into our home and a lot of children, so my son took care of the kids and now they get married in this church."

Mr Ruan turns 70 around Easter but the couple hope to continue to work in ministry together at Holy Trinity for a few years until a successor is appointed.

New Registrar, economist Malcolm Tadgell, sets to work

ECONOMIST MR Malcolm Tadgell is the new Registrar of the Melbourne diocese.

Archbishop Philip Freier announced Mr Tadgell's appointment on 5 March.

Mr Tadgell succeeds Mr Michael Urwin, who completed his time in the role in February after overseeing the introduction of electronic counting for Synod elections and in dealing with the Church's mandatory reporting obligations to the



Malcolm Tadgell.

Victorian Commission for Children and Young People, which came into effect early this year.

The new Registrar – a member of St George's Parish Malvern, where he was actively involved in the worship team and parish governance – most recently worked at consultancy firm Farrierswier, after leading KPMG's Australian economic regulation practice.

A regulatory economist with

more than 20 years' experience working and consulting on the regulation of energy, water, transport and other network infrastructure, Mr Tadgell ran his own consulting practice from 2003-12 and before then had been employed by Victorian water distributor/retailer South East Water and the state Department of Energy and Minerals.

He took up his role as Registrar on 10 March.

Faith films online will 'break walls of isolation'

by Stephen Cauchi

AFESTIVAL OF FAITH-based films – including *The Passion of the Christ* and *Hacksaw Ridge* – will be shown online in Australia and New Zealand in April and May.

“Hope at Home” will feature 12 movies over 10 weeks, delivered to the inboxes of people who purchase a festival pass.

The films were originally planned to be screened in Hoyts cinemas in Melbourne for the inaugural Faith Film Festival, but the coronavirus crisis has forced the festival to be moved online.

The festival is the idea of Hoyts and Queensland-based media distributor Heritage Films.

At a time of concern about coronavirus, “it’s probably more important than ever to get out a message of hope”, said Rod Hopping, chief executive of Heritage Films.

“It’s timely to try and mitigate fear and anxiety in people’s lives. It seems better timing than ever. Maybe God’s got it on his mind as well in terms of bringing it all together.”

The Passion of the Christ, which earned \$US622 million at the box office following its re-release in 2004, was a defining moment for faith-based films, he said.

“What [director] Mel Gibson did was, he raised the bar from both a quality story-telling perspective but also a box office perspective,” he said.

“Everyone will try and catch that bottle of lightning again.” Sony Pictures, for example,

is a really interesting and fun idea to kind of mix it up and give the audience a number of films to go and just see what happens.”

According to a statement from Heritage Films, the festival “was designed to bring

to come together in a way that can assist in fighting against the potential anxiety and loneliness many are facing as a result of recent events.

“The stories we have in our hands bring life and powerful messages of God’s intimate love for each of us.”

The Festival starts on 5 April, when ticket holders will receive a special Easter bundle of three films. They will then receive a new film in their library every week until 6 June, as well as an accompanying Q&A with the filmmakers and fellow storytellers and access to a range of online events including panels and workshops.

A Festival Facebook Community will have “watch parties” and other exclusive content.

“After you secure your festival pass you’ll receive a detailed description around how to access and watch the festival content,” said Heritage Films.

Tickets for the festival are \$59.99, but a discount voucher is widely available (see <https://www.hopeathome.com.au/festival-pass> for details). This brings the price down to \$29.99.

Those who subscribe later have instant access to earlier films.

Visit [hopeathome.com.au](https://www.hopeathome.com.au)
Read the full version of this story at [tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/news](https://www.tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/news)



“The stories we have in our hands bring life and powerful messages of God’s intimate love for ... us.”

had released a number of faith-based films in recent years, including *Paul Apostle of Christ*, *The Star* and *Miracles from Heaven*.

These were “high quality films with great actors attached,” he said. However, “it’s not easy with faith-based films to make them work. It’s a very limited space that you get in terms of programming. So this festival

life, hope and nourishment to communities around Australia across the month of April”.

“Now, we’re seeing the need to bring deep hope and opportunity for connection to those same communities in an online environment.

“We believe there’s a beautiful opportunity to foster togetherness, break down walls of isolation and invite Australians

“The most disadvantaged in our community need our help, now more than ever.”

Conny Lenneberg
Executive Director
Brotherhood of St. Laurence



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With 'contactless ministry', creativity flourishes

by Rachael Lopez

MORE THAN 200 PEOPLE tuned in to a webinar in late March which explored how to do ministry beyond doing a Sunday livestream. "Beyond the Stream" was hosted by Ridley College and the panel included the Revd Dr Graham Stanton, Lecturer in Practical Theology at Ridley; the Revd Jess Naylor-Tatterson from St James' Old Cathedral West Melbourne; and Wayne Chan, Digital Content Producer for Ridley College.

After the global coronavirus pandemic forced the closure of churches, Anglican parishes around the country had merely days to figure out how to "do church", many opting to livestream services. Panellist Wayne Chan encouraged parishes to explore other ideas.

"I think we as Christians ... try to wholesale copy things into new formats," he said. "How am I going to get my same 1.5 hour service every week and replicate word for word, structure for structure?"

Dr Stanton noted that "the essence of pastoral ministry is engaging people, engaging them with word and prayer". The good news is that there has been a burst of creativity across parishes, as contactless ministry becomes the only option.

Ms Naylor-Tatterson described some of the creative ideas already forming out of her church as "a weird combination of low-tech high-tech" for the very mixed congregation at St James'.

As Mr Chan reflected on our Christian heritage he said: "It is in our bloodline to want to create new opportunities where we can connect the gospel to people, regardless of the circumstances, regardless of the dilemma we're facing."

The following Ideas Log was inspired by the Beyond the Stream webinar. See <http://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/outreach> for a complete list.



Ideas Log

At the beginning of the week, I have been sending out a short video to families, challenging the kids to work on a project for the week. On Sunday morning during our Zoom meeting, the kids listen to the story of the week and then share the projects [that relate to the story] that they have been working on.

The Revd Jess Naylor-Tatterson,
Curate, St James Old Cathedral

ing our genuine care and love for our local community.

The Revd Bree Mills,
Senior Associate Pastor,
Glen Waverley Anglican Church

When I first heard that there was a chance that the government might curtail or ban public gatherings, I began thinking about what tools churches might use to help members care for each other in very local areas. Since I couldn't

"It is in our bloodline to want to create new opportunities where we can connect the gospel to people, regardless of the circumstances..."

Last year at Oaktree Anglican I ran a "Bible Lego" challenge where families built a scene from the Bible and brought it to church. Whole families got involved – children, youth and adults. In this season I'm bringing it to my new parish, with creations to be shared by photos on our Facebook page.

The Revd Suzie Ray,
Rector, St James Anglican Church,
Sanderson, Northern Territory

GWAC is currently releasing a daily video that encourages the Glen Waverley community to pray for an organisation or groups within the local community. The series is called "Living Hope" and encourages Christians to be other-centred and intentional in prayer, while demonstrat-

think of one I began to build it: a web app based on Google maps that will allow each person in a church to see the 10 (or whatever) people closest to them, along with their prayer requests and contact details. Initial build is almost finished.

Dr Andrew Moody,
parishioner, Holy Trinity Doncaster

This year we are giving each household "Easter in a Box". Each box will contain a journal, Bible readings and resources to help our parishioners celebrate Holy Week in their homes. We will also include a handwritten note and links to online resources to have the perfect blend of digital and physical resources.

The Revd Mark McDonald,
Vicar, Christchurch Anglican,
Newport

One way we're providing for our people is by loaning them a green Prayer Book and directing them to The Daily Offices, p.383 onwards. This provides them with a helpful structure to turn to God, commit themselves to Him, hear from His Word, and intercede for others.

The Revd Devan Foster,
St Nicholas' Rockingham,
Western Australia

Our staff team are working through the Psalms, using video reflections to try and maintain a level of personal connection with our community, and using the content to create visual posts for Instagram at the same time.

The Revd Liz Webster,
Curate, St Hilary's Network

With people's schedules unusually clear, we want to use the coming months as an opportunity to grow together in a deeper understanding of the Gospel. We are putting together a series of online seminars to engage newer and more mature Christians.

The Revd Pete Greenwood,
Pastor, Inner West Church,
Kensington

With playgroup not an option now and inspired by bear hunts happening around the world, we set one up at our church by putting bears in twelve of the church windows. We created a checklist with the bear photos, available online, and kids can do this activity with their parents on a walk or on the way home from the supermarket.

The Revd Chris Bowditch,
Lead Minister, Lindisfarne
Anglican Church, Tasmania

Please check current state and federal laws relating to COVID-19 before proceeding with any new ministry ideas.

See <https://www.ridley.edu.au/covid/beyond-the-stream-your-questions-answered/>

Inspiring young readers, with a Christian touch

by Stephen Cauchi

A PARISHIONER AT St James' Pakenham has just been elected president of the Young Australian Book of the Year Awards (YABBA), which is held throughout Victoria's primary and secondary schools.

Michelle Nye, who is also a librarian at Hillcrest Christian College in Clyde North, said that YABBA instilled the joy of reading in students and also exposed them to Christian ideas.

"Reading is just so important and we don't do enough reading for pleasure," she said. "We do so much compulsory reading with set texts in primary schools that the joy of reading is lost at secondary level."

There are four categories: picture books; fiction for younger readers; fiction for older readers; and fiction for Years 7 to 9.

During Term 1, children across Victoria nominate their four favourite books.

The 10 books with the most nominations in each of the categories make the shortlists. Students are encouraged to read these books in terms 2 and 3.

In term 4, students vote on the shortlisted books for the winner.

YABBA is the Victorian branch of the Reading and Enjoying Australian Literature

(REAL) Awards. There were 30,000 nominations in YABBA last year, said Ms Nye. While participation is not compulsory, "thousands" of both private and state schools in Victoria are involved.

It was "really, really important" for young people to read Australian books said Ms Nye, "because they're able to then read an Australian setting in context with what they're experiencing".

As well, children's literature was a chance for students to be exposed to Christian ideas, she said.

"There's so much Christian worldview in our Australian picture books," she said. "Like if you think about the Pig the Pug series, (the character) Trevor is saying how many times we should forgive."

Other Australian Christian writers included Coral Vass, whose book *Sorry Day* was a Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) book of the year in 2019.

Another CBCA short-listed Christian author was Patrick Guest, author of *The Second Sky* (illustrated by Jonathan Bentley). "He writes amazing stories and one of them actually has images of the cross splashed nearly across every single page.

"When you look at *The Second Sky* you can just see the Holy Spirit's fingertips over the illustrator's work. These type



Michelle Nye.

"YABBA instilled the joy of reading in students and also exposed them to Christian ideas."

of stories just make your heart sing."

Christian authors did not necessarily identify as such on their books, nor did they necessarily mention Christian subjects such as church in their stories, she said.

"A lot of fiction is about how we treat each other as human beings and that's really the essence of what Christians are about.

"It's about making these faith-based connections through what they're reading rather than overtly reading a Christian story."

Last year's YABBA winners were *Seriously, Do Not Open This Book Again* by Andy Lee and illustrator Heath McKenzie; *The Bad Guys: Do-You-Think-He-Saurus?* by Aaron Blabey; *The 104-Storey Treehouse* by Andy Griffith and illustrator Terry Denton; and *Maybe* by Morris Gleitzman.

The top YABBA winners over the years are Terry Denton with 21 titles, Andy Griffiths with 17, Paul Jennings with 16, Morris Gleitzman with 10, and Emily Rodda with 8.

Ms Nye, 49, has been at Hillcrest for 21 years and has been a member of YABBA for about the same time. She took over as president on 20 January.

In 2014, Hillcrest hosted the awards ceremony, which Ms Nye said was a great success. The students' "literacy rates and their reading and borrowing stats and their literacy appreciation in upper primary going into lower secondary just skyrocketed".

YABBA is seeking a secondary school host for this year's awards, which are scheduled to be held on 27 October.

Bishop Huggins' father's wartime photos donated to State Library

FORMER MELBOURNE assistant Bishop Philip Huggins and his brother David have donated their father Alfred's World War II photo collection of the war in Greece and the Middle East to State Library Victoria.

Bishop Philip and Mr David Huggins were joined by family at the presentation of the collection, comprising about 200 photographs, to the Library.

The collection includes images as the battles began and the ensuing Allied retreat,



Burial in north-central Greece, April 1941. Alfred Savage Collection, State Library of Victoria.

as well as photographs taken by a German soldier showing the German arrival in Athens and the preparations of German airborne troops headed for Crete. There is also



Troops boarding transports in Suda Bay, Crete, May 1941. Alfred Savage Collection, State Library of Victoria.

an audio recording of Alfred Huggins talking about his Greek campaign experiences.

The donation was arranged through historian, writer and tour guide Mr Jim Claven.

Mr David Huggins said he had toured Crete, visiting some of the sites connected to his father's wartime service, accompanied by former Victorian Premier and family friend, Mr Steve Bracks, who attended the handover of the collection.

The donation was received by the State Library's CEO Ms Kate Torney and Collections Manager Dr Kevin Molloy. Mr Claven said the photographs would be available to view on the State Library website in future.



Freiers host vice-regal couple

ARCHBISHOP PHILIP and Mrs Joy Freier recently hosted Victoria's 29th (and first female) Governor, the Honourable Linda Dessau (pictured above), and her husband, Mr Anthony Howard QC, to Bishops Court – temporary home to one of her early predecessors while Melbourne's imposing current Government House was built in the 1870s.

The Freiers gave the vice-regal couple a tour of Bishops Court, which was home to Sir George Ferguson Bowen, the fifth Governor, and Lady Bowen between 1874 and 1876 after Melbourne's first Bishop, Charles Perry, and his wife Frances sailed home to England.

It was fitting that the Queensland-born Archbishop and Mrs Freier hosted Sir George Bowen's successor as Sir George had earlier served as first Governor of Queensland from 1859-68.

A Government House post on the Bishops Court visit said Governor Dessau and Mr Howard "were able to learn a little about the history of the house, both as a former residence of the Governor of Victoria, and as an example of early Melbourne architecture".



Bishop Kate blesses teen housing project

BISHOP KATE Prowd, who oversees the Oodthenong Episcopate, visited Debbie's Place, a home for at-risk girls from the Bellarine who are completing their VCE, in January.

This "home away from home" is an initiative of the Parish of Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads and is operated in partnership with Korus Connect.

Bishop Prowd heard how important the project is for young women who are living in vulnerable situations while trying to complete their secondary education.

"I could hardly believe something so great could be here for me," said one young woman. "Without Debbie's Place I wouldn't still be in school. Trying to sort out the day-to-day survival stuff was just taking so much of my time and energy."

"It's such an important project," Bishop Prowd said. "There are so many risks and challenges for young women in unstable housing. Providing them with secure and supported housing gives them the opportunity to successfully complete their education, and opens up so many more options for them as they move into adult life."

Visit www.debbiesplacebellarine.com.au



Colton Close aged care home resident Judith Fawcner on her 75th birthday, reading the virtual hugs sent to her and preparing to Facetime her family.

Families send 'virtual hugs' to loved ones

MELBOURNE ANGLICAN aged-care provider Benetas has invited families and carers with loved ones in its residential aged care facilities to share virtual messages of hope and love.

Following social distancing requirements, Benetas' online "Virtual Hug" tool reminds everyone in the community that while physical distancing is critical during the coronavirus crisis, so are meaningful relationships and emotional connections.

The tool allows families to send written messages and photos to loved ones. CEO Sandra Hills OAM said that Benetas was seeing people across Victoria make generous acts to share their care and love for their elderly loved ones despite the physical limitations that are now in place.

"It's imperative that we're sharing messages of care, and that we're actively encouraged to look out for one another if we're going to build a community that's supporting those who are going to be most vulnerable," she said.

Since launching the tool on Friday last week, dozens of family members have sent through messages of care and compassion.

Visit www.benetas.com.au/covid-19-updates/spreadkindness

Spiritus
SHORT FILM PRIZE

Call for entries for short film prize

ENTRIES ARE now open for the biennial national 2020 Spiritus Short Film Prize, an initiative of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture at Charles Sturt University.

The Centre's Executive Director Professor Stephen Pickard said, "The Spiritus Short Film Prize initiative is part of the Centre's commitment to promote the lively interaction between arts, sciences and culture, which is one of the Four Pillars of its work and mission.

"The Centre believes that there is wisdom to be found in such an interaction which can contribute to a vision of hope and the common good for Australia."

Entries close on 30 June, with winners to be announced in September.

Visit www.about.csu.edu.au/spiritus

NT Wright, Mike Bird collaboration launched

by Stephen Cauchi

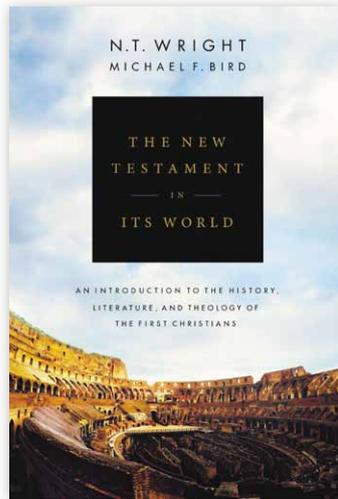
A NEW BOOK BY esteemed British scholar Bishop N.T. (Tom) Wright and Ridley College academic the Revd Dr Mike Bird was launched at Ridley College last month.

The 992-page publication, *The New Testament in its World: An Introduction to the History, Literature and Theology of the First Christians*, takes an in-depth look at the early Church and the books of the New Testament.

Dr Bird, who is academic dean and lecturer in theology at Ridley, told the launch he was honoured to work with a scholar of the stature of Bishop Wright.

“Working with Tom was very humbling simply because he is the biblical studies superstar. It’s a bit like being asked to sing a duet with Beyoncé,” he said.

“It was great to work very closely with Tom, who is very gracious. It was quite intimidating ... he certainly has a level of brilliance that is very humbling but it’s also mesmerising to watch.”



“Working with Tom was very humbling simply because he is the biblical studies superstar.”

Bishop Wright has written over 70 books, including *The Resurrection of the Son of God* and *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*. His work, such as his views on the Apostle Paul, has stirred controversy. He has also held a number of academic titles and is currently a senior

research fellow at Oxford University.

Dr Bird said that Bishop Wright “gets a lot of flak and criticism from a wide variety of people but he also has a very wide appeal among a great variety of people”.

When Bishop Wright visited Melbourne several years ago, people from a wide range of denominations attended his events, including members of the Uniting, Catholic, Baptist, Anglican and Hillsong churches.

“He just has this appeal that really transcends denomina-

tions and differences,” Dr Bird said.

The Principal of Ridley College, the Revd Dr Brian Rosner, told the launch that the book was “incredibly comprehensive” but despite that, “quite concise”.

“It’s hard to put down, I find,”

he said. “It’s extraordinary that the book somehow distils so much of a New Testament scholar, Tom Wright, in a way that’s readable and memorable.”

Dr Rosner praised Dr Bird as a prolific author and a world-class scholar whose style of writing was “short and punchy”. As well, the book was lavishly illustrated with figures, maps, tables, text grids and timelines.

Dr Rosner said the book was for “everyone”, including academics and non-academics.

“If you’ve got a theology degree already, it’s a great revision. If you haven’t got a theology degree, it’s a great taster.”

Dr Bird, who said the book had been “10 years in the making”, first suggested the idea of the book to the publisher SPCK.

Later publisher Zondervan got involved, he said, with the result that two DVDs, a workbook and an instructor’s guide were also included.

DVD footage of Bishop Wright was played at the launch, which was held on 2 March.

Read the full version of this story at tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/news

New John Dickson book asks: is Jesus history?

by Stephen Cauchi

THE LATEST book from Anglican academic and historian the Revd Dr John Dickson, *Is Jesus History?* – an apologist work written for non-believers as well as Christians – was launched at Ridley College on 11 March.

Ridley College principal the Revd Dr Brian Rosner, who launched the book, said the “deliberately ambiguous” title reflected two questions it posed.

It asked, firstly, if Jesus’ existence was rooted in historical evidence and, secondly, if Jesus was relevant in modern times, he said.

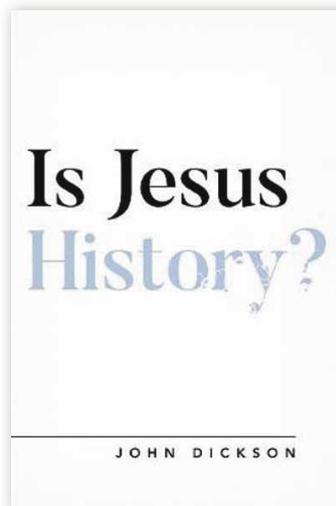
“People still ask the question, can we be sure that Jesus even existed? Is the New Testament reliable?” said Dr Rosner. “Is Jesus out of date, obsolete, irrelevant? What’s the relevance of Jesus for today?”

Dr Rosner said the 196-page book made it clear that Jesus not only existed but was entirely relevant for the 21st century. The book was “mature ... concise and punchy”.

The book was also meant to be passed on to non-Christian friends and family members, said Dr Rosner. “It’s an excellent gift, it’s not a cringy Christian book in any sense. It’s the kind of book you could give a friend and feel confident about them not rolling their eyes as soon as they open it.”

Dr Dickson told the launch that he “wanted to write a book that you could hand to your mate who doesn’t believe, who thinks there is nothing credible to it”.

A key way of doing this was stressing that history was what differentiated the Christian faith from other belief systems, he said.



“Our faith didn’t happen in an imaginary battlefield like the Bhagavad Gita, it didn’t happen in the Dreamtime, it didn’t happen in the mythical Greek time,” he said.

“We say our guy was crucified by the fifth governor of

Judea. We’re making an historical claim. Our guy went from this town to that town. He paid taxes. He met Pharisees and Sadducees. We are saying stuff that is real-world stuff,” he said.

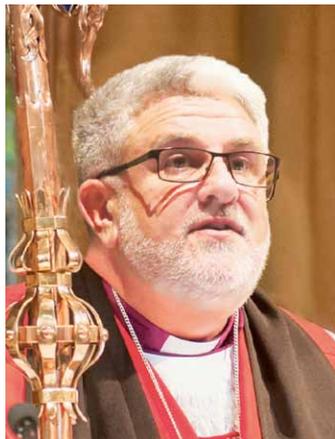
Dr Dickson said that he once became friends with a New South Wales magistrate who had become a Christian after being diagnosed with a terminal illness.

“He eventually said to me one day, ‘I’ve been reading and assessing testimony for all my professional life. And there is no way these gospels are made up. This is good testimony,’” said Dr Dickson.

“He died with a deep trust that if Jesus was raised then he would be raised.”

Read the full version of this story at tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/news

Vote for Primate deadlocked – from page 1



Bishop Richard Condie.

Archbishop Smith, who has led Adelaide's Anglicans since 2017, and Tasmania's Bishop Richard Condie, a former Archdeacon of Melbourne and Vicar of St Jude's Carlton who became Tasmania's Anglican leader in 2016, were the only candidates from the third ballot after the Northern Territory's Bishop Greg Anderson, Brisbane's Archbishop Phillip Aspinall, Canberra-Goulburn's Bishop Mark Short, Newcastle's Bishop Peter Stuart and Ballarat's Bishop Garry Weatherill were eliminated.

Dr Aspinall, who was Primate from 2005-14 and will be acting Primate until Dr Freier's successor is chosen, was the only candidate other than Archbishop Smith and Bishop Condie to reach the second ballot.

He was to have chaired this year's General Synod, which had been scheduled for 31 May to 5 June in Maroochydore in Queensland, but the global coronavirus emergency has forced the postponement of the meeting to 2021. The Standing Committee of General Synod is due to meet from 17-18 April.

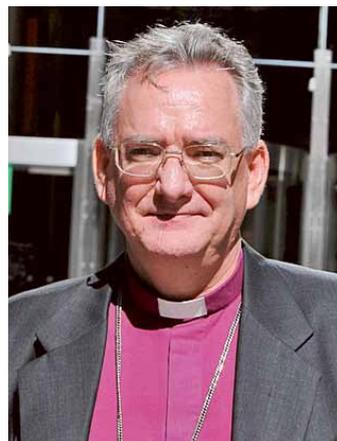
Dr Freier's resignation as Primate takes effect on 31 March. He announced last November that he would step down before his term was due to expire and would not seek re-election but that he would continue as the Archbishop of Melbourne, a role he has held since 2006.

Sydney Anglican priest and blogger the Revd David

Ould wrote on davidould.net that following what had been described to him as "a very carefully orchestrated plan", conservative electors for the new Primate had prevented the election of a new leader who would not uphold the doctrinal integrity of the Anglican Church of Australia.

Mr Ould wrote that the strategy was to go "all in" for Bishop Condie.

"(Bishop) Condie's nomi-



Archbishop Phillip Aspinall.

"The Board of Electors is expected to meet again before 30 June."

nation was always going to be controversial," Mr Ould wrote. "As chair of GAFCON Australia he was a figure that many could not accept. Nevertheless, conservatives maintained the argument that he was the only viable candidate who genuinely upheld doctrine and polity at this crucial time. Conservative strategy was predicated on the requirement to gain a majority in all three houses. Six conservative clergy votes would be sufficient to hold out against alternate candidates."

Images of ballot results on Mr Ould's blog show that as early as the third ballot, Archbishop Smith achieved a clear majority over Bishop Condie in the Houses of Bishops and Laity – 15-8 and 9-3 respectively – but

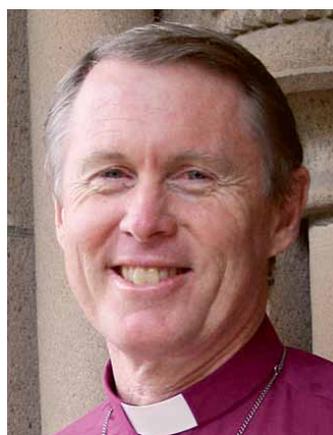
that he fell two votes short in the House of Clergy, 5-7. Archbishop Smith won a total of 29 votes to Bishop Condie's 18 but to succeed, he needed a majority in all houses.

In the fourth ballot, Archbishop Smith drew level with Bishop Condie 6-6 in the House of Clergy but in subsequent ballots was unable to achieve a seventh vote that would have made him Primate.

The Board of Electors is expected to meet again before 30 June.

If Archbishop Smith were to be elected Primate, he would be the first Archbishop of Adelaide to hold the post – although Dr Keith Rayner became acting Primate in 1989 while Archbishop of Adelaide, but had taken office as Archbishop of Melbourne (succeeding the late Dr David Penman) when he became Primate in 1991.

The election of Bishop Condie would be historic as no bishop who was not a metropolitan has been Primate.



Archbishop Geoffrey Smith.

Archbishop Freier was elected Primate in 2014 and was formally installed into the office by Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury at St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne on 13 August that year.



Archbishop Glenn Davies.

Dr Davies to stay on until March 2021

ARCHBISHOP GLENN

Davies of Sydney is to resign in March next year, six months after his 70th birthday and eight months after his original retirement date, due to a desire in his diocese for stability amid the coronavirus emergency.

The diocesan Standing Committee unanimously voted on 23 March to ask Dr Davies to withdraw his resignation and continue in office until 26 March 2021. It is hoped that an election synod to choose a new Archbishop, originally scheduled for August this year, can be held in early 2021.

The Sydney Anglicans website reported that several Standing Committee members said the extension would allow stability of leadership through troubled times.

Dr Davies absented himself during the debate and returned to applause as the decision was announced.

"My wife and I have served Christ together in ministry for many years and are happy to continue to serve wherever we are needed," he said.

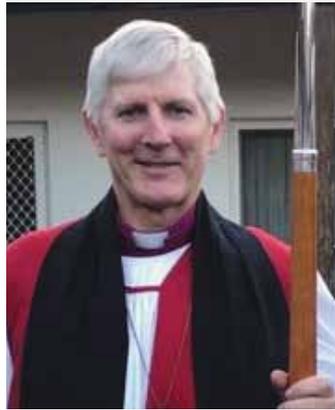
Downsized ceremony for new ADF Bishop

by Stephen Cauchi and
Barney Zwartz

FORMER SOLDIER turned Christian minister Grant Dibden has been inducted as Anglican Bishop to the Defence Force, although the coronavirus pandemic forced his consecration ceremony to be scaled down.

The ceremony was held on 18 March at the Royal Military College in Duntroon. The consecration was performed by the then Anglican Primate of Australia, Archbishop Philip Freier.

Dr Freier said the ceremony happened just before the Australian defence forces



Bishop Grant Dibden.

imposed a limit of 100 people for any military assembly.

“As you can imagine this necessitated many people who

had accepted the invitation to be present being told that they could not come,” he said.

Bishop Dibden was a career soldier, rising to colonel and commanding the Force Support Group when in 2004 he left the army to pursue full-time Christian ministry.

He returned to the Defence Forces as a chaplain in 2007 with the rank of captain.

Now, as Anglican Bishop to the Defence Force, he is head of the Defence Forces’ Anglican chaplains and a member of the 10-strong Religious Advisory Committee to the Services.

“It’s been about following where I thought the Lord has

been leading me,” said Bishop Dibden.

His most important job in his new role is the pastoral care of the Anglican chaplains in the Defence Force: 43 full-time chaplains, 43 part-time and another six now in training. All have to live and work in a multi-faith environment in which there is great diversity of ethical and cultural views.

Two other key responsibilities are recruiting chaplains, making sure they are a good fit, and helping them transition back to their dioceses when they leave the service, which includes liaising with local bishops.

Cancer claims Sydney’s first bishop of Chinese descent, Ivan Lee

LONG-SERVING SYDNEY Bishop Ivan Lee – the first Bishop of Chinese descent in Sydney Diocese and only the second in Australia – has passed away more than four years after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Bishop Lee died on 4 March at Sydney’s Greenwich Hospital, where he had been receiving palliative care.

“We have lost a great champion for the gospel, for evangelism and for healthy churches engaged in ministry and mission,” said Sydney Archbishop Glenn Davies.

“Our diocese has lost a faithful bishop and teacher of God’s word. I have lost a good friend

**“We have
lost a great
champion for
the gospel ...”**

and loyal colleague. Virginia and her family have lost a loving husband, father and grandfather.”

Bishop Lee served a record 17 years as Bishop of Western Sydney after his consecration in 2003.

Even though his successor, Gary Koo, was appointed last



Bishop Ivan Lee.

year, he continued to serve as Bishop for Evangelism and Church Growth until he was forced to go into hospital in January.

Bishop Lee told *Southern Cross* magazine in 2019 that the cancer had been in remission after his initial operation and chemotherapy in 2015, until it reappeared in 2019.

He described his cancer as a personal test of faith. “There were lots of tears but not anger, not questioning why. None of the kids have said ‘Why you, Dad?’, and I haven’t either. I know it’s common for other people, but it was already an understanding in my head that anyone can get sick and Christians don’t get any special privileges in a fallen world.”

Russell Powell, sydneyanglicans.net

World Vision rocked by CEO’s departure, media allegations

by Mark Brolly

WORLD VISION Australia (WVA) was rocked last month by the departure of its CEO, Ms Claire Rogers, and allegations of the organisation being implicated in a multi-million-dollar corruption scandal.

Ms Rogers’ resignation after three-and-a-half years as chief executive of one of Australia’s biggest charities was announced on 8 March, shortly before *The Age* and



Claire Rogers.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported that leaked invoices and emails suggested that donations by Australians had helped pay for contracts to a printing group, which then made secret payments to the father of a World Vision executive.

“The organisation and its chairman denied Ms Rogers’ resignation had anything to do with the news about the alleged corruption in the organisation, though her announcement had

been brought forward from its planned timing of Wednesday. There is no suggestion Ms Rogers was involved in any wrongdoing,” *The Age* reported on 9 March.

The previous day, World Vision Australia’s Chair, Mr Shannon Adams, had announced Ms Rogers’ resignation “after three and a half years of outstanding service ... to spend more time with her family before starting the next chapter of her career”.

Two trailblazing Anglican women pass away

by Mark Brolly

TWO PIONEERING Anglican women – renowned Australian obstetrician and gynaecologist, Dr Catherine Hamlin, and the first woman to be consecrated a bishop in the Anglican Communion, US Bishop Barbara Harris – died within days of each other last month.

Dr Hamlin, 96, died on 18 March at her home in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where she and her late husband Dr Reginald Hamlin co-founded Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia, a healthcare network treating women who suffer from the debilitating effects of an obstetric fistula – a horrific childbirth injury.

The official obituary for Dr Hamlin published by the Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation said in part: “To



Dr Catherine Hamlin.

say Catherine was a remarkable woman is an understatement. In our eyes, she is a saint ...

“Women and girls who suffer from obstetric fistula have been described as our modern-day lepers ... Catherine Hamlin lived to give these women their life back.”

Bishop Harris died on 13 March, aged 89, in



Bishop Barbara Harris.

Massachusetts, where her historic consecration as bishop occurred on 11 February 1989.

She served as suffragan bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts until her retirement in 2002.

The Presiding Bishop of the US Episcopal Church, Bishop Michael Curry, said: “Bishop Harris was not large of physical

stature. In fact, the opposite. But she was larger than life. She was larger than life because she lived it fully with her God and with us. She did it by actually living the love of God that Jesus taught us about. She did it walking the lonesome valley of leadership, paving a way for so many of us whose way had been blocked. She did it lifting her voice for those who had no voice ...”

Barbara Clementine Harris was born on 12 June 1930 in Philadelphia. She was active in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and in 1965 helped register black voters and took part in the historic Selma to Montgomery march in the South.

She was priested in 1980, when the ordination of women had been officially recognised in the Episcopal Church for only four years.

Welby says L'Arche 'as important as ever' despite founder's abuse

by Mark Brolly

THE ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury has responded to revelations that the late L'Arche founder Jean Vanier had abused six women over 35 years to 2005 by saying that the commitment of L'Arche communities to a world where people of all abilities were celebrated was as important as ever.

Archbishop Justin Welby's reaction, on Twitter, came amid widespread dismay about the revelations about Vanier, who was widely described as a saint on his death last year.

The revelations were published on 22 February by the leaders of L'Arche International, Stephan Posner and Stacy Cates-Carney, following an independent inquiry by GCPS, an independent UK consultancy that specialises in improving procedures for the prevention and reporting of abuse. The inquiry examined the environment surrounding Father Thomas Philippe, who had abused adult women without disabilities in L'Arche, including the role of Jean Vanier, who considered Fr Philippe to be his spiritual father.



Jean Vanier.

“The inquiry received credible and consistent testimonies from six adult women without disabilities, covering the period

from 1970 to 2005,” the L'Arche leaders said. “The women each report that Jean Vanier initiated sexual relations with them, usually in the context of spiritual accompaniment. The inquiry made no suggestion that Jean Vanier had inappropriate relationships with people with intellectual disabilities.”

Archbishop Welby tweeted his response on 26 February: “I continue to pray for the brave women who have spoken about being sexually abused by Jean Vanier. I pray too for L'Arche communities in the UK and worldwide ...”

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The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne does not tolerate abuse, harassment or other misconduct within our communities. If any person has concerns about the behaviour of a church worker, past or present, they can contact Kooyoora Ltd.

We are deeply distressed that there have been occasions when abuse and misconduct have occurred in our communities. Kooyoora Ltd is independent of the Diocese and receives and manages complaints about abuse and misconduct by members of the clergy and church workers.

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For further information: www.kooyoora.org.au

Ex-businessman takes reins of parish school

by Mark Brolly

MR NEIL ANDARY HAS taken an unconventional path to the leadership of South Yarra's Christ Church Grammar School, the only remaining Anglican parish primary school in Victoria.

Mr Andary spent the first 20 years of his working life in business, managing a family warehousing and distribution company and then an indoor sports centre in Adelaide.

"I reached a point where my wife Dianne and I had



Neil Andary.

three young children and I was looking at what direction to take next in my career," he told *Domain Review*. "I knew

I wanted to do something fulfilling."

A school camping trip with his then eight-year-old daughter, Rebecca, set him on the path that eventually led to teaching and to Christ Church Grammar, founded 122 years ago as a choir school for boys and co-educational since the early 1920s.

"I was given the role of taking some of the children for an exercise session each day and I loved every minute of it. I loved working with the children. That memory and the enjoyment stayed with me and two years later I knew that teaching was

what I wanted to do with my life."

Mr Andary came to Christ Church Grammar after 16 years at the Uniting Church-affiliated Prince Alfred College in Adelaide, including as head of the preparatory school, deputy headmaster and acting headmaster.

He believes relationships are at the core of education.

"We all want to be valued, heard and cared for. If you know your students and you value who they are and their differences, then they will generally work much harder."

Challenging clericalism requires culture change: Dr Bruce Kaye

by Muriel Porter

THE AUSTRALIAN Anglican Church needs to understand and challenge clericalism in its ranks if it is to "better serve the purposes and values" of the kingdom of God, according to the Revd Dr Bruce Kaye.

Clericalism, Dr Kaye said, was identified by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse as a facilitator of child sexual abuse in the Anglican Church. The Commission had put it at the heart of the sexual abuse problem, but "sadly" the Commission did not investigate its sources or essential character, he said. It was time for the church to "take this matter up where the Commission left it".

Delivering the third annual Robin Sharwood Lecture in Church Law at Trinity College on 4 March, Dr Kaye said that examining clericalism's institutional and practical sources would involve a "significant change in the culture and arrangements of our church". This would be "conflictual and uncomfortable for some, if not many", he said, and would require respect, patience and sustained gentle persistence to change "our inadequate and unhelpful practices and institutions".

Dr Kaye, adjunct research professor at the Centre for Public and Contextual Theology

at Charles Sturt University and a former General Secretary of General Synod, described clericalism as the abuse of the status given to bishops and clergy. It "flourishes in a community" and "grows in some widely accepted, or at least tolerated, attitudes and compliance". No amount of complaining by lay people would have much impact on it, he said. Rather, the "dynamics of the institutional context need to be changed".

The issue is, he continued, that "ordination brings with it professional privileges of personal engagement with members of the church", giving clergy what the Commission called "positional power". The abuse of that power facilitated moral failure; in the matters before the



The Revd Dr Bruce Kaye.

being consolidated and becoming the accepted framework for the life of the community, he said, even though they may not be represented in the laws and canons. "The problem could not grow without a weakness in the practices operating in the

were so many other demands on the bishop's time, parish clergy were left with "a great deal of freedom in the way they exercise their ministry". They were often quite isolated. Clergy could find themselves "with power and control somewhat at odds with the language of the ordination service".

He suggested that the "operating assumptions" of parishes might be challenged if, for instance, the incumbent did not chair the parish council meeting, giving way to an elected lay person. Similarly, a lay person instead of the bishop might chair diocesan councils. While these were small examples, he said, they might "prove to be of some significance in forming the culture of the community involved and would more naturally lead to more transparency".

He continued that "clearly good and trustable occupants of these two offices, bishops and parish incumbents, can and are very likely to make any arrangement work well so that Christian character is formed in the community. But we are not concerned here with the good and trustable. We are concerned here with the weak and malleable, or in a worst-case scenario the insecure and authoritarian, who can be led to enhance their positional power in a framework that does not sufficiently discourage or inhibit that."

"Clergy ... can find themselves subject to expectations which are hard to resist."

Commission, it was the abuse of children, "though of course also potentially of any member of the church".

"In some of our institutional arrangements", he continued, "church officers, including clergy and bishops, can find themselves subject to expectations which are hard to resist." Those expectations in time have the effect of

church. Any institutional design should have the effect of protecting people from unreasonable expectations whether they are clergy or lay people and also at the same time inhibit impulses to seek inappropriate power in community relations."

The oversight of parishes was in theory the responsibility of the bishop, he said, but because there

Discrimination bill will close 'gaping holes'

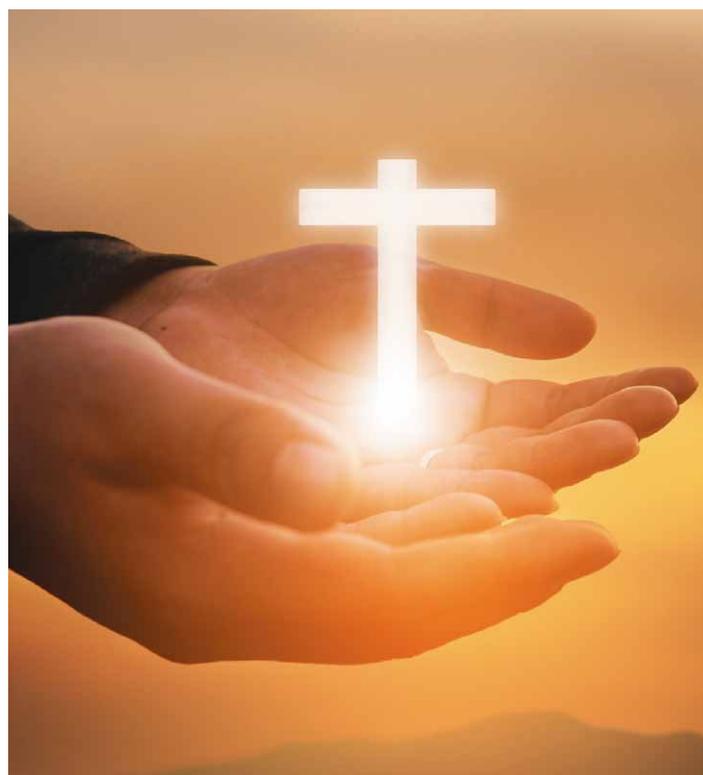
by Michael Bird and
Mark Sneddon

WE READ WITH CONCERN Archbishop Philip Freier's article "Do we really need religious freedom legislation?" published in *The Age* on 10 March. The Archbishop challenged the idea that religious freedom legislation is needed to "ensure our freedom to practise our faith". He was also concerned with the "divisive debate" about the legislation's contents.

We count the Archbishop as a leading advocate for ensuring that Australia remains a tolerant and just society, a safe place for people of all faiths and none. However, some of us who have worked and written in this area were perplexed by the article.

To begin with, the government is not proposing a Religious Freedom Bill but a Religious Discrimination Bill (RDB) to protect religious people and organisations from being *discriminated against* on the basis of their religious belief (or unbelief) or lawful religious activity, just as the Ruddock Panel recommended. There is currently *no such protection* in federal, NSW or South Australian discrimination law. The RDB will fill those gaping holes in protection.

While there is no current threat to the freedom to meet and pray in worship communities, in 2018, the Pew Research Center stated that Australia ranks the second highest in the Asia Pacific for social hostility against religion and religious communities. There are real threats to the freedom to live out one's faith in the



"People of faith need protection now given the social and legal threats in the current climate."

workplace, education sector, and public settings. The RDB is concerned with the real cases of discrimination faced by religious people and organisations including the 30 described at australiawatch.com.au by religious freedom lawyers. For example, a Christian student at a South Australian university was suspended from classes and threatened with removal from campus after praying for a fellow student who had asked him to pray with her, but

later complained. In Tasmania the Catholic Archbishop and a Protestant minister had to defend anti-discrimination cases for months because their teaching to Christians in support of traditional marriage offended non-Christian activists.

The "divisive debate" which the Archbishop regrets is led by anti-religious organisations and by activists who resort to complaints and courts to stop religious people from reasonably expressing their views.

Considering the above cases against clergy and laity, the RDB will protect statements of belief (and unbelief) from vexatious discrimination complaints. But it will only protect reasonable statements which satisfy *all* of the following tests: the statement is in good faith, not malicious, not threatening, not harassing, not vilifying, not seriously intimidating and not encouraging a crime.

The Archbishop suggests that a better approach is to hold off legislating religious discrimination laws and instead work to protect religious people with a Charter of Rights. But why should people of faith suffering real discrimination now have to wait years for a Charter of Rights which may not solve the problem?

Australia has major gaps in its religious freedom protections. This is detrimental to Australia's status as a safe and free multicultural nation. By religious freedom we do not mean the preserve of Christian hegemony in a post-Christian culture; rather, we mean protecting faith communities of all types who are vulnerable to discrimination due to inadequate legal protections. We also wish to avoid divisiveness, but people of faith need protection now given the social and legal threats in the current climate.

The Revd Dr Michael F. Bird is Academic Dean, Ridley College, and worships at St Alfred's North Blackburn. Mark Sneddon is Executive Director of the Institute for Civil Society, former Associate Professor of Law at University of Melbourne, and worships at St Alfred's North Blackburn.

Find more opinion pieces at tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/opinion

"The Medevac case study, so movingly depicted in Heather Kirkpatrick's daring documentary *Against Our Oath*, can inspire us in our current emergency and in the daily but constant attentive care of all kinds, in our paid and unpaid professions."

The Revd Dr Gordon Preece on the lessons we can learn from the Medevac campaign.

"If Hannah Clarke's murder and that of her children is going to mean anything, our politicians need to unite and say that the abuse of women must stop; we must do more to eradicate this scourge."

The Revd Dr Kevin Giles on domestic violence, and how the church can work to help prevent it.

Practise spatial isolation, not social isolation

by Stephen Duckett

IF A WEEK IS A LONG TIME in politics, a day is an extremely long time in a pandemic. In one day, the number of people reported as infected will grow by at least 25 per cent and new restrictions on our social life will be introduced. The actual number infected, but untested, will grow at a similar rate. The more interactions people have, the more chance they will infect others, hence the slow shutting down of the economy and the move to spatial isolation.

In my view we were too slow to recognise the seriousness of the coronavirus challenge, and too slow to implement the injunction for us all to keep a healthy distance from each other. But what should not happen, and is not happening, is shutting down community. We should practise spatial isolation, not social isolation.

COVID-19 and the tighter controls over human face-to-face interaction are changing how we live and work, includ-



Dr Stephen Duckett.

"We must act as a community ..."

ing how churches work. Like a toy with the battery running down, we have witnessed a slow phasing down of building-based ministry. This has forced parishes – and other church organisations – to think through what mission and ministry mean in this environment. Who are we? What do we value and how will we work?

My parish – St Peter's

Eastern Hill – continues its Eucharistic tradition of daily masses, but it is now a private mass with only people who live on-site in the congregation. A weekly mass is livestreamed, similarly with a tiny congregation, however there is joy in this, with one parishioner reporting that she sang along extremely loudly to a recent mass. But what about hospitality? How do we continue those little interactions that make a community? The answer of course is by telephone or social media. We are also thinking about how we spread the readings of the day to our community, maybe by trying to get comments on, and interactions about these.

In a sense what we are trying to do in all these endeavours is to ensure that even when we are shut in our homes, we are able to gather. It is a different type of gathering, but still gathering of two or three in Jesus' name.

What COVID-19 forced us to do is to think through what it is we value and how we are to continue that in the new environment.

In my work role, I have been quite active in the media during the pandemic, not only trying to highlight the impact on the health system, but also to reinforce community, sharing my concern that we should focus on spatial isolation, not social isolation, and this should be part of our wider ministry at this time. My tweet calling attention to this spatial-social distinction was seen more than 150,000 times, and retweeted more than 600 times. The ministry of addressing social isolation is a key one for all of us, right now.

In the absence of tight spatial distancing and slowing the spread of infection, the health system will be overwhelmed. We must act as a community, take the pain of restrictions on our interactions, and attempt to slow and hopefully reverse the rate of growth in infections. Literally lives depend on this.

Dr Stephen Duckett is Director of the Health Program at Grattan Institute and Vicar's Warden at St Peter's, Eastern Hill.

Calmness, clarity and optimism are contagious, too

by Ken Morgan

AS HUMANITY defends itself against the outbreak of COVID-19, another kind of contagion is spreading. It will affect the vast majority of people in Australia. Its effects are debilitating to varying degrees and frequently long-lasting, but it's very seldom fatal.

The unchecked spread of anxiety, sometimes escalated into panic, has produced all kinds of irrational behaviour, from whip-sawing stockmarkets to toilet paper shortages. To some degree, just about everyone is suffering from elevated anxiety in the face of a rapidly changing response to a challenge the likes of which none of us has faced before.

The things that are steady and familiar to us have been upended. No handshakes, no hugs, no wine at communion. Church services have been



halted as society does its best to adapt to the challenge. Schools and cafes have been forced to close. We find ourselves largely confined to quarters. There is talk of shortages in all kinds of products we take for granted.

Personally I'm finding it difficult to focus and function. I'm compulsively checking the news to see what's happening so I might have some chance of taking initiative and adapting. My thinking is fragmented and flaky. I feel on edge.

The adaptive challenge for the church is large and complex. Our primary value propositions are delivered in the context of gatherings and meetings. The revenues necessary to meet our

fixed costs are to some extent dependent on activities involving direct human contact, either in worship services, facilities hire or op shops.

Such profound disruption affords us the opportunity for clarity. What, exactly is the purpose of the local church? How do we stay true to that purpose when our traditional *modus operandi* is interrupted?

Further, we're challenged to think beyond ourselves and our own difficulties to those who might face more pressing problems. How can we be good news to people most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis?

The beauty of these questions is that they activate our intellectual functioning, which has an automatically calming effect on our emotions. They get us beyond our own fears and towards more thoughtful, goal-directed thinking.

Calm, clarity and optimism are also contagious. The leader in an anxious context is the one who can keep their thinking, remember the truths beyond the headlines and make thoughtful decisions based on solid principles, rather than joining in the collective reactivity.

If we can be clear on our purpose and principles, and make thoughtful adaptations to the challenge at hand, we have opportunity to show leadership in our community and to make a valuable contribution to the society around us.

When society is at its worst, the church has an opportunity to be at its best. I'm committed to a contagion of calm and thoughtful compassion.

Ken Morgan is Head of Parish Mission and Resourcing (Acting) for the Diocese of Melbourne.

Your say on work, climate change and theology



Coronavirus adds to jobs fears

Gordon Preece, Chair of the Social Responsibilities Committee (SRC), brought Motion 12 to the 2019 Synod. This motion "recognises the likely large-scale impact, positive and negative, of Artificial Intelligence and Robotization in creating workplace uncertainty, unemployment, and need for just transitions" and asked Synod to empower the SRC to develop a theological and pastoral response and transitional proposals. The motion was passed.

Already, the precariousness of work in the "gig economy" raises concern and fear for the future. This is now amplified by the impact of COVID-19 on jobs. Perhaps our Protestant work ethic has gone too far, with our sense of identity, pride and worth tied closely to what job we have, how much we earn and how many hours we work.

Perhaps we are glorifying work, rather than glorifying God and building relationships with our neighbours. We need to reflect upon our theology of work and our pastoral care for people who are facing underemployment and unemployment.

This is an opportunity for the Church to be proactive in the face of this societal change and regain our relevance. As Bishop John Parkes said in his final sermon as Bishop of Wangaratta, an increasing number of Australians see the church as irrelevant: "They just ignore us. And they ignore us because by and large we've got nothing to say into the public sphere about the issues that matter to them."

We need to be part of the conversation on this societal change.

If this letter helps to reinforce that this motion matters and you have a view to share,

please respond via TMA or contact Gordon Preece at gordon@ethos.org.au or me at bruce.break@outlook.com.

Bruce Everett

Black Rock

Young people must be heard on climate

When Helen Haines stood for election in the seat of Indi last year she promised to fight for three things: the regeneration of our regions, a national action plan to mitigate and prepare for climate disruption and a return to integrity in our broken politics.

She said the 2018 National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework was a good start, but the government is falling behind its own deadlines. The Plan was due last year. We also need a nationwide plan to adapt Australia to a changed climate.

The Prime Minister has acknowledged that adaptation needs greater attention. It's time he matched these words by serious action. The debate is over and there many practical things that now need to be done. The delay in activating this plan is a sign that the government is not serious about climate change.

Former NSW Fire and Rescue commissioner Greg Mullins has called on governments to show "moral leadership" on climate change. He is right. Young people want to be involved. The voice of the

young has been heard through that remarkable Swedish teenage activist Greta Thunberg. I was encouraged when teenager and climate activist Eli Davern addressed his comments to the Prime Minister: "I believe that as young people it is our moral duty and obligation, to ourselves and to future generations to make our voices heard ...".

Young people have a key role in bushfire recovery. Their whole future is at stake. In 2009 children and young people were the hidden victims in the Black Saturday bushfires. This must not happen again. They must be heard.

The Revd S.A. Eiseman

Baranduda

Back to Cranmer insufficient

I have to disappoint Dr Rhys Bezzant. He suggested I would not like his TMA article on the Reformed nature of the Anglican Church ("Understanding origins key to Anglican identity", March TMA).

On the contrary, I like it because it is a very clear exposition of Cranmer's position. However, that was centuries ago. Since then the Church of England has had to deal with some very turbulent periods, steering between the Puritans on the one hand and the Catholics on the other. She has

Continued on page 17

ST MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

PARISH OF CHELTENHAM

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The Rev'd Dr Geoff Cheong (Locum Vicar)



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maintained her rich liturgical tradition, much to the chagrin of Puritans, who suffered the Great Ejection under the Act of Uniformity of 1662. I am not aware of her having adopted the Westminster Catechism as a means of teaching the faithful, hence she is not as Reformed as



some of the reformers would have liked her to be. She has been unable to hold on to the Wesleyans and subsequently the Salvation Army, nor the Plymouth Brethren.

On the other side she lost John Henry Newman and

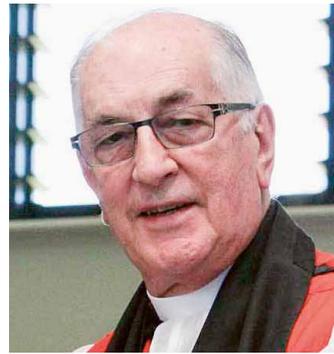
others to the Roman church. Even this day there are fraught divisions within the church in Australia, as correspondence in *TMA* attests.

The church evolves as it sees new truths and reinterprets the Scriptures in the light of those truths. Just as it is a mistake for the Plymouth Brethren to attempt to go back to New Testament days, thus denying the guidance of the Holy Spirit over the centuries, so it is a mistake to think we can recreate the church as Cranmer shaped it. Each generation faces its new challenges, and reinterprets Scripture and tradition in that light.

Associate Prof Alan Gijsbers
Templestowe Lower

Language of ultimatum used across theological spectrum

Since December some *TMA* correspondents have written



Archbishop Peter Carnley.

of their dismay at Sydney's Archbishop Glenn Davies' "please leave" remarks. There is a parallel. In the mid-1980s, Archbishop Peter Carnley of Perth said to Anglicans who in conscience could not support women priests, "please leave". His exact words were: "It may be necessary to shake the dust off our feet and quietly look for a more congenial environment." This statement was much-quoted and re-quoted,

before and after the 1992 General Synod's women priests authorisation.

The language of ultimatum has been used at both ends of the conservative-to-liberal spectrum. Why complain about Glenn Davies when others have done the same?

David Wetherell

Former senior lecturer and Honorary Fellow in History, Deakin University Geelong

Over to You is a forum for respectful dialogue about material published in *TMA*, or issues affecting the church or society more broadly. Please email letters (preferably no longer than 250 words) to editor@melbourneanglican.org.au. Letters may be edited for clarity, length and grammar.

LOVE HOPE JUSTICE LOVE HOPE JUSTICE LOVE HOPE JUSTICE

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LOVE HOPE JUSTICE LOVE HOPE JUSTICE LOVE HOPE JUSTICE

Summer of contrasts exposes best in people

by Ken Spackman

"ALERT BUT NOT alarmed" ... haven't we heard that phrase repeated over and over in recent months, whether it was in response to the bushfires, weather events or now the coronavirus pandemic. These words are designed to reassure us and to inform us how we should be in the face of threats, real or imagined.

I first heard these words this summer while holidaying in Mallacoota with members of my family. They were first said at a town briefing on 30 December, where we were told that a bushfire had started and was headed in our direction. "Be alert but not alarmed," we were told; the fire was some way from us, but we needed to review our fire plan and prepare.

Barely 12 hours later the message had changed considerably. The town would be impacted and unless we could evacuate immediately we would have to shelter in the town. The fire was originally forecast to impact at night, and in my naivety I was anxious that we not face the fire in the dark, preferring to face whatever was coming in the light of day. At it happened, the fire slowed and hit late morning, but by then it was darker than any night I have ever experienced.



The Mallacoota fire.

What happened in Mallacoota is well documented and was a harrowing experience for those of us trapped in a town surrounded by fire. We were luckier than most, in that we had good shelter, unlike those sheltering in the open on the now-famous wharf. The pictures and stories are frighteningly accurate, and yet the enduring memories I have are not of the fire itself, although that is seared in my memory, but of a summer of contrasts.

On the one hand, a significant bushfire bearing down and seemingly unstoppable; on the other a "miracle" of timing which saw a wind change and the worst of the destruction avoided. Of weary firefighters in tankers from all over Victoria, working tirelessly to save houses

and keep us safe, and yet despite this, the loss of more than 120 properties in the community that we love, a significant loss in a permanent population of just 1100. Of shopkeepers who stayed open for long stretches so that the emergency workers had somewhere out of the smoke to rest and refresh. Of people who had lost everything, but turned up to work, opened their businesses to help others and be of service.

The contrasts of being isolated by damaged roads and "killer" trees, but the joy and relief of seeing the navy at anchor or the heavy vehicles of the army roll into town; of endless days of smoke and ash and yet a town spirit that refused to give in. Of grief over loss soothed by the compassion of the Red Cross, the emergency chaplains and the local church, together with the endless grace of navy and army personnel. Of daily town meetings with folk hanging on every word, anxious but patient, knowing that the hard work of clearing the roads was both dangerous and seemingly never-ending.

Of rain that finally put the fire out, but concern at the pollution of the very waterways that had saved us and of supply lines established to restock the town, only to watch the tourists depart by navy ship.

A summer of contrasts indeed, but also one which, on balance, exposed the very best in people: immense generosity for others in a way only a disaster seems to engender. A personal contrast for me was to understand better my faith in God in the face of near and present danger, and yet to realise how close the town came to a much more significant disaster. To look back is often to understand things that the moment doesn't allow. To walk the town and see the fire line and to witness the awesome power of the fire made me grateful for answered prayer and for safety.

Regrettably the summer, and autumn, of contrasts continues. I see the generosity of visitors responding to the "Empty Esky" campaign and yet I know that the survival of the place we love will depend on the survival of the small businesses that lost more than 60 per cent of their income over the summer. It's a much longer task to ensure that they stay afloat.

And as we face the next crisis with the coronavirus impacts being felt and yet to come, I wonder at our capacity to endure.

Ken Spackman is Chief Executive Officer of the Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Corporation. He worships at Ormond Anglican Church.

A Trip to Thailand?

Teaching/Mission opportunity

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Qualifications not essential, however you will love sharing your knowledge and experience. You will need to be self-funded.

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Seeking an Australian expression for Easter

THE CENTRALITY OF THE Easter story to Christian faith is unarguable. The Christian faith and its key doctrines revolve around – and stem from – the Easter events, which by the time of the fourth century formed part of a liturgical cycle which brought into focus key events in our Lord's life. The timing and nature of these events was established through reframing and reinterpreting existing pagan celebrations, with both the theology and liturgy clearly reflecting the northern hemisphere context.

For example, a key Christmas declaration from the prophet Isaiah – “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light” (Isa. 9:2) – carries power when uttered around the shortest day of the year, as in the northern hemisphere. The season of Lent derives its name from the Old English *lencen* – the lengthening days of spring, anticipating new life – which is expressed in the usual Easter symbols: eggs and rabbits – symbols of new life and of fertility, reflected in the changing spring landscape.

This does not reflect the Easter context in the southern hemisphere. As we prepare for Easter, the landscape around us is dying. Trees shed their leaves, the harvest is over and land is being cleared. Days are becoming shorter – radically so when Easter falls after daylight saving ends and darkness envelops the land much earlier. Easter in Australia inaugurates a season marked by days which are shorter, colder and somehow more alienating. We witness creation in throes of deconstruction: animals begin to hibernate, some birds spread their wings for warmer climes, many plants cease production, and deciduous trees shed their leaves, ultimately lending a sober and subdued, even dreary,

hue to the landscape. While we welcome relief at the passing of scorching heat (this year especially, leaving last summer's fires and smoke behind), there appears little to celebrate, little sign of the new life integral to the Easter story.



In the southern hemisphere, the landscape around us is dying – with little sign of new life integral to the Easter story.

The Australian context has yet to find expression in Easter celebrations. As with borrowed Christmas symbols of snow and holly, our Easter observance strikes a discordant

note with the landscape. While we welcome relief at the passing of scorching heat (this year especially, leaving last summer's fires and smoke behind), there appears little to celebrate, little sign of the new life integral to the Easter story.

do this side of the resurrection, it is easy to overlook the depth of pain, anguish and uncertainty which marked the journey which began with the Triumphal Entry. Jesus' disciples evidently had no idea of what was about to unfold, given the strange decisions, denials and desertions which marked their response to the events. Holy Week is punctuated with visceral human responses which reflect the present experience of many in our communities today (does COVID-19 ring a bell?).

“How can we ground the Christian message in experiences and symbols common to our setting, as it seems to have been practised by the early church?”

note with the landscape, creation somehow out of sync with the Creator. Unable to move the timing of Easter, we should search for themes and messages more consistent with creation's voice. If an authentic and relevant spirituality reflects and shapes the rhythms of life, how can we ground the Christian message in experiences and

symbols common to our setting, as it seems to have been practised by the early church? Is this possible with Easter?

To follow the events of Holy Week is to accept an invitation to ride an emotional roller coaster. Living as we

A premature proclamation of the resurrection robs us of the opportunity to experience the full range of emotions and experiences in worship, and allow the word of hope to be born in the midst of painful realities.

Easter commemorations within the church too often reflect society's broader reluctance to grapple with any sense of pain and loss. Rarely have I experienced a Good Friday service without hearing the resurrection proclaimed: a thought not echoing the experience of Jesus' disciples, who were enveloped in despair as they watched Jesus die, the shadow deepened by their complicity in his death through denying or abandoning him. In Jesus' death they watched their hope die. The dream Jesus instilled in them dissipated at the cross.

Yet this is rarely experienced in a Good Friday service. Jesus' death too often seems trivialised against the backdrop of the resurrection, the disciples' struggle and pain glossed over, their sense of loss dismissed. Standing on this side of the resurrection can make it difficult to appreciate the emptiness they felt, yet in the journey of faith we must endeavour to enter that same space.

Contemporary Easter celebrations risk overlooking how new life emerged. An all-pervading gloom marks the Easter story. Critical events occurred under cover of darkness: Jesus' betrayal, arrest and trial, Peter's denial; even Jesus' death took place in darkness. We not only encounter the silence of Jesus in the face of his prosecutors, and the silence of those who might be expected to stand up for him, but, tellingly, God's silence in response to Jesus' own anguished cries in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Continued on page 20

Seeking an Australian expression for Easter – from page 19

Resurrection hope emerged only through the despairing death of Jesus – the One we proclaim Son of God. Jesus' disciples, Jewish leaders, and Roman authorities could not reconcile the two. Jesus' death seemed conclusive evidence against his claims.

When our focus falls on the resurrection without contemplating the circumstances that made it necessary, we merely echo a motivational message that failure is not the end, simply an opportunity to learn and grow. Easter is no tale of persistence through tragedy. But for God raising Jesus from the dead, Jesus' death *was* the end – the resurrection the sole source of light in an otherwise dark tale, and yet an overwhelming source of hope. Jesus' death flowed from his submission to God's purposes. In an act of obedience and surrender, Jesus embodied his teaching that the way to life was to lose it, surrendering to God's purposes. Not seeking to preserve his own life for his own sake, Jesus surrendered it for a greater purpose.

Creation at autumn reflects that truth, as flora and fauna "die off", a necessary prelude to spring growth. Symbols of death surround us: autumn leaves dancing their finale across the streets; lengthening sunsets and cooler evenings



'He is risen' by Robyn Davis.

"At Eastertime in Australia, spring remains a promise which lies beyond the cold, dark, alienating experience of winter."

driving us into shelter earlier, just as much of the animal world retreats; the cries of summer birds slowly silenced; creation slows its pace. As winter dawns, and winter blues cast their shadow, we may despair of ever experiencing summer sun again. Yet this is part of creation's rhythm, clearing away the old in preparation for the new.

Only as these sights and sounds die can they be born afresh.

New life – springtime – stands only as promise, just as resurrection was Jesus' promise to the disciples, just as new life is promise to all who would follow Jesus. Born out of death, resurrected from the demise of the present, new life comes. It is a way to life few choose, preferring to trust in their own strength than to surrender into the hands of another, to hold on rather than let go. To truly live, we must be prepared to die.

Russian novelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, held as a political prisoner as a consequence

next to him, he looked up, seeing an old man standing before him, who took a stick and drew a cross in the ground, reminding Solzhenitsyn that there was a power greater than the empire which imprisoned him. A power which could bring new life in the depths of despair. Solzhenitsyn then picked up his shovel and continued working, his hope renewed. Unexpectedly released from prison in the following year Solzhenitsyn went to live in the United States.

Easter turns despair into hope.

The power of the resurrection emerges through the deepest of emotions. Through depths of despair, through anxiety, through pain of failure, through disappointment. When all seems lost, the resurrection breaks through, triumphing at the moment where it is least expected.

At Eastertime in Australia, spring remains a promise which lies beyond the cold, dark, alienating experience of winter. If we rob our communities of the depth of pain which Good Friday brings, and the emptiness and despair which Holy Saturday embodies, we also rob them of the power of the resurrection, and the transforming hope it depicts and declares for all who would trust in Jesus.



This month's Prayer Diary can be found at <http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/spiritual-resources/>



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Hope from mystics for world at ‘tipping point’

Enfolded in Love series: Julian of Norwich, Thérèse of Lisieux and Teresa of Ávila (Darton, Longman & Todd, 2019)

reviewed by
Samantha Bews

WE LIVE IN TURBULENT times. Extreme weather events, political upheaval and new technologies that were unimaginable only 20 years ago spin together to create whirlwinds of anxiety. Beliefs and institutions that once sustained our society are crumbling. The other night my 16-year-old affirmed he’s committed never to have children. Recently I was asked to put in an expression of interest for an art project entitled “A Positive Future”. Inspiration eluded me.

So it was with some hope that I agreed to review these books, which are taken from the writings of three Christian mystics: Julian of Norwich, Thérèse of Lisieux and Teresa of Ávila. As part of the *Enfolded in Love* series, they were first published in the mid-1980s and are reproduced today to encourage us to “engage with the great spiritual mentors through daily reading and meditation”. Each book is devoted to a single saint and the readings are edited extracts from their written works. The books include a bibliography, a list for further reading and an index to the original works.

There are two books devoted to Julian of Norwich, who lived in late 14th-century England. After a critical illness from which she nearly died, she became anchoress to St Julian’s church in Norwich. Her writing and teaching “flew directly in the face of the ecclesiastical teaching of the time” to the extent that she risked being burnt at the stake. Hers was a God of great tenderness and compassion, and a God that gave hope to the desperate.

Thérèse of Lisieux was born in 1873, joined the Carmel monastery near Lisieux when she was 15, and died only nine years later. Longing to be a priest, prophet, martyr, apostle and doctor of the Church she

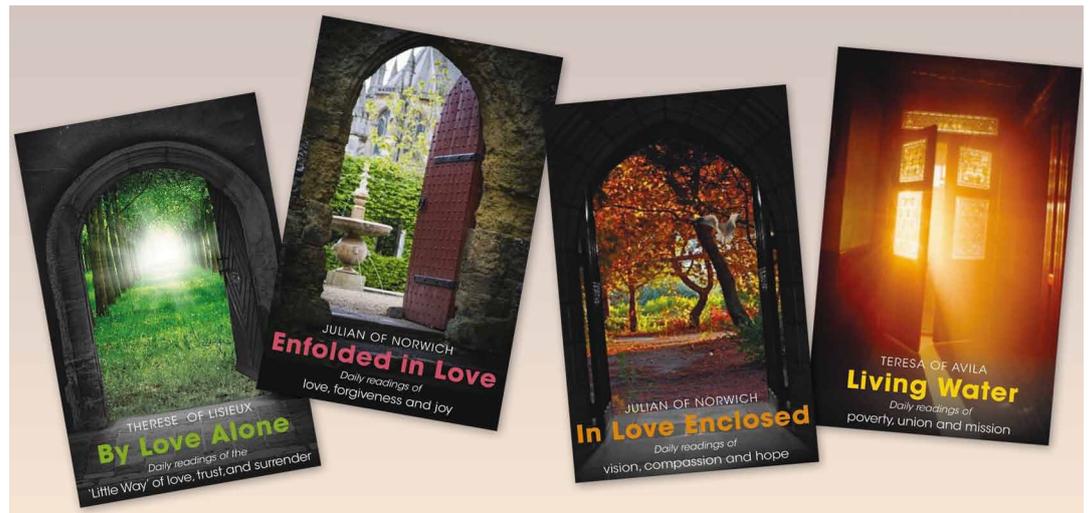
eventually came to understand that hers was to be a different kind of sainthood. The “Little Way” was how she described her spirituality; a way of trust and absolute surrender.

Teresa of Ávila was a Carmelite nun, religious reformer and theologian of the contemplative life. She was born into a marginalised family (her

of the Cross was privileged to.

Theirs is a theology gained through lived experience. In his foreword to *In Love Enclosed*, Luke Penkett describes Julian experiencing the “sight, sounds and smells of daily life” from within her cell, and in *Living Water* the life of Teresa of Ávila balanced beautifully “between her down-to-earth practicality

over the world. I finished the books as we turned to autumn and coronavirus was declared a pandemic by the WHO. As I read, the words of these mystics affected me greatly. They grounded me in a reality that stretches beyond the limits of this material world. They affirmed again and again the value of suffering and opened



“[These three Christian mystics] affirmed my sense that in these tumultuous times we are going to have to dig deep and that we are called to stand with courage in truth.”

grandfather was a Christian of Jewish descent) at a time of great social and racial unrest in 16th-century Spain. During her lifetime, and as the foundress of 16 monasteries, she wrote letters, instructions to her Sisters, poems and treatises on the progress of the soul to God.

It is interesting that publishers Darton, Longman & Todd reissued this series at this time in our cultural history. It is apposite that they are works of women, and women who were not well educated. Julian of Norwich described herself as a “plain unlettered woman” and Teresa of Ávila had none of the formal education that her religious brother and friend St. John

and the ecstatic experience of contemplation”. Similarly, Thérèse of Lisieux came to know the fullness of God’s love through small daily acts of attention. These women reflect much of what is changing in contemporary Western society, where diversity of voices and experiences are acknowledged as valuable, and where experience has an authenticity that traditional power structures have lost.

I did as the publisher suggested and read these books daily over several months. I started as bushfires raged through NSW, then Queensland, then Victoria and news of our burning country hit screens all

my heart to the merciful breath of God. They rooted me in a priority more vital than the preoccupations of my daily life. They affirmed my sense that in these tumultuous times we are going to have to dig deep and that we are called to stand with courage in truth; that love costs, but that we will be flooded with a love beyond our comprehension; that we are included in the love of God, if only we give up what we know and join Him.

This series of books has been curated by Fr Luke Penkett, the honorary librarian and archivist at the Julian Centre in Norwich. It is fitting that all profits from their sale will go to sustaining the Centre’s work. The mystical voice is much needed for a world at the tipping point of crisis.

Samantha Bews is a theatre artist and writer living in central Victoria.

She is a member of the World Community of Christian Meditation and worships at Christ Church Castlemaine.

Read the full version of this review at tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/film-and-book-reviews

'Ordinariness' no barrier to faithful service

Faithful Witness in a Fractured World: Models for an Authentic Christian Life, by Nicole L. Johnson and Michael T. Snarr (Wipf and Stock, 2019)

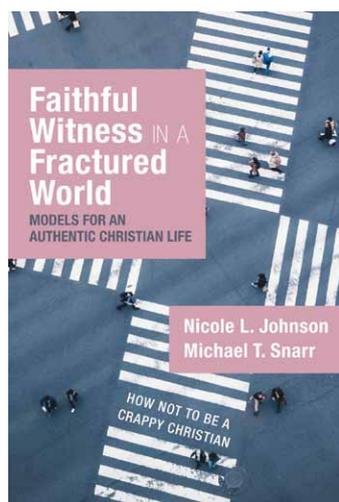
reviewed by Nils von Kalm

SOMEONE ONCE SAID that behaviour never lies. It reveals our character and where our heart is at. Jesus also said that people will know we are his disciples by our love for one another.

Reading *Faithful Witness in a Fractured World* reminded me of the inspiration that comes from learning of the actions of love by disciples of Jesus. It lifted my spirits, stirred me and encouraged me. It tells the stories of seven individuals who are genuinely following Jesus by living sacrificially loving lives in service of those whom society would reject.

We meet people like Rick, who gave up a six-figure salary to walk into conflict zones and be a human shield with Christian Peacemaker Teams. We meet Tammy, a suburban housewife who noticed an increasing number of homeless people in her neighbourhood and now provides shelters for them.

Rick, Tammy and the others we meet are ordinary people seeking to authentically live



out their faith in the risen Jesus. And that is the main point of this book. They are living these lives of faithful witness to the outsider because they are Christian.

This book is written as an encouragement to a church that is divided in a dark and uncertain political environment. It is intended to provide hope for a church that needs it. And it is proof that living a life of faith, hope and love in the service of others is the most fulfilling life one could ever live.

The authors state that this book is for those who are interested in the intersection of religion, culture, politics and social issues. It is for those who are tired of the infighting of Christians in these polarised

times and who want to get on with living outward-looking lives of mission rather than inward-looking lives of predictable self-centredness. And it is for those who want Christians to be known for what they are for more than what they are against.

The powerful stories of the seven servants highlighted in this book are complemented by key themes shared by each of them. They are the following: Christian faith is never passive, but "requires embodied, active work toward the common good"; Christian faith-based service leads to "an increasingly broad and inclusive ethic of love for different kinds of people"; true Christian faith shows allegiance to Christ above any political party or ideology – the people highlighted in the book are from across the range of the political spectrum, yet they all understand that loyalty to Christ always precedes loyalty to their politics; and Christian service contributes to "holistic redemption and restoration". The work of these servants is seen by each of them as part of a greater whole, of "contributing to the larger narrative of the Christian story".

Throughout the book, fascinating little snippets of Christian history are drawn out to highlight the fact that these

are people just like the rest of us. They struggle and they get it wrong at times. But they dust themselves off and learn and continue. This is the wonderful balance of both encouragement and challenge that these stories provide.

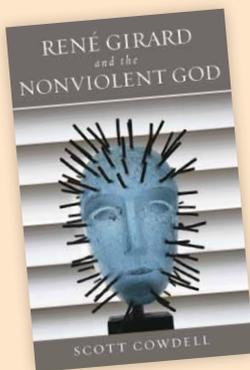
Faithful Witness is short and easy to read. You will find it difficult to put down, but may also find yourself putting it down at times and seeking God out to ask how you can be a faithful witness in this fractured world. The seven people who we get to know are spreading yeast through the dough, providing outbreaks of the kingdom in little pockets of their towns and suburbs.

Be warned though. Don't read this book if you just want to sit in church on a Sunday and remain comfortable. In the words of the old saying, this book could disturb the comfortable and comfort the disturbed among us.

Nils von Kalm is Church and Community Engagement Coordinator at Anglican Overseas Aid. His book *Bending Towards Justice: How Jesus is More Relevant than ever in the 21st Century* is published by Coventry Press.

Read the full version of this review at tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/film-and-book-reviews

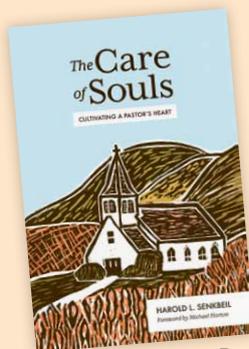
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René Girard and the Nonviolent God, by Scott Cowdell (Notre Dame Press, 2018)

reviewed by Sarah Bachelard

A work of mature scholarship that seeks to address Girard's most serious theological critics.



The Care of Souls: Cultivating a Pastor's Heart, by Harold L. Senkbeil (Lexham Press, 2019)

reviewed by Bishop Paul Barker

I'd urge all clergy to consider reading this valuable book, whatever our theological persuasion or ministerial experience.



The Swelling Year: Poems for Holy and Ordinary Days, by Matthew Pullar (Consolation Press, 2019)

reviewed by Wei-Han Kuan

A book to savour through your liturgical year.

God working quietly, powerfully with every step

In this new column, Anglicans share their faith stories and tell of how God is working in their lives. Here, Liz Donnellan, who was received into the Anglican Church by Bishop Paul Barker on 15 March at St Thomas' Burwood, reflects on her journey of faith.

MY NAME IS LIZ Donnellan. I am a single mum with three beautiful children. I was brought up in the Roman Catholic tradition, and have had a strong dedication to my faith for quite some time – almost 20 years. For a few years, around late high school, I went through a rebellious phase of not wanting to do the church thing, and looking around to see what other faiths had to offer ... but I came back to Christianity around the time I turned 18.

Since then I have served in music ministry, youth ministry, pastoral care, organisation of youth groups, organising events including a summer school of evangelisation run by a group I



Liz Donnellan and Bishop Paul Barker.

used to belong to, I completed my first year of a Bachelor of Theology at Catholic Theological College, I felt called to Religious Life and lived as a consecrated woman for a short time, mentored young people in different ministry roles within the church, ran many and various youth

events ... the list goes on.

Coming to St Tom's was quite strange for me at first – not with regards to feeling welcomed (I couldn't have felt more welcomed if I asked!), but more around my understanding of ritual. Ritual has such a strong emphasis within the Catholic



Church, and I felt quite lost within the services at St Tom's for a while as I was unfamiliar with what was happening liturgically.

Being a "thinker" and wanting to grasp as much as possible, I have not wanted to make a decision on Reception into the Anglican Church in a half-hearted manner. I have wanted to honour my past, my family, my upbringing, my journey thus far, and really seek God in it all. I have felt that God has been working so quietly and powerfully within me and my family.

I think taking this step by formalising myself being a member of the Anglican Church is yet another step for me which I feel ready for now. I realise that there will still be many unanswered questions, but I believe this is part of the faith journey which we all walk in together.

Delighting in the simple daily signs of a loving creator God

by Clare Boyd-Macrae

FOR LENT this year, my little household of two decided to practise the discipline of delight. Every day we planned to register something that gave us delight and wonder, something for which we were grateful. And, as the coronavirus crisis deepened, this felt like an extra blessing in our days.

The older I get, the more I realise that the things that delight me most deeply are the everyday things, not the big, extravagant, rare events. Here are a few of the things that delighted me in Lent:

The fact that, as autumn deepens, I am walking to work as sunrise lights up the sky – a magical time, with pink suffusing the trunks of gum trees, the birds making a raucous riot, the greys of darkness dispersing, a cool-



ness in the air after the stuffy nights of high summer.

Birds, cavorting in our bird bath, oblivious to my quiet laughter.

A new sound system which makes me feel that I am hearing music for the first time, the bass notes thrumming deep in my belly.

The reality that there is boiling water in my kettle and hot water in my shower.

The bliss of pulling up the doona on the first chilly nights of the year.

The lemon scent of clean sheets and the cool smoothness as I stretch my toes down to the bottom of the bed.

Sorting old photos and recalling the visceral delight

of babies and small children.

Reading old letters and marvelling at the deep friendships that have sustained me over decades.

Holding my husband.

Everything about the beach.

The splendour and relief of a long and steady downpour.

The fact that my cousins who live the other side of the world visited and slotted into our lives like the family they are.

That first, wonderful cup of tea each morning.

Food – any food – when I am seriously hungry.

The cacophony of rainbow parakeets in the trees near the zoo of a morning.

The miracle of an entire library of books, all available to me for nothing. The knowledge that I will never run out of fabulous things to read.

Every day of my life – my health.

And, underpinning all the delights and the things for which I am grateful are these:

As Good Friday approaches, the knowledge that God became a human being and consequently knows our suffering, our struggles and our joy. As Easter Saturday approaches, the reassurance that in the darkest hour before the dawn, in the bewilderment and fear of Easter Saturday, God is there with us. As Easter approaches, the hope that love is stronger than death, that love will always have the last word that, aligned with the loving creator God, there will always be hope and new beginnings.

Clare Boyd-Macrae's blog is www.clareboyd-macrae.com

Stateless: a searing portrayal of lives in limbo

by Wendy Knowlton

“WHAT IS MY crime?” screams a recaptured escapee from the Barton Immigration Detention Centre, spitting defiance as she endures a new sort of “torture”. Having fled persecution, she faces suspicion, procrastination and the prospect of simply being forgotten as paperwork gathers dust on the desks of bureaucrats more worried about appearances than human misery and despair. *Stateless* is difficult to watch. The audience can understand, if not support, the reasons behind the choices of most characters, and it is this understanding that emphasises the magnitude of the problem.



Ameer (Fayssal Bazzi) and his daughter Mina (Soraya Heidari) face an uncertain future.

Four lives intersect at the bleak Centre in the middle of the South Australian desert. Ameer (Fayssal Bazzi) has had to compromise his fundamental decency to bring his family from Afghanistan to Australia; Cam (Jai Courtney) sacrifices

morality for financial relief after becoming a guard; Claire (Asher Keddie) wrestles with the administration of a place under media surveillance and government pressures; and Sofie (Yvonne Strahovski in a stand-out performance inspired by the story of Cornelia Rau) finds herself detained and mentally deteriorating after fleeing a cult and lying about her identity.

No one is free to make the choices they would under different circumstances. Pragmatism or the imperative of “doing my job” overwhelms compassion, and desperation leads good people to act in ways they’d never have believed possible. Tamil protestors on the Centre’s roof are ignored as long as helicopters filming them are

denied airspace. When the local church and protesters organise a breakout, those with the chance to turn a blind eye choose not to look away.

The glowing cinematography of Bonnie Elliott, fine performances from an impressive cast – especially the heartbreaking Fayssal Bazzi and emotional rollercoaster, Strahovski – and important issues that continue to haunt our society make *Stateless* an important series. Some fight the system. Others put their faith in the process and wait to be saved, but as one character wearily says, “No one ever gets a visa.” There is little to suggest he’s wrong.

Stateless is screening on ABC-TV and iView

A film with laughter, music and people you can’t help liking

by Beryl Rule

WITH HUMOUR, warmth and two outstanding lead performances, *Military Wives* is always entertaining and at times very moving. Watch for it to be available online.

A regiment has just departed from a fictional British military base for a tour of Afghanistan. To boost the morale of the wives and partners left behind with the constant fear of a phone call or doorknock heralding bad news, the current staff sergeant’s wife is expected to organise diverting activities.

Because her husband has only recently been promoted, Lisa (Sharon Horgan) is new to this task, and her plans do not reach beyond the usual coffee mornings. But the colonel’s wife, Kate (Kristin Scott Thomas), who considers herself steeped in the experience Lisa lacks, decides to take over. She hijacks one of the coffee mornings, calls for fresh ideas, and relegates Lisa to standing by a white board, recording them. Not many suggestions are forthcoming, but Kate greets each one with the brilliant smile an encouraging kindergarten teacher might

bestow on a very slow class. Eventually, they settle on a singing group.

Kate appoints herself as conductor, and with a classical repertoire in mind, has the other women dispiritedly practising scales. Recognising that they want the fun of a pops sing-along, Lisa herself enters the fray. Kate has to compromise on the choice of music, but remains ever-conscious that her husband’s rank entitles her to lead.

Outwardly she is infuriating, but as the film goes on we discover that inwardly she is the one most in need of diversion, driven

by grief at her soldier son’s death. Lisa, too, has problems, being unable to connect with her stormy teenage daughter.

Under Kate and Lisa’s somewhat uneasy alliance, the choir members’ bonding is reflected in their singing. We come to know and care about them all. And when a dreaded doorknock sounds for one military wife, we share the general grief.

Although these particular characters are fictional, the creation of a military wives’ choir really happened, and succeeded so brilliantly that there are now many others all over the world.

Committed to positivity within pain, *Kidding* is a drama for our time

by Tim Kroenert

“YOU CAN feel anything at all ... it’s fine.” In the first episode of American dramedy series *Kidding*, children’s TV star Jeff Pickles (Jim Carrey) appears on a late-night talk show. He is already a legend: the audience sings and sways along to his signature tune.

Jeff’s show-within-a-show, *Mr Pickles’ Puppet Time*, is a melding of weird puppets and heartfelt monologues that has

turned the show into a national treasure and Jeff into a cult figure.

Kidding, though, is targeted at adults. It goes on to explore the fragmenting personal lives of Jeff and his loved ones: estranged wife Jill, father and producer Seb, sister and puppetry genius Deirdre and pre-teen son Will, whose twin brother Phil was killed in a car accident less than a year earlier.

Loss and grief are key themes of season one. As Jeff, Jill and

Will come to terms with losing Phil, Jeff enters a relationship with a terminally ill woman, and butts heads with Seb over his desire to dedicate an episode of *Puppet Time* to death.

He feels a responsibility to confront life’s darker corners, and fill those corners with the light of love and solidarity. In season two, he employs a similar treatment to the subject of family breakdown, as he and Jill consider divorce.

The show’s ensemble cast, led

by Carrey, ground the show’s extremes of high drama and dark comedy with portrayals that are often strange but unerringly sincere.

In these dark times of social isolation and economic uncertainty, *Kidding*’s commitment to positivity amid pain is revealing. We can feel anything at all, but with enough love and solidarity, maybe everything will be fine.

Seasons one and two are available to stream on Stan.