

# ANGLICAN NEWS

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## 25th ANNIVERSARY



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FROM BISHOP STUART

# Christmas Greetings



Picture by Walter Chavez from Unsplash.com

## Beloved in Christ, Greetings!

In my morning bible reading with my wife, Jane, I was struck afresh by Jesus' statement in his prayer in John 17:2 that God had given him, 'authority over people'. That authority sees its outworking in Jesus' gift of eternal life to those who would receive it (verse 2). Remarkable. Authority used in such a way that it serves and blesses those over whom it is exercised. And it's authority refined in the crucible of humility and apparent weakness; the Incarnation and the Passion. He who wears the crown is subject to both cradle and cross.

This Christmastide — my last with you — I do want to encourage you to pursue the kind of leadership and witness that Jesus manifests. He uses authority and power to bring wholeness and reconciliation. May we be a salve and a balm to a weary world as we point them to him who

has 'authority over all people that he might give them eternal life' — John 17:2.

I do also want to use this opportunity to say, again, how much Jane and I have enjoyed our fellowship with you. We have been so privileged to see 'the love of Jesus transforming individuals and communities'. In fact, just last weekend, a lady left her street stall and embraced Jane and with tears in her eyes, described her new found relationship with Jesus and expressed her joy at being connected (by Jane) with a local church. And whilst we've been deeply saddened by accounts of abuse and betrayal by church leaders, there are also many stories of people being reconciled to local communities of faith and recommitting their lives to Christ. Yesterday, I conducted another formal apology with a family (who'd endured unspeakable abuse) and it was such a privilege to pray with them as we concluded. Many thanks for your ongoing prayer in

this arena.

Jane and I will conclude our ministry among you with a Diocesan farewell — in the form of a 'Laying Up Of The Staff' service, in St Saviour's Cathedral on Saturday March 31st at 11.00am. Other 'farewells' will be made at the Ordination in February and the one day synod in March. Our plan, once we leave, is to have a family holiday (including grandchildren) in Cornwall, UK, and then start work in the parish of St Michael, Vacluse, Sydney, in May 2018. It is our plan to sell our house in Goulburn.

I must also reference the imminent departure of my very dear colleague and Episcopal Assistant, Dr Matthew Brain. Bishop Matt and Rachael and their children are Bendigo bound. A friend said Bishop Matt is now to be known as 'Ben 10' — as he'll be Installed as the tenth Diocesan Bishop of Bendigo on February 17th. We have been so blessed by the Brain's fellowship and ministry; they will be greatly missed. Given that all five children need to be placed in schools for first term 2018, I have given Bishop Matt leave to hand over all his ministry responsibilities in order to begin a rapid disengage/re-engage process. Please do pray for Bishop Matt and his family in this time of very significant transition.

Synods-people will recall our celebration of the 25th anniversary of women being



ordained Priest in the church of God — in C&G. Canon Gill Varcoe, who delivered our Synod sermon, further reflects on this epochal event in the current issue of Anglican News.

Kindly uphold my colleague, Bishop Trevor Edwards, as he takes on the role of Diocesan Administrator early next year. It is a complex role made even more so with the absence of two bishops.

God's every blessing to you this Christmas and into Epiphany,

Warmly,  
The Right Reverend Stuart Robinson  
Bishop Canberra & Goulburn



# Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Ordination of Women to the Priesthood



Picture from the Canberra Times 1992

Wednesday 20 December, St Thomas' Eve, marks the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

The diocese had been a pioneer of inclusion of women at all levels of church life, an early adopter of women as lay readers, preachers, and members of synod and parish councils. The debate about whether this could also mean ordination continued over many years. General Synod legislation was passed in 1985 to allow for women to be ordained to the diaconate and, after a legal chal-

lenge, the first women were made deacons in this diocese in 1987.

Priesthood was another matter entirely, in part because of a diversity of views about the nature of priesthood: those who believed that women ought not lead or teach men tended also to express priestly ministry as essentially about exercising authority and teaching, thus excluding women; others, taking a sacramental view, tended to argue that the priest represented Christ in essence, so priesthood must be essentially male. The majority view, however, seeing ordained ministry as essentially about gift,

service and calling, increasingly recognised women in leadership, preaching and teaching, community building, pastoring, administering and 'equipping the body of Christ for the work of ministry'.

Our histories tend to focus on the metropolitan dioceses, so the importance of the pioneering courage of Bishop Owen Dowling and his chancellor, Jim Monro, has often been overlooked. His advice to the bishop in 1991 was that there was a sound legal case for proceeding to ordain 11 female deacons to the priesthood without waiting for specific authorising legislation from General Synod. A date was set for 2 February 1992 which launched a series of legal challenges (one resulting in an injunction preventing the February ordinations), followed by an upsurge of public support, and special meetings of General Synod and diocesan synods, resulting in December ordinations across the country (preceded by ordinations in Perth, Western Australia having a different legal framework, in March of that year).

Those 11 pioneering women are all past (official) retirement age now (though some of us have declined to notice!), but have been followed by a steady stream of dedicated and called women. It is an extraordinary joy to see the ministry of women and men flourishing in partnership across the diocese. It's also a joy that we've embedded in our culture (and indeed, our code of conduct) mutual respect, even where there are still areas of disagreement.

### So where are we ...?

As we take note of this anniversary (which was publicly honoured and celebrated at October's synod, in the bishop's Charge, and with women preaching at the synod service and leading the morning Bible studies), where are we?

Throughout three episcopates since 1987, we've seen women flourish in every 'department' of ordained ministry, as rectors of parishes, as chaplains in traditional and pioneering sectors, training and selecting ordinands, and leading area deaneries and archdeacons. At the moment four of the eight archdeacons,

and three of the four clerical canons (those elected by the synod or appointed by the bishop under the Cathedral Ordinance) are women. In the past nine years alone (including those to be ordained deacon in February) 44 women have been ordained alongside 47 men. We've also seen the bishop appoint and license an episcopal assistant and consecrate the first woman in the Province as a diocesan.

### And what do we hope for ...?

In a time of huge social change, and with traditional models of ministry increasingly challenged by reduced resources, pioneering — involving risk-taking, personal sacrifice and acceptance that some endeavours might fail — needs to remain front and centre.

We must go on talking about differences of opinion and outlook as we discern together God's future for us, and model to a divided Australian community and church what respectful disagreement looks like, including those gospel characteristics of humility and honouring others above ourselves. It's especially important when the stakes are high. The debate in the 80s and 90s was too often very personal and destructive, but there were moments of remarkable grace and kindness among people with different views. I recalled this morning that immediately after we were not ordained in February 1992 I was at a national conference of examining chaplains. Many of my colleagues were loud in their outrage at what had happened. But it was the bishop of Armidale, Peter Chiswell — not in favour of women being ordained — who intuited the spiritual and emotional shock of the injunction being granted when we were already on retreat in preparation for ordination, asked me how I was, and provided me with warm pastoral care. My deep hope is that this is what we will go on modelling in this diocese.

What made change possible in 1992 — in short, courage, perseverance, obedience, and faithfulness to the call to proclaim the gospel — is what enables the vision; and individuals and communities will go on being transformed by the love of Jesus.

by Reverend Canon Gill Varcoe

## Clergy Moves

The Venerable John Barnes has stepped aside as Rector, Crookwell & will, inter alia, take on the p/t 'episcopal oversight' role at West Goulburn.

The Reverend Wayne Landford — following consultation with the CAB & Parish Council, has been appointed as p/t Rector, Crookwell.

Bishop Matt Brain has been elected as the 10th Bishop of Bendigo Diocese and will be installed in that See on 17.02.2018.

The Reverend Dr Guerin Tueno will be Locum Arawang Parish following Bishop Matt's departure.

Archdeacon Elizabeth Dyke is on Bishop's special leave caring for family in the UK. Elizabeth has indicated she will step down as Rector, QDAC upon her return.

The Venerable Eric Burton has been appointed long term locum, QDAC.

The Reverend Yvonne Gunning has been appointed Rector, Cootamundra from 27.01.2018 and an Induction Service will be held that day.

The Reverend Kelvin Harris will complete his placement at Manuka Parish on 31.12.2017 and Defence has appointed him Naval Chaplain at HMAS Stirling, WA.

The Reverend Captain Stuart Haynes has been appointed & licensed as Acting Priest-In-Charge, Bega from 01.12.2017.

The Reverend Chris Lewis will complete his placement at Ainslie on 17.12.2017 and Defence has appointed him Naval Chaplain at HMAS Kuttabul, Sydney.

The Reverend Doug Newman has been licensed as Rector, Bateman Bay from 14.12.2017.

Bishop Stuart Robinson (laying up staff 31.03.2018) to Rector, Rose Bay and Vaucluse, Sydney from 06.05.2018.

The Right Reverend Trevor Edwards will become Episcopal Administrator from 31.03.2018.

The Reverend Craig Roberts has completed his placement at QDAC and Defence has appointed him a Chaplain at Lavarack Army Barracks Townsville.

The Reverend Andrew Taylor has been licensed as Rector, Gungahlin from 29.11.2017.

The Reverend Erin Tuineau's licence as a Chaplain at Radford College has been extended.

The Reverend James Wood has moved to a position in Diocese of Ballarat.

# Portrait of a Parish Partnership



Creating partnerships takes time and imagination. That has certainly been the experience of the Lanyon Valley Parish in the southern tip of Tuggeranong. The Parish has been imagining, along with Anglicare staff, about how a presence of mercy might emerge in the Gordon Community Centre – but it's taken time and care.

'I think of it like housemates deciding to rent a house together,' explains Rector, Jonathan Holt. 'Our parish has no property, so all our disciple-making and mercy-ministry has found homes in community spaces and lounge rooms. But this new partnership with Anglicare presents us with the opportunity to do something we would find hard on our own.'

The partnership involves shared spaces, available for com-

munity groups, some of which are facilitated by Anglicare and others by the parish. Care was taken to frame a Memorandum of Understanding between the Parish and Anglicare, designed to carry the weight of steering the partners through significant disagreements.

'We don't expect things to go horribly wrong, but when Paul urges believers to bear with one another and forgive one another, that's a signal that frail and sinful people need to be ready to repair when things go wrong,' said Jonathan. 'We've taken time at the very beginning of our partnership to establish strong relationships between our Parish and Anglicare, so that, under God, the flourishing of Gordon Community Centre is our clear, shared purpose.'

Two parts of the existing Parish activity were ready to move into the facility. The congregation that meets at 4:30pm has found fresh vision for connecting people to Jesus through their gathering in the Community Centre. The emergency food service, Lanyon Pantry, was transformed from a delivery service accessed fortnightly, to having a presence in Gordon Community centre and being accessed daily. 'We have a good relationship with the IGA across the carpark and have established a voucher system that enables people to get fresh fruit and vegetables when they access our service,' said Jonathan.

Other initiatives were developed ready to begin with the newly established partnership in Gordon Community Centre. Graham Simpson, who coordinates the English Conversation Classes, says, 'Our partnership in the Gordon Community Centre has made our new English Conversation Class possible. We began in July with five regular students. Our students are from three different countries. One lady is a Muslim and the others are from a Christian background'.

Nate, the two day-a-week Community Chaplain, explains, 'My new role sees me on-site at the Community Centre. The goal is to link community resource with community need, confident that

the God of all grace is at work in our service. We love Lanyon and I hope to show Christ-like, neighbourly love.'

Another new program is DivorceCare. This program is a weekly video-based support group for people who are separated or divorced. The thirteen-week program has almost finished its second cycle. The real stories shared on the video encourage open and honest sharing from participants. Participants testify to the power of being listened to and cared for.

'It's easy to list the things we have started, but in truth there has been lots of effort and imagination to get where we are today,' said Jonathan. 'The things that grow healthy seem to grow slowly; it's been important to take our time and trust God for how Gordon Community Centre might grow. Our partnership with Anglicare is hopefully going to have the same careful, slow and healthy growth.'

*by Reverend Jonathan Holt*

**Canons Bill Wright and Bill Pryce are celebrating 60 years as Priests in December. You are all invited to a Thanksgiving Eucharist in Christ Church Cootamundra at 2:00pm on 20 January 2018, with refreshments to follow. For catering purposes, please call Dorothy Pryce on (02) 6942 6861 by 15 January. Fr Bill Pryce, 0400260578.**

# Wagga Wagga Bishop's Convention



'What should a church shaped by mission look like? What is hindering this? And what can we do about it?' With these three questions Bishop Stuart challenged and encouraged attendees at the recent Wagga Wagga Bishop's Convention to be active in ensuring that their churches are

as effective as possible in drawing people to Christ.

The Convention held at St Paul's Turvey Park was a resounding success with around 80 people attending from parishes in the Wagga Wagga region. Bishop Stuart gave four dynamic presentations where he explained the

biblical foundations of mission, shared stories of God at work through local churches and believers, and gave practical teaching on prayer and how to share your faith. A worship band from St Paul's led the singing, and various people were interviewed including Jane Robinson, The Reverend Yvonne Gunning, and David and Natalie McDermott from St Paul's.

The day was truly inspiring with many times of prayer throughout — this was one of the features a number of attendees found particularly significant. The emphasis was on practical changes we can make so that our churches really do have an impact in their communities. In light of this call to action the Parish of Holbrook has already planned a 'season

of prayer' with prayer meetings to take place between now and Christmas. Other attendees reported great encouragement in hearing Jane Robinson's stories of seeing mothers come to faith through community playgroups.

We are immensely blessed to have such a godly and gifted leader in Bishop Stuart, and the overall feel of the day was one of wonderful encouragement and an eagerness to be prayerful and outward-looking for the sake of reaching people for Christ. May God indeed bless all such efforts so that the day might not simply be remembered for the wonderful time that it was, but as a catalyst for spurring God's people on to ever-greater faithfulness and fervour in sharing Christ.

*by Reverend James Coats*

# New Wine Springs Forward



in their faith in an environment that is relaxed, fun and exciting.

Brian and Alison previously spent five years in

The second annual 'Spring Gathering' hosted by New Wine Australia from 3-6 October 2017, saw over 100 people from a variety of churches gather together to spend four days in community: fellowshiping, hearing from God's Word, worshipping and having a lot of fun along the way!

The Greenhills Conference Centre near Canberra proved to be a fabulous venue where people could either stay in ensuite cabins or be more adventurous and choose the camping option. The Reverends Brian and Alison Champness, New Wine Australia leaders, organised the Spring Gathering to be a place where all-ages could spend time together in community and be encouraged

England where they saw the great impact that the New Wine Summer Gatherings were having on churches and people's lives, especially with families and children.

Alison says that 'recent Australian statistics show that nearly 50% of those who have attended a Christian camp or conference say that it was very important to their first faith commitment. More than half said that going to a church camp has been very important in strengthening their Christian faith.'

She continues by saying 'churches can find the task of organising a church camp daunting and expensive, however they can come as a church family to the

Spring Gathering where great teaching, music, kids and youth programs and family fun activities are all organised for them.'

One of the attendees from this year, Libby Horton, said that she had arrived at the Gathering feeling tired and weary but left feeling 'full of God's life-giving water - renewed and revived'. Libby was part of the St Mary in the Valley church group who used the Spring Gathering as an opportunity to have their own 'Church camp'. Another congregation member called Natalie said, 'We loved the ministry, loved the sharing, the speakers were brilliant. Most of all we just loved how down to earth and authentic the whole event was and how practical the messages were to live life to the full with our Heavenly Father.'

Among the many encouraging testimonies is one from a 14-year-old girl named Emily. Emily came to camp questioning whether God was real, but she came away saying excitedly 'God is real isn't He!' Emily went on to say 'We're definitely coming back next year.'

Brian says that New Wine Australia is a growing network that seeks to be a resource to encourage and refresh local churches - both leaders and congregations. 'Our heart' Brian says 'is to see local churches championed so that they can reach their communities with the loving and transforming messages of Jesus.'

New Wine is a renewal movement which began in the UK in 1989 and has now grown to become an international network assisting 1000's of churches who are wanting to see God's Kingdom come and His will be done in their local communities, nations and beyond.

The 2018 Spring Gathering will be held at Greenhills again from October 2-5. This will be a great opportunity to bring your family, friends and whole church to come together for four days of fun, faith and fellowship. Details will be available on the New Wine Australia website soon [www.newwine.org.au](http://www.newwine.org.au) or you can contact Brian at [info@newwine.org.au](mailto:info@newwine.org.au) or 0476 168 118.

*By Reverends Brian and Alison Champness*

## AIDF Celebrates its 50th Anniversary



The Anglican Investment and Development Fund (AIDF), Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year.

Today the AIDF offers a variety of products and services. Funds invested with the AIDF are used to provide loans to parishes and other diocesan agencies, including schools, for building or other capital works projects, along with providing housing, car and personal loans to clergy and other persons employed by the Diocese.

The Fund has operated profitably every year since inception. Profits are retained and used to build reserves and make grants to the Diocese. Reserves are invested ethically in order to further support investors' funds. Today the fund has grown to hold

approximately \$100m in total assets. The AIDF's operations are guaranteed by the Diocese and its financial performance has continued to strengthen. This is evidenced by the fact that investor funds reached \$60m for the first time in late 2016 (\$39.7m - 2015).

The AIDF's core purposes of being a strong and significant supporter of local parishes, including their community activities and buildings, aligns with the investors' desires of not only receiving competitive and accessible accounts but also of supporting their own community. The AIDF investors are a fundamental reason for the success of the AIDF over its long history. The expertise and quality of the AIDF Board also plays a key role in this success. AIDF Board members bring a wealth of experience across the areas of finance, legal, business management, risk and governance.

The AIDF provides fee-free accounts, including Commu-

nity Saver Accounts and Term Investments paying consistent highly competitive interest rates. The 'Community Saver Account' provides a strong return (currently 2.5%) to the investor and the AIDF donates 0.5% to your parish or favourite Diocesan entity. Through these accounts the AIDF donated over \$56,000 to Parishes and Diocesan entities in 2017.

The AIDF has an additional reason to celebrate this year with Leila Cochrane (Operations Manager) celebrating her 20th Anniversary of employment with the AIDF in December.

The fund was established in 1967 by a small group of dedicated finance professional lay parishioners, along with the support of Bishop Warren and a \$1,000 loan.

The fund was originally known as the Diocesan Development Fund (DDF) and its purpose was to subsidise loans and to make grants to parishes and diocesan agencies out of the profits. For

many years it operated out of the AMP offices in Canberra although, given the strong support by lay members (investors), it quickly established agencies in a number of towns throughout the Diocese. By 1974 it had repaid the initial loan, made grants of over \$4,000 and produced an annual profit of \$11,500. In 1980 the Fund moved to an office on the ground floor of Jamieson House in Reid.

The DDF changed its name to become the Anglican Development Fund (ADF) in 1999 and then again to become the Anglican Investment and Development Fund (AIDF) in 2011. At that time the AIDF moved to offices at Level 4, 221 London Circuit, Canberra City where it currently resides.

The AIDF team and the Board wish to thank all investors for their ongoing support and they look forward to continuing to support the mission of the Diocese and all their clients in the future.