



## *The Rural Anglican Church*

BY BISHOP MARK AND MONICA SHORT

### IN 2020, THE RURAL ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA IS RESILIENT AND RELEVANT

This year, 2020, our precious rural Anglican churches in our beautiful Diocese are experiencing both joy and grief. For example, earlier this year we (that is Bishop Mark and Monica Short) excitedly visited the beautiful rural community of Jindabyne, celebrating with Trent, Alice, Henry, Maisie and Siena McGrath as they commenced ministry there (Yay! – very exciting). We are thrilled about this partnership between our Diocese and the wonderful Bush Church Aid Society.

Around the same time and when the roads reopened, we also visited rural communities affected by the horrific bushfires. It was such a treat to see people's handsome and precious faces. We listened to detailed accounts of radical destruction and people repeatedly shared with us that they are left hurting spiritually. People continue to report to us that providing physical resources is essential but by itself insufficient – people desperately need spiritual healing and God's love. In these conversations, people poignantly explained to us the importance of their much-loved local rural Anglican church. Now the rural Anglican church is dealing with COVID-19, and again for a while closed roads.

It might be tempting for some to

wonder could the bushfires, and now COVID-19, extinguish the rural Anglican church in our Diocese? Our response is, 'Absolutely not!' It is too early to outline the impact of the bushfires and COVID-19 on the rural Anglican church. However, the anecdotal evidence is as follows. We are already hearing inspiring stories of people in rural Australia praying for the first time. Others are telling us they are bravely testifying to their neighbours how God has helped them in surprising ways. The further fantastic news is that some people who do not go to church have started watching online Anglican church services. Furthermore, several places are planning to run Alpha or similar courses. Faith matters. The fires and COVID-19 may have sharpened many people's faith. Praise be to God, the rural Anglican church appears to have shined its light during the most challenging of times in 2020. Based on the Bible's teaching in 2 Corinthians 9, we are confident that God is thrilled by congregation members generously and increasingly caring for their rural neighbours and showing God's love during difficult times.

With reference to the fires and COVID-19, how do we (Mark and Monica) know that the rural Anglican church is resilient and relevant? We have three short

answers to this question. Firstly, resilience is part of the very nature and identity of the locations of the rural Anglican churches. Sociologically speaking, a rural town and its rural Anglican church are symbiotic – continually defined and redefined by their relationship to each other. Historically, the rural Anglican church has always been a grassroot and resilient religious and sociological phenomena. Thanks also to God and his grace, the rural Anglican church is more robust than old farm boots. It survives drought, floods, fires, hail, locust plagues, mice attacks, economic up and downturns, rural disadvantage and isolation.

Secondly, theologically, authors such as Stone and Body, and Withycombe, highlight the history and strengths of the rural Anglican church. Since its inception, God's Holy Spirit and His mission have always grounded the rural Anglican church, and this continues. I (Monica) propose the following definition of the rural Anglican church, which is informed by Broughton's depiction of the church. The rural Anglican church is defined as '*gatherings of people located outside major cities who identify as Anglicans. People gather in the power of God's Spirit as churches to learn about Christ, pray, sing, support each other and*

*eat together.*' Its people, character, history and definition testify to its current relevance and resilience. These descriptors point to God's Holy Spirit as determining the currency, relevance and resilience of the rural Anglican church.

Lastly, evidence-based research grounds our (Mark and Monica's) perceptions of the resilience and relevance of the rural Anglican church. Alongside co-authors Broughton, Ochala and Anscombe, we participated in a co-operative inquiry titled – '*Connecting to belonging: A cross disciplinary inquiry into rural Australian Anglican church engagements with people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.*' This research project highlighted that the rural Anglican church can be a source of hope providing wonderful stories of connection, welcome, participation and belonging. More recently, we continue to hear inspiring stories about our precious rural churches in our much-loved Diocese.

With this in mind, please join us and in solidarity pray regularly for each rural Anglican church and all ministry units in the Diocese. Please pray that God will continue to grow their resilience and relevance during this most unusual and complex year. May God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(See pg 7 for more rural stories.)

# Bishop Carol writes ...



Photo by Christian Bowen on Unsplash.com

Our media this week has been full of detail about the explosion in Beirut. An estimated 2,750 metric tons of ammonium nitrate, unsafely stored at a warehouse, has been blamed for the explosion. 137 people have been reported dead, more than 5000 injured, hundreds missing, and over 300,000 rendered homeless. (CNN World News, August 6th)

People are fascinated by explosions. They are fascinated by natural disasters. They are fascinated in general, by disaster and carnage in

any shape or form. It makes for good ratings and high media sales.

The other side of that coin is that the relentlessness of continual disasters, both man-made and natural, can be debilitating and depressing. People can lose hope. Through this pandemic, we have been alerted to the need to watch out for the possible declining mental health of those around us. Many are struggling.

As Christians, we know that disasters – both man-made and

natural – are part of the earthly landscape until Jesus returns. Our call as the people of God is to be light in a dark world; to show love, mercy and compassion to the suffering; to proclaim a message of hope in the bleakness.

There is a sense in which Christians are like midwives (or is it midpersons?). In the same way as a midwife supports a woman as she suffers through the pain of labour, and struggles towards bringing a

new life to birth, as she facilitates the baby's entry into the world, so our task is to come alongside those who are suffering through the pain of a broken world, as it struggles towards the birth of a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1).

As we share the love of God and the Good News of his kingdom, so we help facilitate the journey towards a new creation – both personally and cosmically.

Let us not lose hope in the face of disaster, but hold fast to the hope which is ours in Christ Jesus.

*'Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.'*

(Hebrews 10:23 NIV)



## Clergy Moves

*The Reverend Vicki Hancock* has been licensed as Hon Deacon Assistant Gunning (Cartwright Mission District) from 4.8.2020.

*The Reverend Judy Heggart* has been licensed as Locum Rector Yass Valley from 13.08.2020.

*The Reverend Peter Malone* has been licensed as Manager, Chaplaincy & Mission Formation Anglicare from 21.4.2020.

*The Reverend John Thomas* has been licensed as p/t Locum Rector Bega from 20.8.2020.

*The Reverend Ken Rampling* will be inducted as the Rector Ginninderra from 12.8.2020 and licensed from that date.

*The Reverend Rick Lewis* has been appointed p/t Interim Priest & Equipper, Braidwood, and will commence on 22.8.2020 with a commissioning service that day.

*Ms Di Middlemiss* has been licensed Stipendary Lay Minister, Taralga from 4.8.2020.

*The Reverend Canon Gillian Varcoe* has decided to step down from the many and varied licensed ministries and responsibilities she exercises throughout the Diocese from 1.9.2020.

*The Reverend Dr Chris Simon* has completed his assignment as Locum Rector Ginninderra on 11.8.2020.

*The Reverend Kenneth King* has been unanimously elected by his peers as the new Area Dean for the Goulburn Deanery. He currently has charge of Collector and Marulan EMCUs.

## AnglicanNews

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*Any statements or opinions expressed in articles published in this newspaper are attributed to the identified author and are not necessarily endorsed by or representative of the Diocese or its officers.*

## Celebrating 100 years



Huge congratulations to the Reverend Joe Mullins who celebrated his 100th birthday on 16 July 2020. Such a significant milestone in years and ministry – 70 years a Deacon and 69 years a priest since his ordinations in London. Our colleague the Reverend Robert Willson wrote the following message about Joe to share with you.

Robert writes:

'Joe was born in 1920 and recently celebrated his 100th birthday in the Goodwin Homes at Monash.

He served in the British Army in the Burma Campaign under Field Marshall Sir William Slim and Joe was awarded the Military Cross. Many years ago I invited him to a Chapel Service in the Girls Grammar School and he showed the girls his tin helmet with a bullet hole in it, a reminder of how close he came to death.

After the war he studied at Oxford University and gained an Honours BA and an MA and was ordained in the Diocese of London. One day we had a long conversation about his Oxford years. Joe served for many years in India, including ten years as a Scripture Union missionary.

Joe and Edith and their family arrived in this Diocese in 1974 and Joe was appointed Associate Priest and then Rector of Weston Creek for eight years. His strong evangelistic ministry helped to lay the foundations for the building of the present St Peter's Church. After further service in North Goulburn, Pambula and Wanniasa, Joe retired in 1987.

Members of the Diocese who have been blest by the Ministry of Joe Mullins will give thanks to God for his work and witness.'

# Profile of the New Primate



The Brisbane-born Archbishop of Adelaide, Geoff Smith, succeeded Melbourne's Archbishop Philip Freier as Australia's new Primate after a sometimes tortuous electronic ballot by the Primatial Board of Electors that concluded in early April, just as the impact of COVID-19 was becoming clearer.

He predicted that Lambeth Conference of the world's Anglican bishops, scheduled for next year, would not go ahead even before the decision was announced by The Archbishop of Canterbury.

Now, with the COVID virus reasserting itself in Victoria, questions hang over whether the Australian General Synod may also fall victim.

But Archbishop Smith has also seen opportunities in the pandemic to reach people online, which have eluded the Church in the past.

His recorded sermons from the chapel at his residence, Bishop's Court in North Adelaide, during lockdown have proved popular with regular Adelaide congregations and far beyond.

'Online ministry has been a vital

link to our own congregations, but we have found we have reached people who have never been in a church. For them it has demystified what goes on there and hopefully will set them on a path of discovery as lockdowns end,' he says.

As conditions have eased in South Australia, Archbishop Smith has continued to record sermons every second week, with Assistant Bishop Denise Ferguson providing a video every alternate Sunday. They are streamed on Facebook and posted on the Diocesan website.

But Archbishop Smith is looking beyond that to develop other ways to reach out to the community online.

'We will need to work through what a continuing online church presence looks like for the Church because there does seem an opportunity for that,' he says.

'Action, not words, will be the way the Church regains public trust in the wake of the child sexual abuse revelations,' he said in a recent interview.

'The Anglican Church of Australia faces a long road to regain public trust.' For many people, their

opinions influenced by secularism and fundamentalist atheism, the revelations about sex abuse merely reinforced what they already thought about the Church.

'We need to demonstrate the power of God's love, not just talk about it,' Archbishop Smith says. 'And we need to demonstrate that we are an organisation which is worthy of public trust.'

As for dealing with contentious issues, such as the blessing of same-sex marriage that is likely to come into focus on his watch, Archbishop Smith has faith that there is enough goodwill and a desire in the Church to work together to overcome obstacles.

That goodwill will be vital given the sometimes frustrating organisational hurdles.

'Some of our decision-making governance structures do not assist us in discussing complex matters and that makes relationships very important,' he says. 'Given the challenging times we face missionally, we need to work together not allow ourselves to fragment. That will require energy, commitment and hard work.'

'But the Anglican Church of Australia has been dealing with contentious issues for most of its existence – this also is not new.'

Archbishop Smith and his wife Lynn have called Adelaide home since 2017 and love the city, at least in the spring and summer. 'I'll never get used to the winters here I don't think.'

While readers in Canberra and Goulburn may smile at that, the Archbishop has always lived in warmer climes, growing up in Brisbane, and even having a spell as Rector of Taraka in Papua New Guinea.

He originally wanted to be a barrister but the idea to become ordained took hold after being suggested to him by an uncle who is a priest.

'I attended a selection conference in Brisbane when I was 19 and was ordained for Grafton diocese when I was 23. I have never regretted being ordained so young and have had an absolutely blessed time as an ordained person.'

*by Bill Condie, Media & Communications, Adelaide Diocese*



# LOVE IN ACTION

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# Communion in a Time of Corona



Archdeacon Paul Cohen shares with us some pictures and details of how St Simon's Kaleen is undertaking Communion during COVID-19:

1. Clergy sanitise their hands.
2. People line up as usual – with tape on the floor to keep 1.5m distance in the line.
3. One person at a time receives the wafer/bread from the line, standing – person then eats.
4. That person then moves to the 'cup' station and receives a large

plastic cup (ie from Woolies/Coles).

5. That person then moves to the 3rd station and wine from the consecrated 'jug' is poured into their cup – they drink.
6. That person then drops their cup into the blessed red bucket.
7. That person then returns to their seat.

Clergy (me) are wearing clear full-face visors (\$3 at Bunnings). Clear visors are used because when we're speaking the words when giving

the bread/wine we're just within 1.5 metres of recipients.

You can also see the TV (below) via which those in church can see those

at home via Zoom. And we can hear those at home: via a button on the sound desk that sends our zoomer's voices through the speakers, for our time of Thanksgiving, Greeting of Peace, notices, etc.

Those at home on zoom choose the view they want: the wider view via our new iPad with a x2 lens attached; or the closer lectern view via the iPhone with 8x telescopic lens (ie we don't any longer 'pin' a view – individual zoomers choose the view).

I'm using Trybooking for our 40 seats – it's working well. For the first three Sundays we're averaging 32 in church and 25 separate Zooms (= 35-40 adults and kids still zooming). Once we reach more than 40 people wanting to come, we can then have two services again.



# The 1st Bushfire Recovery Pastoral Care Worker



Janice Ackland has commenced her work as the Diocese's first bushfire recovery pastoral care worker. Janice will be working across the Eurobodalla Shire Council Area which includes the Parishes of Batemans Bay, Moruya and Bodalla/Narooma as well as St Peter's Anglican College Broulee. Her role will be to provide pastoral care to bushfire affected individuals and families and to assist them to access further support through local churches and other community organisations.

Janice is a trained social worker

with theological qualifications and chaplaincy experience. She is the first of three pastoral care workers to be appointed across the Diocese under an initiative supported by the Anglicare Bushfire Appeal, Anglican Aid, the Bush Church Aid Society and the Anglican Investment and Development Fund.

Bishop Mark Short said Janice's appointment has come at a vital stage in the recovery process.

'With the tentative lifting of some COVID-19 restrictions the opportunities for community connection are great. While the

summer bushfires may seem a world away in light of all that has happened since, the ongoing impacts are very real for those most affected. It is vital

that the Diocese and its ministry units and agencies continue to engage these people and their needs in Christ's Name.'

## From Janice

It is a very great privilege to have been invited to take up this pastoral care role in the Eurobodalla in the aftermath of the bushfires and to come beside people who have been through such a challenging year. My husband James and I have made the move from the Illawarra to Bawley Point to be close to the area in which I will be spending most of my time.

There are many wonderful people in the local communities and churches who have been supporting each other for many months now, and I see my role as a partnership with them in the work of healing and recovery. I am looking forward to being able to contribute to the building up of caring, healing communities and, with God's help, being an encouraging presence that will reflect the love of Christ.

Anglicare Moruya has been very generous in creating an office space for me and it will provide a quiet place to see people in need of pastoral support. I will be working alongside the Anglicare Bushfire Recovery team and hope to receive referrals from them as well as from the community.

I am hoping to be involved with local parishes as well where there is a need for Pastoral Care support.



# Solidarity with the poor in COVID-19 response



the people most impacted are those without access to secure housing, regular income, food, water and sanitation.

Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA) is taking on the challenge of COVID-19 in the countries where they work, helping local communities prepare, prevent and lessen the impacts of the virus. They have adapted their programs to ensure the communities they work with can prevent and fight coronavirus and support those most at risk.

AOA is working with local church partners, who have a trusted connection with their communities, as well as local government, to provide accurate health information. They are also helping with the secondary effects of lockdowns, providing essential supplies to the most vulnerable, helping families maintain livelihoods, and improving safety for women and children.

In Kenya, AOA's partner, Anglican Church of Kenya, Mount Kenya West Diocese (ACK), has activated its volunteer network of Nyumba

Kumis (volunteer community leaders), training all 500 to educate their 10 local communities on hygiene, prevention measures and accurate information about COVID-19.

These volunteers have reached 15,000 families and distributed food, soap and masks to over 800 of the most vulnerable households. ACK is also working with these communities to prioritise child protection, and support them to start small businesses from home.

Likewise, in Mozambique, AOA's partner, Diocese Missionária de Nampula (DoN), has engaged their community-based volunteers in the response to COVID-19. They are running a well-being initiative called Equipas de Vida (or 'Life Teams') which improves health knowledge in rural and remote communities.

Before March they had been educating people on good nutrition, family planning and diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, however now they are also talking to people about COVID-19 and

how to prevent it. After the Diocese translated information from Portuguese into local languages, the Life Teams have been able to reach over 47,000 people across the north of the country.

The danger for these communities, between existing poverty and poor health services, is that they may take a long time to recover, both physically and economically. However, with the support of Australian Anglicans, we can help prevent the most devastating impacts of COVID-19 for some of the world's most vulnerable.

Anglican Overseas Aid is the overseas aid and development fund of the Diocese of Melbourne. It is an Anglican response to global suffering. To read more about their response to COVID-19, visit their website <https://anglicanoverseasaid.org.au/our-work/covid-19-and-our-projects/>

*Story from Nils von Kalm  
Anglican Overseas Aid*

## Profile of a Deacon

Since my ordination to the diaconate in February 2018, I have been learning what it means to be a deacon. Finding myself at the interface between the flock gathered and the flock dispersed, I look back into the church, and also out to the community. That feels like a good place to be; the support and nourishment from worship in the congregation gives me the strength and grace to venture out onto paths unknown. More than that, the grace of ordination overwhelms me sometimes. God does not call us for small things.

***More than that, the grace of ordination overwhelms me sometimes. God does not call us for small things.***

I am attached to St Paul's at Manuka, where, pre-COVID, I had a liturgical role in the services. The Vicar understands and supports the role of the deacon, and employed me fully in that capacity, including preaching. Operating on the edges of the gathered, I led services at aged care facilities, administered home communion with reserved sacrament, attended parish council meetings, liaised and met with families to prepare them for the baptism of a child, met with

families to make funeral service arrangements, and participated in wedding services. I also led a weekly Bible study group, mentored the EfM program at St Paul's, and assisted with the children's choir.

I am also a casual chaplain and warden with Anglicare, attached to St David's Close in Red Hill, and Brindabella Court in Dickson. This involves meeting many elderly people, and their families — I spend a lot of time talking, visiting, praying, sitting with people in their grief or anxiety, or accompanying them on shopping expeditions and concerts. It has also involved considerable 'mediation' in cases of conflict between residents, replacing light bulbs, finding lost cats, and sleuthing activity to detect who/what was making all the noise at night, or who was stealing the grapefruit off someone's tree. I enjoyed that work very much; it's wonderful to hear all the different stories, and to see the examples of faith in action under joyful, trying or sad circumstances.

Since COVID, of course, different ways to 'be a deacon', to occupy those liminal spaces, have begun to emerge. Apparently, in the practice of permaculture, the most fertile places, and the best places for cross-pollination, are on the

edges. I have become a 'digital deacon', riding the boundaries in a virtual world. Zoom services, Bible study, daily office, reflection/study days, training programs, aged care services, 'coffee catch-ups' are now standard daily activities. Many more phone calls, speaking with people, hearing stories, and in lots of ways getting to know people better. As I work through the parish roll, ringing people, I have made contact with many who have not been to a service for years, but who are now back in contact, getting our weekly newsletter and zooming in to Sunday services or the weekday Office. I have travelled in time and

space, revisiting the saints as we celebrate them week by week in the Lectionary, and writing articles for St Paul's weekly E-pistle. The cloud of witnesses is ever present.

As we prepare for people to return to the building, I have learned about cleaning products and COVID plans. And brushed up on maths ... what exactly does the 4-square metre rule mean? Measuring the church ... working out where people can sit ... (see photo below).

And the wonder of ordination, and the gift of serving, continues to fill me with joy and thanks.

*by Reverend Kay Pendlebury*



*Deacon Kay and Assistant Priest Alipate Tuineau trying to work out where people can sit for the church service*

# Running a Small Business During COVID-19



*We interviewed small business owner Gail Lubbock, of Escala Shoes, to find out what the impacts of COVID-19 have been for her and how she has been managing those.*

**• Can you tell me how you came to be the owner of Escala Shoes?**

Following a nursing career spanning some 35 years, and 10 years of variously working in sales and marketing, NGO and retail I was given the opportunity to buy Escala – an opportunity which I grasped and which I have thoroughly enjoyed for the past 22 years.

**• What did running a business look like for you in pre-COVID times?**

I took an already flourishing business and have been fortunate enough to enable it to continue to grow and flourish. I was able to travel to Europe twice per year to attend Shoe Fairs and factories, to meet designers and craftspeople and choose stock which reflected the requirements of my clients both here in Canberra and the wider region. I have been blessed to meet and build great relationships with wonderful

people in my industry.

Pre-COVID times have not been without their difficulties also, as we surfed through the significant period of the Global financial crisis, the introduction of the GST and various other global impacts.

**• What have been some of the biggest impacts of the Pandemic, of running a small business?**

Businesses generally have been impacted by global shutdowns, the closure of non-essential businesses, the restriction placed on people movements; all of which place considerable difficulty on cash flow, intake of stock for now and the future and cause significant anxiety as businesses look to a future without a map. For most small business there



is no clear way of understanding how one provides a forecast for even the next month let alone the next 6 or 12 months. My business is no different and I too have to anticipate how to proceed into a slightly discombobulated and uncertain future. How to create cash flow, how to anticipate stock levels, how to ship goods from overseas and amongst it all to remain confident that there is a way forward and this too will pass!

**• What have been some of the ways that you have adjusted what you do in response?**

Initially and in the early part of the lockdown period, I offered appointment-only opportunities for my clients which they responded to beautifully. It was an enjoyable experience for both the client and myself, and an enabling thing for my business.

My staff, of course, were stood down and JobKeeper came into play, which has been enabling for everyone, including myself. We are now running the store on reduced opening hours and staffing which, as the situation improves, will be reviewed.

Buying presents a more thought-provoking situation as travel to Europe for the foreseeable future is restricted. This is where I am eternally grateful for the relationships which I have built up with my suppliers and factories over many years. Because knowing the workmanship, styling and manufacturing processes, I can work via online mediums such as Zoom.

**• What are some of your worries, concerns, or plans for the future and how does being a Christian enable you at this time?**



When a business, any business, experiences the downturns such as we have experienced over the past months, the concern is for the future. How do we plan to proceed?

In my particular situation, this has involved: strategic planning for stock intake; deeper understanding of client requirements during this time which will be reflected in the buying; maintaining a good social media presence which keeps clients informed, excited and positive; and continuing to rely on a God whose strong arm has brought me along this journey for many years.

To not be shaken or afraid I've needed to cast all my anxieties on Jesus and to learn in a much deeper way to trust in my God who tells me that:

*'I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'*

Jeremiah 29 :11

## The Heroic English Village



*Mompesson's memorial by Andy Stephenson, commons.wikimedia.org*

In this very difficult time of the coronavirus pandemic I recalled again the story of an English village named Eyam. Eyam is in Derbyshire and my wife and I visited it while on a long camping holiday around Britain in 1975. My Willson ancestors came from the area around Hope, in the same county. I read again the story in a volume of 'The King's England'.

In September 1665, during the reign of Charles II, the bubonic plague had broken out in London and thousands were dying. Samuel Pepys gives a vivid account of it in his diary. The eleven volumes of the famous diary, with accounts both of the Plague and the Great Fire, rest

on my library shelves.

**The Deadly Infection**

That month a box arrived in Eyam from London with cloth and old clothes. That box carried the deadly infection. The first victim was the journeyman (carrier), who had opened the box. He was dead within four days. By the end of that month five more people had perished.

For more than a year the pestilence raged in Eyam. Within a year 259 out of 350 villagers had died, as well as 58 children.

But it is how the village responded to that frightful ordeal that makes it famous to this day. It was not only a place of grief and despair but also a

place of quiet heroism.

**Isolation**

The Church of England parish priest, William Mompesson, his wife Catherine, and another clergyman living in the village, set themselves to isolate the village from the outside world and so to contain the infection. With a stick they drew a line around the village and everyone swore not to cross it.

They arranged for food supplies to be brought from the outside world and left at places on the boundary. They left coins to pay for these supplies, each coin being carefully washed before being taken away.

**Continued on page 7**

# The Heroic English Village (continued from page 6)



Picture of St Lawrence's Church Eyam by Alan Fleming on Wikipedia.org

Deaths became so frequent that the church bell ceased to toll and there was no room in the graveyard. In August 1666 Catherine Mompesson, wife of the Rector, died and was buried in the churchyard. A yew tree now marks her grave.

The heroic sacrifice of Eyam was not in vain. The infection of the plague did not spread to

neighbouring villages around Derbyshire. My Willson ancestors, and many others, may possibly have owed their lives to the sacrifice and courage of Eyam.

## Reminders of the past

We visited the Parish Church on a beautiful summer day. The quiet beauty of the place today seems to be a world away from the horrors of

the plague three hundred and fifty years ago.

Much of the ancient medieval church was later restored and sadly the old furniture was scattered. But there are many reminders of the heroism of the village. I remember seeing a beautiful book on display listing the names of every recorded villager in Eyam, those who died and those who survived. Visitors may see an ancient oak chair carved with the Rector's name 'Mom, 1665'. It is said to have been rescued from a dealer's shop in Liverpool where it had been discarded as junk.

I remember seeing the 'leper's squint' dating from the Middle Ages. A leper would be totally isolated and forced to ring a bell and cry 'unclean' to warn anyone not to approach him or her. But he was allowed to crouch against the outside wall of the church and view the Mass being celebrated on the altar through a hole called the leper's squint.

## The 2020 plague

In 2020 the world is struggling to cope with a coronavirus pandemic, a new plague like the bubonic plague

or leprosy, and many have died while scientists desperately struggle to find a vaccine. In the 17th century there was no knowledge of a vaccine but the people of Eyam coped with their ordeal just as we are being asked to do. They kept themselves isolated to protect the people of other villages and many paid for it with their lives.

Our Blessed Lord said, as recorded in John 15: 13, 'There is no greater love than this: that someone should lay down his life for his friends'.

by Robert Willson



William Mompesson, Photo from Wikitree

# Remembering

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers are warned that the following story contains images of deceased persons.

The daily news about COVID-19 is a current reminder of our mortality, and that life is finite. Recently we (Bishop Mark and Monica Short) have said goodbye to several precious friends who have enriched our lives. Like many other people, one of our traditions, when someone dear passes, is to reflect on what they have spoken into our lives. At the time of writing this, three more friends have been promoted to glory.

## Isabel Bennett



Isabel Bennett. Photo provided by Lloyd Bennett. Used with permission.

Isabel Bennett (1940-2020). Isabel grew up in a Christian family, attended her local church, was a school teacher and married her wonderful childhood sweetheart The Reverend Lloyd Bennett. Isabel and Lloyd own a residence in the Snowy Mountains. Isabel deeply loved Jindabyne and its local church. Isabel repeatedly shared stories with us about the local church, the people there, the landscape, its history and was excited about the town and church's future. She desired for everyone there to know Jesus. Additionally, Isabel was gentle and patient – always making us feel loved. She constantly had our beautiful Diocese's best interests in her heart.

## Doug Orr



Doug Orr (1944-2020). Doug attended his local church, had several careers including being a successful CEO and married his delightful childhood sweetheart Frances. Rural churches were one of Doug's heartbeats. Doug and Frances skilfully coordinated the Bush Church Aid nomads and loved rural Australia. Doug and Frances

Doug Orr. Photo provided by Frances Orr. Used with permission.

## Rob Grinton



Rob Grinton. Photo provided by Mavis Grinton. Used with permission.

Rob Grinton (1931-2020) attended his local Anglican church in Turvey Park and was a highly-skilled electrician. He married the love of his life the wonderful Mavis Grinton. Rob loved South Wagga Wagga Anglican Church and faithfully cared for this church for decades. We remember talking to Rob regularly such as while he sat patiently and watched concrete dry at the church so that it was not damaged by human hand or by an animal. In these moments, Rob narrated with warmth in his eyes and a cheeky smile the history of the church to us. Rob too was always patient and gentle with us, and in practical ways continually ensured our wellbeing when we were living in Wagga Wagga. Rob made us feel loved. Rob wanted the local Anglican church to grow and for everyone to know Jesus, flourish and be happy.

The local rural Anglican church is the reason we know and treasure Isabel, Doug and Rob. Isabel, Doug and Rob helped us understand how the local church is wonderful and worth working hard for – warts and all. They showed us what it is like to feel Christian love and how to share this love through God's church. We (Mark and Monica) pray that we will emulate Isabel, Doug and Rob's example of loving God, loving His church and loving our neighbours. May God bless the families of Isabel, Doug and Rob.

by Bishop Mark and Monica Short