



Remembering Jason Page

On Wednesday afternoon, 18 November, the Reverend Jason Page, Rector of Weston, was unexpectedly called home to God. He had faithfully served the parish at Weston for almost 23 years.

Bishop Mark Short said that Jason had made a significant contribution to the life of the Diocese.

‘His passion for sharing the good news of Jesus and his concern for the well-being of others are great examples for us to follow. In just the short time since his death I’ve spoken to a number of clergy who testify how God brought them encouragement through Jason’s ministry when it was most needed. We give thanks for his legacy and pray for God’s blessing on all who will miss him.’

A Thanksgiving Service was held at Canberra Grammar School on 28 November.

The Bishop Ross Nicholson preached the sermon, based on Revelation 21:1-7 and the future hope and future life described in that passage. He shared that this future hope comes in the form of five promises.

One, that there will be a new heaven and a new earth. All that is physically broken and fallen in this world will be transformed. Two,

God will be with his people. We experience a foretaste of that now through the Holy Spirit’s presence, but that time is coming when we will walk and talk with Jesus. There’s a physical reality that will flow from that Fatherly intimacy; that God himself will wipe every tear from our eyes. That’s the third promise. Mourning, crying and pain, those bleak companions of dying which drive us to tears, will be no more, because death will be no more.

All of those previous promises rest on this next one, the fourth promise, that God will make all things new. God will redeem everything that was distorted and broken by human sinfulness and rebellion. Before pointing out the fifth and final promise, Bishop Ross reminded those gathered that hope is always a future orientation. We live now in a world where memory will always draw us back to the brokenness, the fallenness of the present.

Sickness, ageing, disappointments may shape our memories and blunt our hopes, which is why the fifth promise of God in Revelation 21:7 is this:

‘To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I

will be their God and they will be my children.’

Julie Mitchell, parish administrator at Weston, who had known Jason for more than 20 years and noted how Jason always made her feel valued and appreciated and always put people first if they popped in, shared in her eulogy:

‘Faith with humour was Jason’s style. Whether it was from the pulpit, a family event, a church retreat, or down at a local shop, Jason was never the quiet one and nor did he ever find it hard to bring his humour or his faith into the conversation. He never hit anyone over the head with the bible (that I’m aware of but I wouldn’t put it past him to do it in jest!), but neither did he ever miss the opportunity to share the gospel. He had such an outgoing personality that you always knew when he was around and had such an easy going way about him that he made people feel at ease, especially if church was a foreign concept.

‘Over his almost 23 years at St Peter’s it was sharing the gospel of our Saviour that was foremost for Jason: this was done at Sunday services, baptisms, weddings and funerals and then programs like Christianity Explained, Alpha and

40 Days of Purpose, as well as our annual parish retreat.

‘Then there were the un-planned places: the local coffee shops, the squash court, the pharmacy, the receptionist at the accommodation for Synod, the neighbours; basically anywhere, anytime Jason was up for a chat and an opportunity to share the gospel.’

Michael McKay, long-time parishioner and friend of Jason’s, said: ‘His life was a demonstration of how Jesus could fill someone’s life. He showed me that it is possible to bring Jesus into every conversation in a quiet and caring, but powerful way. I know he loved me as a brother in Christ, as he loved all his friends and all his church family. I know he loved his Lord Jesus and would show that to everyone he met.

‘Jason had a huge impact on people. Yesterday I heard from a couple of my friends, only as casual acquaintances of Jason. One said to make sure everyone knows he had a ‘Big smile, jovial nature and welcoming heart’ and the other told me ‘Jason was an inspirational man in such an easy going way’.

As Julie concluded ‘See you in heaven Jason, save me a slice of pizza.’

Bishop Mark Writes ...



And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14 (ESV)



Image by Kristina Paukshtite on pexels.com

Sometimes we struggle to know how to pursue two good goals simultaneously.

Take, for example, the yearning for freedom and the desire to be safe. Both are important to us, but throw in a pandemic, the internet and a dose of scepticism towards

authority and there'll be no end of debates about how to balance them with each other.

Or we might consider a passion for truth and a desire to be gracious. At worst, seeking grace without truth can result in silence or acquiescence in the face of evil. On the other hand

the pursuit of truth (or our version of it) without grace can lead to discord and disagreement.

In light of our struggles these words from the fourteenth verse of the first chapter of John's gospel come like a gentle cooling breeze at the end of a long hot day: 'The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.'

Unlike Matthew and Luke, the gospel of John doesn't begin with the events of the first Christmas. There are no angelic visitors, no heavenly choir and no baby in the manger surrounded by awestruck shepherds. Instead we read a profound meditation on the significance of those events. We are reminded how the Word who was with God, indeed who was God, came into the world that had come into being through Him. We recall how in doing so He shone bright light into our dreary darkness. We are told that He reveals God's grace and truth, not grace or truth but grace and truth.

It's not that the grace of God or the truth of God were unknown before Christmas. For millennia God had poured grace into creation, first by

gifting us this beautiful world then by choosing and rescuing a people. God had also revealed truth, in the cycles of the seasons, in the depths of the human conscience and through the prophets.

Then at Christmas the invisible becomes visible, the word becomes flesh, grace and truth are embodied in one flawless human life. As He grows Jesus embodies grace in His welcome of the outsider, in His care for the needy and in His forgiveness even in death. Jesus embodies truth in teaching with authority, in His critique of hypocrisy and most especially in making God known.

The very polarities we struggle to explain, let alone express, Jesus lives to perfection. Then He empowers us to do the same. This is the true wonder of Christmas. The God who comes to be with us in the manger, gives Himself for us on the cross so that He might be in us by the Spirit.

Growing as gracious, truthful people is a journey that lasts a lifetime. It begins with a simple act of trust in the One who showed the way for us. Monica and I pray that this Christmas your celebrations and your lives may be full of the grace and truth of Jesus.



ANGLICAN CHURCH SEEKS INPUT FROM SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

People who have experienced violence from an intimate partner (domestic violence) and also have a current or previous link with the Anglican Church are being invited to contribute to a research project to help improve the Church's policy and practices.

An anonymous online survey contains questions about demographics (such as age and gender), personal experiences of intimate partner violence and the ways in which the Anglican Church featured in each person's story. A small number of people will also be selected for in-depth face-to-face interviews if willing.

The survey is available here: surveys.ncls.org.au/NAFVP/experience
The Anglican Family Violence Working Group has engaged NCLS Research to undertake the research which is titled the National Anglican Family Violence Project. There are three studies that make up the project.

- More information can be found online:
- About the Family Violence Working Group: <https://anglican.org.au/our-work/family-violence/>
 - About the research project: <http://ncls.org.au/research/NAFVP>

CLERGY MOVES

The Reverend Dr Ben Edwards was elected by his peers as the next Area Dean Central Canberra (3.12.2020)

The Reverend Gavin Krebs has been appointed Rector, Woden, and will be inducted into that role on Tuesday 11 February 2021 at 6.00pm at St Alban's Woden.

The Reverend Lynda McMinn resigned as Area Dean Central Canberra (3.12.2020).

The Reverend Peter Hayes has been licensed priest Locum, West Goulburn, taking Sunday services and providing pastoral care as required.

AnglicanNews

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The Anglican News welcomes contributions of up to 600 words that highlight ministry and mission initiatives across the Diocese or explore new ways of engaging a world of difference with the love and truth of Jesus.

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.



GOOD THINGS CAN BE EVEN BETTER WHEN WE DO THEM TOGETHER

Image by Alexis Brown on Unsplash.com

Good things can be even better when we do them together. Next year, our Diocese will be participating together in three seasons of focussed engagement to help us better understand our shared call to mission.

1 The first season, of study, will take place during Lent – from February 17 to March 29. During this time members of the Diocese will be encouraged to

understand their setting for mission by engaging with Scripture. The Diocesan Public Issues Commission has prepared a set of studies for this purpose. *God of Compassion* is a six-week study which looks at what God has to tell us about compassion in the public sphere: for those in our parish, in our Anglican communion, nationally and inter-generationally. Some key themes include: aged care, reconciliation

with First Peoples, inequality, climate change, refugees and asylum seekers. The study booklet can be downloaded electronically free of charge or ordered in hard copy for a small fee at www.anglicancg.org.au/our-diocese/governance/bishop-in-council/public-issues-commission/god-of-compassion-a-lenten-journey.

2 The second season, of prayer, will be from Easter to

Ascension Day – from April 4 to May 13. During this time members of the Diocese will be encouraged to seek power for mission by engaging with God in prayer. The Reverend Steve Nation has been engaged by the Bishop's Office to prepare resources for this season. Steve has already written an excellent resource in the book *A Call to Extraordinary Prayer: Recharging your Prayer Life through the Book of Acts* (Christian Focus Publications, 2017).

3 The third season, of mission, will be from Pentecost and beyond – from May 23 until Jesus returns! During this time members of the Diocese will be encouraged to engage in God's mission by sharing the love and truth of Jesus. Bishop Mark and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Canberra-Goulburn, Christopher Prowse, have commissioned a team to facilitate the uptake of Alpha courses across our churches as one expression of our desire to reach people for Jesus.

Bishop Mark says details of further activities will be made available as the year unfolds. 'We will be working to share resources and ideas as widely as possible, recognising that Parishes, ministry units, schools and agencies will also develop their own initiatives. Please join with me in praying that we will be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to glorify our God and Saviour in all that we do.'

WAGGA WAGGA FRIENDS HOST THEIR OWN FUND-RAISER LUNCH



An advertisement appeared in the latest Newsletter from Friends of St Saviours Cathedral, which was an 'Invitation to a Soup and Sandwich Lunch that Isn't'. The Soup and Sandwich Lunch has been an annual fund raising event for the Friends, but this year COVID restrictions put a stop to it. The advertisement was an invitation for individual 'friends' to host functions of their own.

In response, two friends of St Saviour's from Wagga Wagga, Elaine Campbell and Ruth Rush,

organised an event which, in short was called, 'The Four P's', but in full, better described as, 'A Pizza, Patty Cake, Plonk and Poetry Luncheon'. Husbands Wes Campbell and Colin Rush also got involved; Wes providing transport, photography skills and support in the patty cake manufacture, while Colin thought it was easier to provide the plonk and poetry rather than walk to Goulburn for a second time.

The Luncheon was held on Saturday 24 October at the home of Ruth and

Colin Rush. COVID restrictions placed limits on attendance, but in the end 18 were entertained. It was 'touch and go' with the weather at first, with people spread throughout the lounge, dining and family rooms for drinks, nibbles and conversation. Then, although clouds still hovered, the sun shone through at times, so all moved out to the rear Patio overlooking the garden for Pizza, more drinks, entertainment, cakes and caffeine.

The entertainment, well, it had a sort of religious link, and the poems ranged across topics including, 'Not Bloody Golf Again', 'A Bush Christening', 'Husbands' and 'The Revolt of the Lawnmowers'.

Takings for the event were supplemented through sales at a small Trading Table which Ruth and Elaine had set up. When the guests had departed, happy and well satisfied in all departments, the amount deposited in The Friends of St Saviour's Cathedral Bank Account was \$550.00. Not a bad effort!

by Reverend Colin Rush



Reverend Colin Rush reciting poetry

You can find out more about the Friends of St Saviour's Cathedral and how you can be involved on the Cathedral website at: <https://www.goulburncathedral.org.au/friends-cathedral-0>

DEACON PROFILE - SARAH PLUMMER



BY REVEREND SARAH PLUMMER

In May I was appointed Executive Manager for Mission and Training with Anglicare (NSW South, West & ACT), responsible for overseeing all induction, formal training, mission formation and chaplaincy within Anglicare. My role also includes engaging with parishes in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

Six months into my new role and it has flown. It is a real privilege to see the way parishes and Anglicare partner together for those in need in their communities. Recently I have heard of an incredible Canoe project the Reverend Michael Palmer, Anglicare's rural chaplain on the far South Coast, is doing. He is an amazing catalyst of connections with the indigenous community, the naval community and the local high school. The Eden Canoe Project has enriched the lives of local Aboriginal students giving them greater connection to Country and greater feelings of identity and self-worth. Building, painting, and paddling the canoes has allowed them to tap into unique creativity and spirituality that bonds them with the land and with each other. The project also enhanced the practical, organisational and teamwork skills of the students – skills which they can carry with them into their further tertiary studies.

In Orange, I heard of the huge need for emergency food relief as supplies are likely to run out in March next year. Our Anglicare rural chaplain in the central-west, Barry Porter, shared with me that Anglicare is the only agency left in some areas doing food relief for families in need.

I have had the privilege of hearing beautiful stories from the Reverend Andrea de Vaal Horciu about the palliative children with disabilities and how their families are supported

in times of grief and loss through embracing ministries. Or the work of the Reverend Peter Malone who co-ordinates our Chaplaincy Area and serves in Anglicare Retirement Living caring and supporting others through the COVID isolation. He has gently gathered the key chaplaincy frameworks and models that exist within Anglicare ministries to inform the future directions for Anglicare Chaplaincy.

Each of our chaplains are bridge-builders into their communities. They are amazing servants of Jesus who deeply care for others around them. They create connections and bridges between groups of people to widen the safety net of care around people. They are enriched by the person and work of Jesus and that love shines through their words, deeds and emotions.

We are very conscious of the needs families and individuals are already expressing leading into the Christmas season. A mother with five children burst into tears after picking up some food and being offered a small target voucher to purchase some toys for her children.

Helping your unknown mate or fellow person who exists on 'country' with you is somehow now palatable after COVID. We have had a shared pain, a shared story, a shared challenge and so many families are now finding they are in economic crises like never before.

This is a deacon's calling and promise; to live out the word of Christ and life of Christ to the glory of Christ for the benefit of others in the community. I have been serving the body of Christ in Anglican parishes for just over 30 years. The joy and challenge of the diaconate is that the ministry pathway is always unique to each deacon. I recall

my very first activity as a deacon was giving my deepest apologies to the Archbishop. The front page of the Telegraph read 'Bride of Christ & Bride of Craig – Sarah's double wedding'. My ordination and wedding were one week apart. Nothing like starting off your public ministry with messaging around perceived polygamy by a reporter.

I was taught from a very young age to be a bridge-builder between the Church and the community; how to lovingly and prayerfully support anyone who may choose to encounter the other. I have worked in schools, in hospitals, in aged care

and in international community development. I have sat on national and international boards learning from some amazing men and women. It is truly incredible when you trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, but acknowledge the Lord in all of your ways so he will make your path straight.

It has been a great privilege to see how God works in us and though us for his glory, even despite of us. I have so many stories of what God is doing around New South Wales and the ACT in Anglicare, so it is hard to know which ones to share. I learnt as an 18-year-old that a childlike faith in Christ will look to God's people, but a mature faith in Christ will look to Christ and Christ alone. So I like to ask God to 'fix my eyes on things above', so God's will may be done on earth as it is in Heaven. God's righteousness in all things, including justice and truth, be revealed in all circumstances; God's love pervade my heart so that it directs what I see and moves me to act to enrich and empower others.

Our work in Anglicare is messy. It's done with a posture of walking alongside and listening to hard things that can stretch you, but, oh, what joy when you see the transformative work of God's love and care upon one life.



Eddie Woo is back for Life@Work Conference in 2021!

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

And as a special bonus, register before December 31 and get your ticket for the early bird price of just \$25.

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

HOW A UNIVERSITY RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE FARED DURING COVID



St Martin's College is welcoming new students studying at Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga campus and students studying medicine through UNSW at Wagga Wagga Campus. St Martin's College had its origin in the Riverina Diocese and the Canberra-Goulburn Diocese in 1992 and has since grown to a 98-bed college (12 x 8-bedroom cottages, a 2-bedroom flat and the chapel) that surrounds the centrally-located Fairfax Community Centre (affectionately known as 'the Fax'). Community, inclusion of all, support, care and excellence are at the heart of all the College does.

2020 has been a difficult year for all people. The College saw its numbers drop on 30 March 2020 from about 80 students to 10 students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the decision on the University to close its campuses and go on-line for all of session 1 and all of session 2 (for most students). It is 'return to normal' for the University in January 2021. And more than 40 returning students are looking forward to that. So how did they manage 2020?

Meg from Milthorpe, in her third year of a four-year social work course, writes:

'I have had the pleasure of being a Residential Advisor at St Martin's College in 2020. Though this year was difficult we continued to host events, whether virtual or in-person, with students, according to restrictions and guidelines. The current pandemic did not limit the spirit of the St Martin's community as we all worked to adapt to ensure we could still connect with each other.

'St Martin's is such a warm and inclusive community where students can make lifelong friends. It is an environment that fosters growth whether that is socially, academically or professionally.

'What I value most about St Martin's College is the family environment. This enabled me to make a smooth transition into university life and has given me the opportunity to make many lifelong friends.

'The advice that I would give to future students is to immerse yourself within the community and step out of your own comfort zone! This will allow you to have many opportunities opened up to you as well as give you the chance to make your university experience the best it can be!'

Romy, a Vet Science student going into Third Year, commented:

'Despite the lack of people on campus, the few that stuck around during COVID became the many, and life went on. I think we probably spent more time with other college students than normal, given that we were all confined to our rooms for online lectures and there were few other excuses to leave the house than to play some backyard cricket with the neighbours.

'Being on campus is a no brainer, especially in first year, because you only have to walk 5-10 minutes to your lectures. Within walking distance there is also the pool and gym too for the sports enthusiasts. Life at Martie's is great because you get to know the other students really well, and you'll probably spend a lot of time in each other's cottages sharing dinner and studying together in what can feel like a family home.

'I value the shared space that we have within the college, including the outdoor and indoor area of the Fairfax Centre, which we can use at our leisure to study/relax/cook or just have a nap.'

In the summer break, the diverse interests continue. Josh and Seb are out doing contract grain harvesting over summer and two

others are doing grain receivals at the grain silos. Others are in retail - Bunnings, Boost Juice etc. Some are working in Vet clinics. Nursing students are finding work in Aged Care. A few students have returned home to farms, a few are doing catch-up placements because of COVID-19 restrictions (in places like piggeries, dairy farms etc) and our performing arts students have put on a production. Animators are finding work on projects and our international PhD students are continuing their diverse research work in exotic areas including dung beetles, micronutrients, and environmental sciences. One of our

undergraduate Social Work students has just presented at a National Health Conference (by zoom) on a new initiative in TeleHealth.

St Martin's is a vibrant community that unobtrusively encourages faith and whole-person development in a supportive and pastorally-rich environment.

Check out the website at www.stmartinscollege.org or take the aerial drone tour of the College at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OeHHwpl6NbPOO8M8obvpqqtXdNBXCAJ_/view?usp=sharing

Applications are on the website and are now open for 2021.

by Bill Anscombe



Lifting up the lowly

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CGGS STUDENTS VOLUNTEER WITH EMBRACING MINISTRIES



BY REVEREND JENNY WILLISHER

During the October holidays this year, several year 10 students from Canberra Girls Grammar School took part in a volunteering opportunity with Embracing Ministries.

Embracing Ministries, an initiative of the Anglican Church of Canberra and Goulburn, aims to support families with youth and children affected by disabilities. Additionally, they aim to educate Christian people about the societal need for inclusion for such families, in particular inclusion in their parishes and Christian community groups.

The holiday program provided by Embracing Ministries aims to provide youth and children affected by disabilities unique and fun experiences, as well as exposing

them to social contact outside of their school and family.

The CGGS School students volunteered as mentors for this program. This included running activities each day, looking after the children, but most of all being a mentor to the children, having fun with them and ensuring they had the best possible experience on the program. All the girls who volunteered as part of the program found it extremely rewarding and describe their individual experiences in the statements below.

'I particularly enjoyed getting to know the children on the program and learnt about how important inclusiveness for all children was. Even though the program only lasted for a week, I can happily say that it

was one of the most eye-opening experiences in my life – building a bond with a unique bunch of children who were each beautifully different in their own way.' – Riya

'The program highlighted that a person living with a disability is not defined by their disability, they are a human being with their own ideas and thoughts and, if people take the time to listen, these children could educate people around them and change society for the better.' – Catherine

'My time with the kids allowed me to apply my communication skills in ways I never have done before such as learning and using Auslan and a POD. Though this holiday program came with many challenges that I have not faced before, overall

this experience allowed me to see the beauty that each child holds no matter their ability.' – Sahaana

'Words cannot justify how grateful I am for the opportunity to partake in such a wonderful form of service. It was certainly a week filled with memories I will cherish forever. Every child was so special in their own ways and it was incredible to have the opportunity to get to know them. Seeing the smiles when we were pushing kids on the swing, the dancing during the drumming workshop and the joy that filled the room when we were stomping on bubbles were just a few of the small moments that reminded me how truly lucky I was to have met these beautiful children.' – Sophie

'Every day volunteering with Embracing Ministries is a learning experience, whether it be getting to know one of the kids more closely, learning ASL, or learning to use a pod. As well as learning new things, we also had a lot of fun, whether it was pushing the kids on the swings or doing music together. While there were some bumps in the road occasionally, I wouldn't trade this experience for anything, as it's certainly one of the best I've ever had, and I can't wait to help out again next year. I'm forever grateful to have spent this time with all these wonderful children, and hope that they got just as much out of it as I know I did.' – Anneliese

AN ANNIVERSARY AND AN OPENING IN SOUTH WAGGA



Dr Joe McGirr State Member for Wagga, Dr Stuart Gamble Chair of Parish Council and Facilities Committee, Bishop Mark, Mr Peter Caspersonn Chair of Grants Team, Mr Charles Merrett Project Manager, Rev Scott Goode Rector

During November South Wagga Anglican celebrated the five-year anniversary of the amalgamation of St Alban's Koorngal and St Paul's Turvey Park. Bishop Mark and Monica joined us for the official

opening of the newly refurbished St Paul's hall and amenities – the result of a NSW Government Stronger Country Community Funds grant.

This updated our 1962 facilities to modern ground-access amenities

and gave our hall a face-lift, including a new meeting room and storage cupboards.

During a speech, the Reverend Scott Goode spoke about our church buildings as our 'family home' in which we invest so we can see God grow His family.

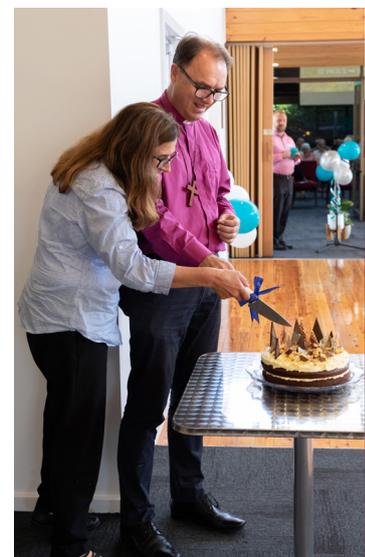
No sooner had this event finished, and Bishop Mark began officiating at his first of four weekend services where we gave thanks and celebrated our five year anniversary.

The last five years have been a challenging but wonderful story of welcome, shared ministry, new initiatives and outreach.

The weekend finished with a Baptism and Confirmation service where six people publicly declared their faith in Christ. The theme of the weekend was from Paul's letter to the Thessalonians (1:2-3): 'We always thank God for all of you ... We continually remember before our

God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.'

by Reverend Scott Goode



A YEAR AFTER THE FIRES



BY REVEREND SARAH PLUMMER AND JANICE ACKLAND

A critical question we need to ask about this year's catastrophic bushfires is this: What is the best type of long-term spiritual and pastoral care we can offer people and their communities over the years to come.

We have communities of walking wounded in our midst. We have experienced some of the worst fires we have ever seen as well as drought, flood and then the COVID Pandemic. There have been so many external factors out of our control, is it any wonder that we are seeing so much stress in individuals, parishes and our communities.

As Christian communities of faith in the midst of this Christmas season, it is an opportune time to reflect on the God who came to us in our deepest need; on the God who beckons us to walk alongside others in the mess of life to be a source of love and peace. It is important to consider – what is the most helpful way we can walk alongside those who are wounded so that it brings small glimpses of healing and hope?

The impact of the 2019-2020 Bush Fires continues to be evident on so many levels. The huge disruption to so many people's lives has taken an enormous toll on mental health and well-being. Strong and independent communities have faced the worst and been crippled in many ways, in losses experienced by individuals, families and as community. Surviving has been a challenge for many financially as well as emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually. Everybody's story is different and unique although there are many threads that connect us and that seem to help to build strength and resilience and, most importantly, hope for the future.

Mental Health support through many agencies has offered

opportunities for people to feel heard, supported and not alone. Listening empathetically to a person's story gives that person the opportunity to process what has, and continues to, happen for them and to make sense of their experience. It gives reassurance to the person and helps them in their understanding. This is hard work and, like any grief, there is no fixed timeline – 'it takes time and there are good days when you feel like you are moving towards recovery and other days when you are feeling like you are going backwards. While the process of recovery may be long and painful, many people are able to use the experience to grow. People often feel they come out of a traumatic experience with a stronger belief in themselves, with improved social relationships, benefits in personal [and spiritual] growth and life priorities.' (*Taking Care of Yourself and Families*, 2010, Beyond Blue, pp 107&109.)

For the professional carers, our clergy, pastoral carers and bushfire recovery staff in Anglicare, burn out and compassion fatigue is very common and poses a threat to our well-being. Emotional exhaustion can creep up unexpectedly. Vicarious trauma can stop us in our tracks unless we recognise it and acknowledge it. So caring for oneself and each other is vital. Practising kindness and compassion and being ready to receive it is a gift.

The media is reminding us of the year that was, and yet our minds and bodies do not fit in this construct. Time has paused; for some time has stopped. Some are not ready to consider it has been a year. You may be a member of your community trying to work out what to do for each other. It is a stark reminder of the need for that connectedness,

coming together to share stories and to remember.

Yet not necessarily everyone who has endured the trauma of the past year wants to or is able to endure the pain of remembering. Pastorally and prayerfully, there are opportunities to get alongside those who seek the enabling of someone who will listen, who will support them through their journey of grief, of the kaleidoscope of emotions that come with such trauma, and assist them to more fully process their experiences in a sensitive and non-judgmental way. Gentle, gentle is the pace and nature of this journey for the wounds are so deep.

Some people are ready to deal with and process their trauma from the fires in positive ways. Many are actively engaging in the creative space and stories are being told through extraordinary artworks, craft, poetry, music, prayers or gardening.

Recent exhibitions I (Janice) have been deeply moved by in the Eurobodalla include Postcards from the Fire held in Mogo and now showing in Batemans Bay, the Creative Arts Batemans Bay

art and sculpture exhibition, and initiatives such as Rising from the Ashes in Milton are examples of local communities working together to express themselves and their experiences through the various mediums of the arts. Some people are creating objects of art from remnants found after the fires to truly bring beauty out of ashes.

As much of the landscape begins to bring forth new life and the colours return, the flowers blossom, the crops are ready to harvest and the birds and the wildlife start to return, there are signs of renewed hope and for many there lies new fervour to conserve and protect what remains.

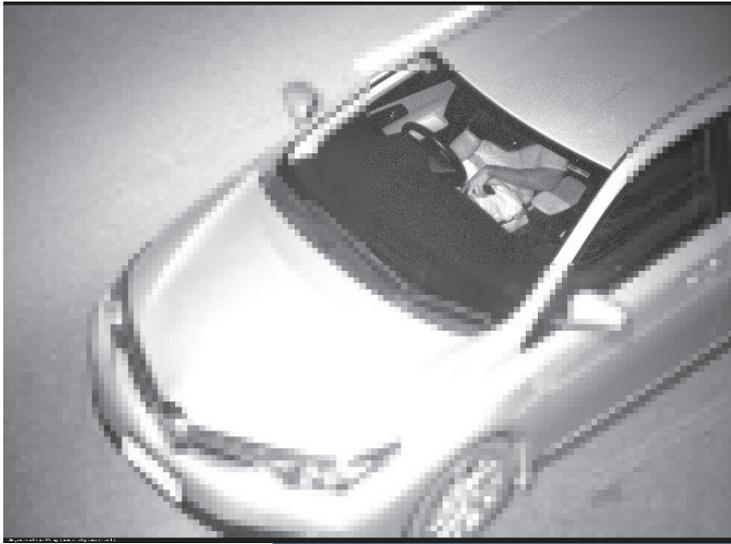
The shared experiences of the past year have brought some communities closer together as they continue to build on the bonding that fighting for survival brought for them, an RFS chief in one community told me very recently. Other communities may not yet be at that point, such is the extent of their loss and grief and the delays in recovery due to sometimes multiple reasons. For some the strain has become unbearable, with couples and families now dealing with fractured relationships in the midst of trauma. Sadly, some families have relocated out of their communities as paperwork and insurance decisions have left them unable to rebuild.

I pray for compassion and wisdom for us all as we move together towards recovery and renewal. Please continue to uphold our affected communities, our clergy, pastoral care workers and Anglicare staff still caring for the needs of those affected.

We invite you to continue to pray this prayer, written by Dean Andreas Loewe, uttered at St Paul's Cathedral early Jan this year by the Anglican Primate of Australia, Melbourne Archbishop Philip Freier.

*Almighty God and heavenly Father, we pray for this world that you love so much
that you sent your Son Jesus to be born as the child of Bethlehem:
We pray for the safety of those sheltering from fires and those fighting fires,
for livestock, native animals, paddocks, bushlands and sacred places.
We remember our own loved ones and those who are dear to us facing this crisis.
We pray for those tending to the injured, the frightened and the broken-hearted,
for emergency services, emergency broadcasters, chaplains and counsellors.
We ask for your forgiveness for our own failures in safeguarding your good creation,
and pray for political and community leaders, and all those responding to the current crisis in our nation.
Above all, we pray the peace that passes all understanding,
in our nation and state, in our homes and in our hearts.
This we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*
(<https://www.anglicanprimate.org.au/2020/01/02/a-prayer-amidst-bushfires/>)

DRIVE SAFELY THIS CHRISTMAS - ADS FLEET ROAD SAFETY MESSAGE



notices related to speeding, red lights and the use of a mobile phone whilst driving.

when issued with a 10-demerit-point loss during a recent NSW double-demerit point period.

For an example, the use of a mobile phone (whilst driving) carries a penalty of five demerit points and a \$349 fine (\$464 in a school zone). The penalty increases to 10 demerit points during double-demerit periods, which one of our drivers recently found out

So our simple message to everyone is to please travel safely and pay attention while you are on the roads, as the best Christmas present you can give your loved ones and friends is to arrive safely at your destination.

Trevor Ament
Chief Executive Officer, ADS

Recent ADS Fleet infringement photos showing mobile phone use infringements



With Christmas fast approaching and everyone's focus being on work, the coming holiday period and time/celebrations spent with family and friends, we thought it was important to send a simple message about travelling safely.

increase in the number of traffic infringements and damaged vehicles, which are reflective of simple mistakes and poor choices. We all understand there can be significant ramifications for what seem trivial traffic infringements, such as speeding, running a red light or accepting a call on your mobile while driving.

We all know the Christmas to New Year period is extremely busy with so many people on the roads travelling to their holiday destinations. ADS Fleet has noticed a recent

By way of background, since April 2020 the ADS Fleet has received 28 infringement

Please forward this Anglican News to anyone who might like to receive it. If you would like to subscribe to receive the Anglican News electronically please send an email to: alison.payne@anglicands.org.au

God of Compassion: A LENTEN JOURNEY

Diocesan Lenten Study for 2021

By the Public Issues Commission
Foreword by Bishop Mark
Supported by Anglicare

A six-week study which looks at what God has to tell us about compassion in the public sphere. Travel with Jesus to the cross who, in his life, death and resurrection, reminded us of the priorities of God: justice, mercy and compassion for those we don't know or don't understand, poured out on those who have been marginalised, the hurt and forgotten, the proud and foolish, those who have and those who do not.

The Lenten Studies will challenge us to think about our circles of care, and hopefully to enlarge them a little. Available online (<https://anglicancg.org.au/news-and-events/publications/>) and in booklet form in early November.