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Sunday 18 September 2022

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost



Welcome to St Philip's

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we worship, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present and emerging. We extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who worship with us.

St Philip's COVIDSafe Plan We are asking folk not attend church if they feel unwell, to be aware of their hand hygiene and to be mindful of social distance. Thank you. Masks are available for those who wish to wear one.

Pew sheet & Order of Service: the full Pew sheet is available on our website. The QR code in the pews will direct you to the current edition, please use your phone/tablet and follow along. Service cards, Pew Bibles and Prayer Books are also available.

Offertory: at the offertory when our gifts are brought forward, there is an opportunity for you to make your contribution. A self-serve Eftpos machine is available in the foyer, you can use it before or after the service. St Philip's EFT details are also available if you would like to make a direct transfer: 702-389 05202512. Giving cards are in the foyer if you wish to place something in the offertory bag after giving electronically.

Communion: if you are baptised you are welcome to receive communion, which at present is in 'one kind.' If you would like to receive a blessing please cross your hands on your chest as you come forward.

If you would like to volunteer as a reader, sidesperson, welcomer, or another role on the Roster, then please email rosters@stphilipsoconnor.org.au

The Flowers today are in memory of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

From the Rector

Dear Friends,

The death of the Queen, whilst not unexpected, still comes as something of a shock, because of her longevity and because of the inevitable changes that her death brings. But whilst we mourn and reflect on the passing of time we should acknowledge and celebrate the sacramental nature of her reign. In that famous speech the then Princess Elizabeth committed herself to a lifetime of service. At her Coronation she was anointed and vested in the Dalmatic the vestment of the Deacon and therefore into the ministry of service. She remained steadfast in that ministry to the end of her life.

The Queen's reign had a sacramental quality about it because despite all the pomp and pageantry she pointed away from herself to the nation, the Commonwealth and the people she served. This is a rare quality in our world in which the cult of celebrity is ubiquitous. She was the antithesis of celebrity, it was never about her, and clearly she endeavoured to instil that understanding in those who will come after her.

This is the essence of the sacramental. Christian ministry is by its very nature sacramental. 'We love because, God loved us first.' It was summed up in the Collect at the Queen's Requiem Eucharist celebrated here last Thursday:

Merciful Father and Lord of all life, we praise you that we are made in your image and reflect your truth and light. We thank you for the life of our late Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth, for the love she received from you and showed among us. Above all, we rejoice at your gracious promise to all your servants, living and departed, that we shall rise again at the coming of Christ.

And we ask that in due time we may share with your servant Elizabeth that clearer vision promised to us in the same Christ our Lord; who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

Amen.

Every blessing, *Martin*

rector@stphilipsoconnor.org.au

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Eucharist for the fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Introit Hymn (10am) 251 t.138 (TiS)

Lord Christ, we praise your sacrifice,
your life in love so freely given.

For those who took your life away
you prayed: that they might be forgiven;
and there, in helplessness arrayed,
God's power was perfectly displayed.

Once helpless in your mother's arms,
dependent on her mercy then;
at last, by choice, in other hands,
you were as helpless once again;
and, at their mercy, crucified,
you claimed your victory and died.

Though helpless and rejected then,
you're now as risen Lord acclaimed;
forever by your sacrifice
is God's eternal love proclaimed:
the love which, dying, brings to birth
new life and hope for all on earth.

So, living Lord, prepare us now
your willing helplessness to share;
to give ourselves in sacrifice
to overcome the world's despair;
in love to give our lives away
and claim your victory today.

Alan Gaunt 1935-

Entrance Antiphon

You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.

2 Corinthians 8:9

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, ✠ and the love of God, and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

Lord, we have sinned in thought, word and deed:

Lord have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

We are truly sorry and we ask you to forgive us:

Christ have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Help us by your Spirit to live in newness of life:

Lord have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you ✠ and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray:

O God, you are rich in love for your people:

show us the treasure that endures

and, when we are tempted by greed,
call us back into your service
and make us worthy to be
entrusted with wealth that never fails.

We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Today's Readings

A reading from the book of the prophet Amos 8:4-7

Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
⁵ saying, 'When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain; and the sabbath, so that we may offer wheat for sale? We will make the ephah small and the shekel great, and practise deceit with false balances, ⁶ buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, and selling the sweepings of the wheat.'

⁷ The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

Psalm 113

Praise the Lord, O sing praises, you that are his servants:

O praise the name of the Lord.

**Let the name of the Lord be blessed:
from this time forward and for ever.**

From the rising of the sun to its going down:
let the name of the Lord be praised.

**The Lord is exalted over all the nations:
and his glory is above the heavens.**

Who can be likened to the Lord our God:
in heaven or upon the earth,

**Who has his dwelling so high :
yet condescends to look on things beneath?**

He raises the lowly from the dust:
and lifts the poor from out of the dungheap;

**He gives them a place among the princes:
even among the princes of his people.**

He causes the barren woman to keep house:
and makes her a joyful mother of children. Praise the Lord.

A reading from the first letter to Timothy 2:1-10

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made for everyone, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. ³This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, ⁴who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, ⁶who gave himself a ransom for all —this was attested at the right time. ⁷For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

⁸I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument; ⁹also that the women should dress themselves modestly and decently in suitable clothing, not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, ¹⁰but with good works, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God.

Gradual hymn (10am) 456 (TiS)

Your hand, O God, has guided
your flock from age to age;
the wondrous tale is written
full clear, on every page.
your people owed your goodness,

and we their deeds accord;
and both of this bear witness:
one church, one faith, one Lord.

Your heralds brought glad tidings
to greatest, as to least;
they bade them rise, and hasten
to share the great king's feast;
and this was all their teaching,
in every deed and word,
to all alike proclaiming
one church, one faith, one Lord.

Through many a day of darkness,
through many a scene of strife,
the faithful few fought bravely
to guard the nation's life.
Their gospel of redemption,
sin pardoned, earth restored,
was all in this enfolded:
one church, one faith, one Lord.

Your mercy will not fail us,
nor leave your work undone;
with your right hand to help us
the victory shall be won;
and then by all creation
your name shall be adored,
and this shall be our anthem:
one church, one faith, one Lord.

Edward Hayes Plumptre 1821-91

Gradual (8am)

Alleluia,

alleluia!

For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

1 Timothy 2:7

Alleluia!

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke 16:1-13

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Then Jesus said to the disciples, 'There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. ²So he summoned him and said to him, "What is this that I hear about you? Give me an account of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer." ³Then the manager said to himself, "What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes." ⁵So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, "How much do you owe my master?" ⁶He answered, "A hundred jugs of olive oil." He said to him, "Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty." ⁷Then he asked another, "And how much do you owe?" He replied, "A hundred containers of wheat." He said to him, "Take your bill and make it eighty." ⁸And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. ⁹And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

¹⁰Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. ¹¹If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹²And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? ¹³No slave can serve two masters; for a

slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.'

For the Gospel of the Lord,

praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

Let us affirm the faith of the church

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, ✠ and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

In our prayers we remember those in need, particularly: Ben, Gage, Hugh, Sarah, David, Otto, Bob, Noel, Ermida, Vanessa, Molly and Katherine, those unable to gather with us, those in hospital, residential or home care and those from whom we are isolated.

We pray for Raw Potential, the Outreach Workers as well as the disadvantaged young people they support. We pray that accommodation may be available for young people when they need it, and that they may have the confidence to accept the assistance that Raw Potential can provide. We pray that the Outreach Workers will be successful in making connections with disadvantaged young people so that they can help them to begin to turn their lives around. We pray that our contributions will have a positive impact on this important service.

We commend to God the recently departed especially HM Queen Elizabeth II, those whose anniversaries fall at this time, Jill Isbister (23/09/2021), Laurie Keast (24/09/1990), the victims of war, disaster and pandemic, all whose memories are dear to us, and those who have no one to remember them.

The Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Offertory Hymn (10am) 599ii (TiS)

Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.

Take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
at the impulse of thy love.

take my feet, and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold,
nothing, Lord, would I withhold.
Take my intellect, and use
every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine:
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love: my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure-store.
Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Frances Ridley Havergal 1836-79

Offertory

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation; through your goodness we have our money to offer,
the fruit of our labour and of the skills you have given us. Take us and our possessions to do
your work in the world.

Blessed be God for ever.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,
mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary
and lived as one of us.

By his death on the cross
and rising to new life,
he offered the one true sacrifice for sin
and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

**Heaven and earth and full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he ✕ who comes
in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Merciful God, we thank you
for these gifts of your creation,
this bread and wine,
and we pray that by your word and Holy Spirit,
we who eat and drink them
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;
and when he had given you thanks
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,
and again giving you thanks
he gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Drink from this all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant
shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do, this, as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.'

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:
Proclaiming his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross,
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming again,
we celebrate with this bread and this cup,
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice
for the sins of the whole world.

Great is the mystery of faith:
**Christ has died.
Christ has risen.
Christ will come again.**

Renew us by your Holy Spirit,
unite us in the body of your Son,
and bring us with all your people
into the joy of your eternal kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom and in whom,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
we worship you, Father,
in songs of never-ending praise:
**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be
done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as
we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us
from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Breaking of Bread and Communion

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered together

and made one bread:

so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

Agnus Dei

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away
the sins of the world.

Happy are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon

**To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory
for ever and ever. Amen.**

1 Timothy 1:17

The Sending out of God's People

Let us pray:

Gracious God, we thank you that in this sacrament you assure us of your goodness and love.
Accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and help us to grow in love and obedience
that we may serve you in the world and finally be brought to that table where all your saints
feast with you for ever.

Most loving God, **you send us into the world you love. Give us grace to go thankfully and
with courage in the power of your Spirit.**

Recessional Hymn: 672ii (TiS)

Lord of earth and all creation,
Let your love possess our land:
Wealth, and freedom, far horizons,
Mountain, forest, shining sand:
May we share, in faith and friendship,
Gifts unmeasured from your hand.

People of the ancient Dreamtime,
They who found this country first,
Ask with those, the later comers,
Will our dream be blessed or cursed?
Grant us, Lord, new birth, new living,
Hope for which our children thirst.

Lord, life-giving healing Spirit,
On our hurts your mercy shower;
Lead us by your inward dwelling,
Guiding, guarding, every hour.
Bless and keep our land Australia:
In your will her peace and power.

*Michael Rayner Thwaites 1915-
and Honor Mary Thwaites 1914-93*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge
and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the
Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

GOOD TO BE HERE! PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 2022 THE RIGHT REVEREND DR MARK SHORT
Anglican Church of Australia, Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn 47th Synod, Second Session,
9-11 September 2022, Goulburn NSW

I acknowledge the triune God, the Creator of heaven and earth and His ownership of all things. (Psalm 24:1) I recognise that He gave stewardship of these lands upon which we meet to the First Nations Peoples of this country (Acts 17:26). In His sovereignty, He has allowed other people groups to migrate to these shores. We acknowledge the cultures of our First Nations Peoples and are thankful for the community that we share together now. We pay our respects to elders, both past and present, and those who are rising up to become leaders. (Written by The Reverend Neville Naden, BCA Indigenous Ministry Officer)

Friends in Christ, it is good to be here. It is good to be here because you are here!

Over the past six weeks Monica and I have been on a learning journey as we've encountered different aspects of God's worldwide church. We've marvelled at the faithfulness of Christians who live and worship as a marginalised minority. We've visited grand medieval cathedrals but also heard of congregations gathering under trees and in refugee camps. We've been encouraged by stories of God at work as churches are planted and believers are discipled so they can be salt and light in their communities.

Sometimes the great blessing of being away is a deeper appreciation for what you have at home. That has been true for Monica and me as we've returned to the Diocese that has done so much to nurture and encourage us. More than ever, we are convinced that under God our Diocese has a particular culture and history that can help us all navigate the challenges and opportunities before us in the strength and the grace God provides.

And so we gather as the Second Session of the 47th Synod; more importantly as members of the body of Christ called to serve God's people and God's mission through our deliberations and decisions. We gather mindful that although we have passed through the peak of the most recent wave of COVID infections we still need to care for each other; hence I ask that we might observe all necessary precautions at Synod including making use of the masks that have been provided.

Love and Truth in a World of Difference

It was three years ago when we last met as a Synod in this location. On that occasion I suggested that as God's church in this place at this time we are called to engage a world of difference with the love and truth of Jesus.

"First, we are a world where we are increasingly aware that we differ from each other. As globalisation facilitates the movement of people, capital and ideas across boundaries it brings the diversity of human experience and worldviews to our neighbourhoods, workplaces and social media feeds. In that sense it creates a 'virtual' home where everyone and no-one feels they really belong.

Second, we are increasingly a world where we differ with each other. Sometimes alongside, sometimes in reaction to globalisation there is a reassertion of the local and the particular."

It seems to me that events since 2019 have only strengthened these conclusions. While the challenges associated with the pandemic saw the formation of a National Cabinet this was accompanied by a diversity of policy and practical responses at the State and Territory level. At the most recent Federal election the proportion of votes received by the two major blocs was the lowest since World War II and afterwards a swathe of local independents almost held the balance of power in the House of Representatives.

As a whole Australia was spared the worst of the polarisation over COVID responses we saw in the United States and some other nations. Nevertheless, such disputes as did occur in Australia revealed the extent to which we differ over issues such as the relative importance of freedom and safety, the role of science in decision-making and the extent to which voluntary organisations such as churches can and should play a part in public health responses.

Love and Truth in a Church of Difference

Today, I want to press that analysis a little further by asking another question: how should we respond when the same patterns of difference evident in the wider society manifest themselves in the church? What might a commitment to love and truth look like here?

To begin with I note that most of us would regard a church where we increasingly differ from each other as a blessing. The more that a church, whether at the congregational, Diocesan or denominational level, reflects the diversity of its surrounding community the more it witnesses to the power of the gospel which unites people from all backgrounds under the loving Lordship of Jesus. Of course, genuine diversity pre-supposes that we move beyond a focus on welcome only to consider how we might positively embrace the gifts and the leadership insights of the different people God is bringing to us.

The more difficult question is how to respond when we differ with each other. Here the issue is less about diversity and more about disagreement. Sadly, we can all identify occasions when as Christians we have responded to such difference in the same ways as the broader culture – for example, by uncritically adopting polarised positions or by retreating from broader engagement to more local expressions of fellowship where we can be relatively confident of only having to connect with people who see matters as we do.

To consider how we might avoid patterns that mirror these aspects of our culture I want to draw on an image I introduced three years ago – that of low fences and deep waterholes:

The image comes from an unsourced preacher's illustration. A farmer from overseas is visiting an outback grazier and is amazed at the size of their holdings. "How do you keep your sheep from wandering off? You must have to build lots of fences!" says the visitor. "No" says the grazier. "We don't worry about the fences. We just take care of the waterholes."

In this context the waterholes are the living presence of Christ, manifest at the heart of the Church's common life through word, sacrament and Spirit at the heart of the Church's common life. The people of God serve their culture well when they are attentive to and appropriately protective of this presence. In part, this will mean cultivating convictions and patterns of life which are distinct from those of the wider community. This is the particular 'good' of religious freedom – that it gives Christian and other religious communities space to embody their particular vision of faith, hope and love

(For an extended argument along these lines see Joel Harrison Post-Liberal Religious Liberty: Forming Communities of Charity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

But what of low fences? These are the connection points between a church and its wider culture. The point of them being low is that they allow free and unfettered access so that those on the "outside" can enter and encounter the living presence of Christ for themselves. Those same low fences also allow people to exit when they no longer wish to be part of a particular church – that is, they mitigate against cultic or coercive dynamics.

At the recent Lambeth Conference bishops and spouses studied the New Testament letter of 1 Peter under the theme 'God's Church for God's World' (I believe this theme can be expanded to 'God's Church for God's World for God's Glory'). 'God's church' highlights the distinctive nature of the people of God as explored in passages such as 1 Peter 1:14-16

("Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance. Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct, for it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."); 'for God's World' recalls the missional dimensions of passages such as 1 Peter 3:15-17 ("but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect. Maintain a good conscience so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame.") while 'for God's Glory' points to the ultimate end or purpose of this way of life as outlined in 1 Peter 2:12. ("Conduct yourselves honourably among the gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honourable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge.").

So what of disagreements? Often, but not always, they are most pointed when we are seeking to discern whether a particular conviction or pattern of life represents (a) a means of preserving the fresh waterholes that give the church its distinctive Christ-centred character or (b) an unnecessarily high fence that prevents people encountering the life of Christ for themselves. These discussions often arise when there are changes to the pastoral and missional context within which the church is called to witness to the love and truth of Jesus.

As one example: I and others believe the church's received teaching that sex difference is of the essence of marriage is part of those deep waterholes insofar as it witnesses to the union between Christ and His Church and God's ultimate plan to bring together heaven and earth and all things in Christ. For others that same teaching may be perceived as a barrier to people finding their place in that plan.

So where does that leave us? Let me suggest possible some ways forward:

First, we can seek to discern a common vision behind various positions. Might the image of deep waterholes and low fences be such a vision, not because it resolves every issue but because it gives us a framework for exploring how we might embody the call to both maintain a faithful identity and engage in effective mission?

Second, we can seek to pursue our disagreements in ways that are distinctly and observably Christian. British scholar Christopher Landau identifies four biblical principles to guide such a pursuit. I commend them to you:

'Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone.' (Colossians 4:6).

'Pursue godly speech, inspired by the Spirit' (Matthew 10:19-20, Luke 12:12, Acts 4:31).

'If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.' (Romans 12:18).

'Cultivate the fruit of the Spirit' (Galatians 5:22-23)

Christopher Landau A Theology of Disagreement: New Testament Ethics for Ecclesial Conflicts (London: SCM Press, 2021), p135.

Third, in facing the challenges of disagreement we must not lose sight of the blessings of diversity. Fellow members of the Body of Christ are always gifts to be received and people to be loved rather than problems to be solved. I thank God for every member of our Diocesan family and encourage us all to do the same.

Next Steps

As a step on the journey of listening to and learning from each other we will be moving into Conference mode tomorrow to consider how we are responding to the changed pastoral and missional context resulting from changes to the Marriage Act to allow same sex couples to marry. The format will be similar to a conversation held at the 2015 Synod, prior to those changes.

The purpose of the session is not to debate whether or how the church should change its understanding of marriage. It is an opportunity to take stock on where we are now so we are then in a position to better explore how we might move forward together in engaging our world. I will have more to say on the format tomorrow but please be assured that your feedback matters to us.

Developments in the Wider Church

In what follows I outline some recent developments affecting the life of the Anglican Church of Australia and the wider Anglican Communion.

In May this year the Eighteenth Session of the General Synod met in Adelaide. Much of its business will be reflected in our Synod Agenda, including amendments to safe ministry and professional standards legislation, responding to domestic and family violence and establishing national standards for professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals for those in licensed ministry. We also passed a motion noting the 30th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood; this is of course a story in which our Diocese played a key role not least through Diocesan leadership and those women who courageously responded to God's call.

Most media coverage focussed on debates on two statements on marriage, sexuality and human relationships. In the first statement Synod members were asked to affirm that the faith, ritual, ceremonial and discipline of this Church upholds marriage as the exclusive union of one man and one woman arising from mutual promises of lifelong faithfulness, and hence the solemnisation of a marriage between a same-sex couple or the blessing of a same-sex marriage is not in accordance with the teaching of Christ and the faith, ritual, ceremonial and/or discipline of this

Church. This statement was passed in the houses of laity and clergy but narrowly lost in the house of bishops.

In a later motion General Synod overwhelmingly affirmed "that marriage according to the rites and ceremonies of the Anglican Church of Australia is the voluntary union of one man and one woman arising from mutual promises of lifelong faithfulness". (Resolution R108/18. The context of the resolution was the need to articulate this teaching for the purpose of seeking religious exemption clauses from anti-discrimination legislation).

The next major event in the Anglican Communion was the Lambeth Conference for Bishops and Bishops' Spouses held in England from July 27 until August 9. I wrote some initial reflections for the August Anglican News and will have more to say in this month's edition. Suffice it to say that Monica and I, Bishop Carol and Jay, were blessed to meet many Christian leaders who are faithfully witnessing to the Lord Jesus in circumstances that are more complex, contested and chaotic than anything I have experienced. As one example, it was inspiring to hear Bishop Elizabeth from Rumbek Diocese in South Sudan speak of her 'strategy' for church planting. As she was shifted from one refugee camp to another, she would reach out to any Anglicans present, invite them to her home and plant her next church!

Closer to home, some of you will be aware that later in August a group of Anglicans called GAFCON met in Canberra. During the conference GAFCON announced their intention to create a new entity called 'The Diocese of the Southern Cross' and it was subsequently announced that a priest and some members of a parish in the Diocese of Brisbane will be joining the new Diocese, having reached the decision they are no longer able to accept the leadership of their Archbishop and Synod. The former Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Glenn Davies, has been commissioned as bishop overseeing the new Diocese.

The Diocese of the Southern Cross will not be part of the Anglican Church of Australia and as such is not connected to the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn. I encourage you to pray for them and the Diocese of Brisbane, remembering they are members with us of the church universal and sisters and brothers in Christ.

In describing the developments above I have refrained from detailed commentary, not least because I do not want to test Synod members' endurance beyond what is reasonable! However, if any of what I have said raises questions or concerns for you please be in touch with me. Most importantly, I remind us that as followers of the Lord Jesus our choices are determined neither by the tides of history nor by the decisions of others. We have the opportunity and the honour of hearing God's call to us, individually and corporately, using our God-given gifts for God's glory.

Love and Truth in Ministry and Mission

As I mentioned earlier, COVID has cast a heavy shadow over our churches and other ministries over the past two and a half years. Even as restrictions on meeting have lifted, the need for volunteers and paid workers to isolate when infected has placed extra burdens on those who serve in our churches, schools and welfare ministries. I am particularly grateful for those in leadership who ensured that programs have been able to continue, even as I am aware of the cost many of you have paid.

It therefore particularly appropriate that our next season be one of personal and corporate renewal, focusing on the importance of sustainability and wellbeing in ministry. One expression of this has been the pilot program we have entered into with City to City Australia and six of our Parishes to engage in a process of review and revitalisation in ministry and mission. In the year ahead, I will be working with our Senior Leadership Group to explore other pathways to parish renewal, including analysis of data from the 2021 Census and National Church Life Survey.

As the responsibility of leadership is shared more broadly between clergy and laity, especially in rural Parishes, it is vital that we provide opportunities for faithful servants to nurture their own relationship with God so that they can minister with joy. This year, for the first time, Bishop Carol has organised two retreats for clergy, each with a different style. It is my expectation that all licensed clergy will avail themselves of one of these, or a similar retreat experience, each year. There is more to be done in providing similar opportunities for lay leaders; for many years Cursillo fulfilled such a role and there is a need for us to recapture something of its 'charism' even if the structures are different.

In the wider society we have the opportunity to engage with discussions around the introduction of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament. I welcome the commitment of the Prime Minister to holding a referendum on this matter in the current parliamentary term and pray that churches will be active in the cause of inclusion and justice as they were in the lead up to Referendum 1967. An excellent resource on the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which lies behind this initiative, can be found at www.abmission.org/resources/a-voice-in-the-wilderness.

Fellow Labourers

As we re-acclimatised from a warm and dry Europe to a cool and damp Australia, Monica and I were reminded how deeply grateful we are for the blessing of serving you. Your faith, hope and love is an inspiration as we labour together in the cause of Christ.

Today, I want to acknowledge three fellow-labourers who will be with us at Synod for the last time, at least in their current roles.

The Very Reverend Phillip Saunders will be retiring as Dean of St Saviour's Cathedral in early 2023. Since being called to the Diocese almost 20 years ago Dean Phillip has renewed the culture and the fabric of one of Edmund Blackett's great gifts to the Australian church. He has been a judicious adviser to Bishops and others on all things liturgical and has co-ordinated many worship services that have expressed and enriched our life as God's people. On such occasions some of Dean Philip's best work happens behind the scenes so it is appropriate that he will come out from behind the curtain to preach for us at our Synod Eucharist. Our prayers and wishes are with Philip and Sue as they prepare for the next stage of life in this beautiful city.

Mr Jeremy Halcrow's passion for justice and Jesus has been evident during his service with Anglicare NSW South, NSW West and ACT, first as Director for Communications and Strategic Partnerships, and for the past nine years as CEO. Jeremy has modelled the Anglicare values of dignity, inclusiveness, compassion and integrity. He has been a dedicated team player, building bridges between Anglicare and other aspects of the Diocese. His expertise has been recognised by his peers in the welfare sector and the Anglicare Australia network and will ensure he continues to make an impact in his new Canberra-based role with The Benevolent Society.

Ms Bev Forbes has served three Bishops in her time as Bishop's Executive Officer. More importantly, she has quietly and faithfully served countless clergy, lay people and staff by guiding them through the complexity of Diocesan life and Governance. Bev has been gifted with a head for process and a heart for people and I have greatly valued and benefitted from her care and concern for others in all the changing circumstances of Diocesan life. It has been a blessing to work with Bev and other members of the Bishops Office team to make it a place where all are welcomed and treated with respect. Bev and Alan will be enjoying retirement in Canberra and I expect their home will soon be welcoming the sound of little (puppy) feet.

Please join with me in thanking these servants of Christ and praying for God's continued blessing on their life and ministry.

Conclusion

Let me conclude where I began: it is good to be here! It is good to be here because God is here. It is good to be here because Jesus promised that in this world we would not be left bereft as orphans (John 14:18) and Jesus can be trusted to do what he says. God is here, and God will be with us as we go into that world, with all its difference, bearing words of truth and deeds of love. I invite you to join with me in praying that we will do so, confident in the all-sufficient grace of our Lord and Saviour.

Most loving God, **You send us into the world you love. Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage in the power of your Spirit. Amen.**

News

The ministry from **St John's Care** is increasingly important in what are difficult economic times for many. Currently SJC are keen to receive donations of Shampoo, Coffee (100g), Olive oil, and tinned fruit. If you are able to assist please leave your donations in the baskets at the back of the church. Cash donations are also appreciated, see their website www.stjohnscare.org.au/ for information on how to contribute.

If you would like to contribute towards the cost of **flowers** see Susan or use one of the

envelopes in the narthex. They can be dedicated in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving and a note placed in the pew sheet.

Pandora's Spring Launch will be held next Saturday 24 September; come along a pick up a bargain! A great opportunity to 'come and see' the ministry that is Pandora's, enjoy some hospitality and add a little something to your Spring wardrobe!

Maurice Nevile invites you to 10 Summers Place, Florey, for a **St Philip's board games afternoon**, Sunday 25th September - drop in between 2-6 pm. No Monopoly, no Scrabble! Last time we dived for treasure, walked across Japan, and built rail networks across Europe. We could try those again, or build an Ecosystem, a Dream Home, a Tiny Town, grow a coral Reef, battle it out as bandits on the Colt Express, or do something else. The aim is always to enjoy the games and our fellowship together.

Bishop's Executive Officer. Are you looking for an opportunity to integrate Christian faith and administrative excellence? With the imminent retirement of Ms Bev Forbes the Diocese is looking to recruit a new Bishop's Executive Officer. The successful applicant will be a key member of the Bishops Office Team, enabling and equipping the clergy and laity of the Diocese to fulfil their mission of engaging our world with the love and truth of Jesus. Further details of the position and the application process can be found at www.anglicancg.org.au/bishops-executive-officer/
We would appreciate applications being received by Friday 23 September 2022.

Embracing Ministries sibling program: request for support It is a tough gig for sisters or brothers of disabled family members. Special support is often required. Embracing Ministries (EM) is holistic in its care programs and its ministry activities. It supports the whole family including siblings and carers. This is why we are seeking support for siblings to attend Camp Pelican in January next year.

EM's Siblings Program supports siblings of those who have complex intellectual, physical and medical needs. Many of our families face multiple challenges in their daily lives. For most they struggle financially to meet needs. For the vast majority affording even a brief time away is beyond their capacity. Help in providing a time at Camp Pel for children who attend our siblings program provides much needed support and assistance to the families it can often be transformatory.

We are appealing to Canberra churches and members to support:
17-20 Siblings attend Camp Pelican @ a cost of \$100 per person
4 Leaders attend Camp Pelican @ a cost of \$250 per person

The program provides siblings the opportunity for mutual friendship and support. Siblings aged 8-14 can participate in regular fun, recreation and social outings. We are seeking donations to support some of our most disadvantaged children who are siblings of kids with disability or receiving end of life care to attend a 4 day Camping trip in January 2022. We are counting on your support. We do hope that you will respond positively and provide financial assistance for one or more of our siblings or leaders to attend the camping trip in January next year. We will acknowledge your support.

Thank you in anticipation please make donations to
Embracing Siblings
Anglican Investment Development Fund
BSB 702 389

Account number 0520 9841

I look forward to hearing from you soon, Many blessings Andrea

Holy Cross Hackett and St Margaret's Uniting Church are running their **Annual Sustaining Our Future Festival** on **24 September**, featuring a full programme with something for everyone! All are welcome!

11am-4pm Pop-up Market: Conservation and community stalls, kids' craft, e-bike rides, food and sustainable goods.

11.30am Labyrinth spirituality

12pm Mosaic making

12.30pm Roving Regenerators composting workshop

12.30pm History of mosaics in Christianity

2pm Labyrinth spirituality
 Ethical fashion showcase
 1-3pm Textile repair cafe (drop in)
 1-3pm Slow fashion op-shop
 3-4pm Sustainable Fashion Q&A
 7pm: Jazz and Democracy evening with Tim Hollo

News from Parish Council Key points from Parish Council September meeting

- Wine during Communion – Parish Council agreed to introduce a modified use of the Common Cup on Sunday 25 September. Under this modification, communicants will have the choice to receive an intincted Host from the celebrant.
- Parish planning day – Council agreed to hold a whole-of-parish planning day on Saturday 29 October. More details to come.
- Leaf removal – A contractor has cleared leaves from the roof on the rectory and kindergarten.
- Courtyard tree – Council agreed to accept a quote to prune the London plane tree in the courtyard, including the removal of dead branches.
- Electrical safety – A contractor has completed testing and tagging 123 items. Council is receiving quotes to replace the ageing switchboard in the church.
- Lamerton Centre waterproofing – A builder has resealed the roof and replaced several moisture-damaged lights.
- Mid-year budget review – Council has conducted its mid-year budget review. The deficit currently exceeds \$10,000, in large part due to significant and unplanned repairs and maintenance.

This week @ St Philip's

Today	<i>Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost</i>
8am	Eucharist
10am	Eucharist with Hymns
Tuesday 20 Sept	<i>John Coleridge Patteson, first bishop of Melanesia, martyr (d.1871)</i>
10am	Funeral - Col (rtd) Lloyd Streeter at Duntroon.
2pm	Eucharist – Sir Leslie Morshead Manor
7-9pm	Statement from the Heart – Reflection 10 (Last)
Wednesday 21 Sept	<i>St Matthew, apostle, evangelist & martyr</i>
10am-12noon	Pandora's sorting & tidying
Thursday 22 Sept	<i>National Day of Mourning</i>
10am	Eucharist
Saturday 24 Sept	<i>Feria</i>
10am-1pm	Pandora's Spring Launch
11am	Eucharist - Kankinya
Sunday 25 Sept	<i>Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost</i>
8am	Eucharist
10am	Eucharist with Hymns
2-6pm	Games afternoon (see 'News')
	<i>Readings: Amos 6: 1a, 4-7, Psalm 146, 1 Timothy 6:6-19, Luke 16:19-31</i>

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 24 Sept	Pandora's Spring Launch
Saturday 29 October	Parish Planning Day - Greenhills
Sunday 6 November	All Saints
Sunday 13 November	Remembrance Sunday
Sunday 20 November	Christ the King

Rosters

		18-Sep-22	25-Sep-22	2-Oct-22	
	Sunday of month	3rd	4th	1st	
	Liturgical Season	15th Sunday after Pentecost	16th Sunday after Pentecost	17th Sunday after Pentecost	
	Flowers	Flowers Team	Flowers Team	Flowers Team	
8am	Celebrant	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Canon Scott	8am
	Preacher (if different to Celebrant)	Rev'd Canon Scott			
	Sidespeople	Rhonda & Susan	Shane & Tim	Margaret & Russell	
	Liturgical Assistant	Rev'd Martin	Brian McK	Lisa C	
	1st Bible reader - OT	Rebecca P	Shane W	Russell M	
	2nd Bible reader - NT	Julianne S	Shane W	Margaret M	
10am	Celebrant	Rev'd Canon Scott	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Martin	10am
	Preacher (if different to Celebrant)			Rev'd Canon Scott	
	Sidespeople & Welcomer	Laura W, Jeannette MCH & Richard G	Fred A & Sally A	Fred A & Katie C	
	Liturgical Assistant	Rev'd Martin	Philippa W	Crucifer: Leighton M	
	Musician(s) & Singers/Soloist	Colin F	Colin F	Colin F	
	1st Bible reader - OT	Ashton R	Colin D	Jos G	
	2nd Bible reader - NT	Fred A	Jeanette D-T	Richard G	
	Morning Tea	Helen P	Janene B	Katie C	
<i>Additional details/notes</i>		<i>School Holidays</i>	<i>School Holidays</i>		