

NEWSPAPER OF THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF GRAFTON, NEW SOUTH WALES

# NORTH COAST ANGLICAN

*Transforming lives through Jesus Christ*

August September 2019 | Issue No 4



SPECIAL SYNOD EDITION

## INSTRUMENTS FOR MISSION



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MORE DETAILS PAGE 12



## FROM THE BISHOP



Diocesan Synod in June was my first Grafton Synod and the first time I have chaired a synod. I was heartened by the respectful way that debates were conducted. This was important because I know that some of our discussions were challenging for many. Given the contentious nature of current issues such as human sexuality, there will continue to be awkward discussions in future years.

There have been a number of misconceptions regarding the June Synod. Sadly, a small number of people have intentionally misrepresented the decisions that were made. One aspect of this related to the fact that Synod did not pass the motion (27) which stated: *That this Synod affirms the authorised standard of worship and doctrine of the Anglican Church of Australia as set out in the Fundamental Declarations and Ruling principles of the Constitution*. Not surprisingly, once word of this got out, there was discussion about it on social media, where I was at pains to point out that the Synod did not *withdraw*

anything. Quite the contrary in fact. The diocese continues to affirm the constitution and fundamental declarations. The Synod simply decided against passing a motion that reaffirms these as the members of Synod were not convinced of the need to affirm it again and again. An example I have used to illustrate this point is the renewal of ordination vows. If a clergyperson decides not to go to the reaffirmation of vows service in a particular year it does not mean they have rejected their vows, simply that they did not feel the need to reaffirm the vows on that occasion.

In the light of all this I think it is important for me to clarify that the authorised standard of worship and doctrine of the Anglican Church of Australia is set out in the Fundamental Declarations and Ruling principles of the Constitution. If you hold a Bishop's Licence you will have signed Oaths and Declarations affirming this. For those who are not familiar with the Constitution it is publicly available at: <https://anglican.org.au/governance/constitution/>

On a related note, two members of Synod moved a motion, which was passed by a majority, asking that General Synod in 2020 consider developing liturgies for the Blessing of Same Sex Marriages. To assume, on the basis of this motion, that we are now offering such



L to R: Mr Jacob Killick, Mr Lawrence Outridge, Bishop Murray Harvey, Ms Emma Webb and Mr Brodie Marshall

blessings in Grafton Diocese is ludicrous. As previously stated on numerous occasions, in accordance with the Bishops' Agreement of 2018, I have not authorised any form of liturgical recognition for a same-sex marriage or for the blessing of a same-sex union. These matters will be considered at General Synod 2020, but even then a final decision might not be made until a future year.

A book of essays on this topic has been produced for Anglicans by the Doctrine Commission of the General Synod, entitled *Marriage, Same Sex Marriage and the Anglican Church of Australia: essays from the Doctrine*

*Commission*. It is available as a free download from: <https://anglican.org.au/our-work/doctrine-theology/> A hard copy is available from Garratt Publishing.

If you are going to read it, I suggest that you read the whole thing, not just the essays that articulate your current position. As Dr Jonathan Holland states in the Introduction, even the Doctrine Commission members found putting the essays together to be as much a listening process as an articulation of ideas. Try to at least understand the position that is opposite to the one that you already hold. What did you learn about the other's position

that you didn't already know? Are there any insights at all from that position that you found to be of merit? Maybe you can get together with others from your church or ministry unit to discuss what new insights you have about your own and other standpoints after reading the book of essays.

These are weighty matters and I know that some of you are struggling as we grapple with them as a church. Let's have patience with ourselves and with those around us as we continue to consider these issues.

+Murray

## Former CVAS Head to Lead National Principal's Association

**By Carol Bower**  
**Member – Grafton Anglican Schools' Commission**

The Rev'd Chris Ivey, who was Head of Grafton's Clarence Valley Anglican School (CVAS) from 2003 until 2006, has just been elected as the new honorary Chair of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools in Australia (AHISA). In this position Chris will be negotiating with senior politicians and representing independent schools across Australia on many matters, including federal funding, government policies and legislation on such matters as curriculum, assessment and reporting. He has been on the National Board of AHISA since 2015 and was appointed as

Treasurer in 2016.

Chris is currently the Principal at St Andrew's Anglican College at Peregian Springs, Qld, a position he accepted and commenced in 2007. He has been, until very recently, the State Chair of AHISA Queensland and has served on several advisory panels.

Chris had previously held positions in Independent schools on the Gold Coast and in Cairns. He originally trained as an English and Drama teacher before undertaking theological study, being ordained and becoming a College Chaplain.

During his time in Grafton, Chris acknowledges the "strong sense of community that existed and I hope we built on

at CVAS. There were always people willing to step in and help out when needed".

One of his highlights was the growth of student numbers from 160 to just on 300. "A lot of people put in a lot of work to build our reputation, to enhance our programs and to provide a quality education. We had some fantastic staff during my time, many of whom are still at CVAS and it is their passion for what we were trying to achieve that I will most remember." This was the time that the new campus at Clarenza was being established – a major move in the school's history.

His final quote to me? "Grafton was the place I bought my first boat and fell in love with that awesome river".



### NORTH COAST ANGLICAN

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# Commissioning of the Rev'd Tiffany Sparks

The Third Session of the Thirty Sixth Synod of the Diocese of Grafton commenced at 6pm on Friday 21 June at The Cathedral Church of Christ the King, Grafton, with Eucharist.

The Holy Eucharist was led by Bishop Murray Harvey and included the Commissioning of The Rev'd Tiffany Sparks as the Diocesan Archdeacon and Ministry Development Officer.

Rev'd Tiffany accepted the role following the retirement of the Venerable Gail Hagon earlier this year.

Together with the Bishop and other senior leaders, Rev'd Tiffany will help to shape and live out mission and ministry across the diverse ministry contexts of the North Coast. The Diocesan Archdeacon is required to exercise this significant role of spiritual leadership with integrity, leading and working alongside large teams of clergy, lay people and volunteers.

Bishop Murray Harvey announced that the selection panel was convinced that Rev'd Tiffany will meet the requirements of the role with integrity.

"We believe that she offers the kind of creative energy and leadership that are currently needed as we grow into becoming the church of the future," Bishop Murray said.

"I look forward to welcoming Tiffany and her husband Grant to the diocese and sharing ministry with them. Please keep Tiffany and her family in your prayers as they undertake the responsibilities that Tiffany will be taking on."

Rev'd Tiffany joins the Grafton Diocese from the Diocese of Brisbane where she was the Rector of Ashgrove.

She comes to the Diocese with experience in parish ministry where she has creatively engaged with the local community through ministries such as *Practically Spiritual*, a systemic theology group, *Wine and Cheese Nights* which serve as a public forum to tackle matters of faith in the secular world, and *All in Church*, and approach to intergenerational worship.

Beyond the parish Tiffany has experience of engaging with wider society, including being the developer of *Repent4Lent.org*, a social media campaign that involved over 30,000 engagements worldwide, was a panellist on the ABC's Q&A program and is a participant in the SBS reality TV documentary on Christianity, *Christians Like Us*, which is currently airing on SBS TV.

Read more about Rev'd Tiffany in her own words:

"My name is Tiffany Sparks and I am currently the Rector of St Paul's Anglican Church Ashgrove in Brisbane where I have served since 2012. Throughout my life some of the most influential conversations have been theological and philosophical in nature, which has encouraged me to reflect deeply on what being a Christian means and what that tells us about how to serve each other with love, respect and dignity. I have always been fascinated by how we develop as a culture, forming cultural norms and community



narratives. This fascination has been with me from my late teens, drawing me to pursue education in Social Sciences and Theology with honours in Pauline Literature. I was ordained in 2011 at 29 years old. Before ordination my ministry included working for the Development of Theology at ACU during my honours studies and working for Griffith University as Chaplain. Previously I was involved in creating young mothers' groups in Western Queensland,

refugee and homelessness advocacy.

After having my son at a young age, I have been particularly concerned with people on the margins, who feel excluded from God and Church and seek to make the Church more accessible to everyone. I am also interested in exploring the online space with campaigns like *repent4lent.org*, where I encouraged people to reflect on current society and their own beliefs and in 2014 St Paul's became the first

mainstream Church to accept Bit-coin (crypto currencies).

I am married to the lovely Grant Sparks and we have a blended family of six children, a grandchild and two beautiful border collies. I am looking forward to all the adventures this future ministry is going to offer, to meeting and supporting people in their vocations and to being inspired by where the Spirit is moving in our places of worship and in the community."

## Chance Visit Led to Bigger Things

When budding musician Paloma DiDia offered her talent on the keyboard to entertain the crowd at St Mary's Ballina charity fund-raising fête last year, she had no idea that her generous gesture would lead her to an international organ tutor.

It all began when Xavier Catholic College, which was to perform at the fête, had to cancel because of circumstances, including sickness among the band members. Paloma, a 15-year old Year 10 student at Xavier, was asked by her teacher if she would do a solo act.

She did, and impressed fête-goers so much with her talent she was asked if she would be interested in playing regularly at St John the Baptist Anglican Church in neighbouring Lennox Head.

Paloma took on the role of regular musician at St John the Baptist, where then Parish Secretary, John Bryen, made her aware that Ballina Parish's

Music Co-ordinator, Hamsa Arnold, was available for tuition. (Her previous teacher and good friend Myra Kluck had not long passed away.)

Internationally trained, Hamsa not only teaches piano, organ and pipe organ but is also an accomplished choir master.

Fast forward to the present, and once a week after school you will find Paloma at the renowned pipe organ at St Mary's Ballina, rebuilt in 1999 by the church's organist and professional repairer Ian Brown and his wife Jennifer.

With Hamsa looking over her shoulder and passing on his skills, she is already impressing with her enthusiasm and determination.

Paloma started playing piano at age 5, growing up around musicians and bands as her father, Nick DiDia, is a studio engineer/producer.

Paloma said, "My main instrument is piano, apart from my current lessons on the pipe



organ.

"But I also play drums, harmonica, ukulele and a bit of guitar," she said, adding "I also

sing and play trumpet.

"But most of all I want to do well at school and study medicine. My big ambition is to

be a doctor, and my aim is to become a neurosurgeon," she said.



# Stories to Freedom

The 3Es to Freedom program was initiated in 2016 by Anglicare North Coast, and supports refugee and migrant women to navigate pathways to education, employment and empowerment.

The success of this program has been documented through film, photography, textiles and creative arts. And, for the first time, this journey of freedom and empowerment was on public display in a series of exhibitions.

The exhibitions, titled *Stories to Freedom*, held at Coffs Harbour, Lismore and the Gold Coast, offered viewers an insight into the past, present and future lives of refugee and migrant women living and working in the surrounding communities.

Works on display included photography capturing the essence of the program and participants experiences, as

well as hand crafted textiles and a visual narrative on a large canvas cloth created by the women. For many participants it was the first time they had created an artwork, told their story or had their photograph taken.

The audiences were captivated by the stunning portraits and intricate textiles, a skill many women had been taught by their mothers in their birth country. It was a process of joy, reflection and sharing.

The artworks were complemented by a documentary film produced by Dr Mandy Hughes from Southern Cross University. The film shared the women's experiences of the program and depicted their connections to each other and their communities.

Education and employment are key components of



the program, however empowerment is integral too, and underpins every aspect of the 3Es to Freedom program. 3Es helps participants to build

confidence and safety through community connections and wellbeing activities. These exhibitions showcased the spirit of the program to

the wider community and highlighted the wonderful work of Anglicare North Coast.



# Distant recognition for Lismore Bellringers

On June 2 Lismore bellringers were presented with specially struck medals from the Central Council of Bellringers in the United Kingdom recognising their participation in the worldwide ringing of bells event commemorating the Centenary of Armistice Day on 11 November 2018.

Prior to that day, the bellringing team had rung over a period of several months, eight quarter peals in honour of those soldiers from the local 41st battalion who had lost their lives on the Western Front

from 1916 onwards. Tower captain Robert Weatherby composed two tunes for this event, which had their world premier in the Lismore tower. The tunes 41st Battalion and World Peace are now part of the team's repertoire and may well be used again soon as plans are being made to attempt a further quarter peal honouring those soldiers from the battalion who died from wounds following the Armistice.



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# PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

**The Rt Rev'd Dr Murray Harvey, 22 June 2019**

## MISSION

My trusty *Oxford English Dictionary* tells me that mission is an intensive course of preaching, services and other religious activities organised to stimulate interest in the Christian faith. In the Latin, *missio* means "sending". The Latin term *missio Dei* "mission of God" captures the full depth and power of what mission is: it belongs to God and is God's work. Mission flows from the heart of God. Paul Avis writes that *Missio Dei* speaks of the overflowing of the love of God's being and nature into God's purposeful activity in the world. We each, as individuals and communities, cooperate with God in this mission in various ways. The Anglican Communion's Five Marks of Mission are a practical guide to mission's holistic and integral nature but are not a final and complete statement on mission. Mission is not a program, but a divine transforming love in which we are swept up. Mission is exciting, even breathtaking. So mission is something we give thanks for and participate in with grateful hearts! Rowan Williams writes that mission is not complicated: it is the active presence of Christ coming through in our actions and relationships.

As we are invited and drawn into God's work of mission, we realise that our actions and relationships are part of this outpouring of God's transforming love for the world. It is here that we encounter our sense of vocation. Bishop Tim Harris of Adelaide reminds us that both personally as Baptised Christians and as church communities we are called to be a light to the world, an extended family on mission together. That we are a people with a mission to cooperate with God's transforming love and grace is evidenced in many places in the scriptures. In *Luke 4:18-19*, Jesus reads from *Isaiah 61* in the Synagogue – a message announcing the time of God's grace. He has come to proclaim the freedom that heralds God's transforming love. The life and ministry of Christ involves healing, wholeness and reconciliation – all part of God's movement of love and grace towards the world. Our vocation then is to be fellow workers with God (*1 Cor 3:9*) – the

human capacity for freedom implies responsibility. Recent Anglican-Orthodox dialogue affirms that our "chief glory" in responding to God's calling as fellow-workers with God in his mission includes protecting the dignity of all life, caring for the created order and aspiring to holiness. Mission reaches its goal in all things being drawn into Christ (*Eph 1:10*).

In summary then, and with reference to agreed Anglican understandings of mission, mission is God's movement of love toward the world, God's way of loving and saving the world. Baptised Christians and church communities are instruments for mission and have been called to participate in mission together with God. As his partners in mission we are learning to be present to God, to society, to one another and to our deepest selves in a place where God dwells. So our role in this is to be missionary disciples, revolutionaries in the power of Baptism.

## MISSION IN GRAFTON

How are we living out this mission in the Diocese of Grafton? It has been a real privilege for me to join you as Bishop since my installation in September 2018, to serve alongside you and to get to know the various ministry units of the diocese. I have been made very welcome in parishes, schools, Anglicare NC and in other settings. I have been impressed with the level of commitment of clergy and other licensed ministers, staff and volunteers. I look forward to sharing in these ongoing ministries in the years ahead. There is a long and distinguished history of mission in the diocese, commencing in 1842 with The Rev'd John McConnell and other pioneer lay people and clergy. Their early work is continued today through the commitment and dedication of many who are cooperating with God in his movement of transforming love toward the world that we call mission. The Mission and Ministry Overview 2018 captures the hopes and vision of Anglicans in Grafton Diocese for how this mission can be lived out now and in the future. It envisages a restructure of the diocese and a proposal for this is currently being developed. After being discussed at Bishop in Council it will be presented at a special



meeting in November this year.

When I first arrived I offered to spend a weekday in any ministry unit to which I was invited. I've enjoyed sitting in on staff meetings, Bible Studies, SRE classes, weekday services, prayer meetings, joining parishioners for coffee, walking around the town with the rector and so on. Another way that I have become familiar with mission is through Parish Profiles for vacant parishes seeking a new rector. These profiles say a lot about the kind of church they are and what they want to become. I have enjoyed meeting people and getting to know communities, hearing the stories of individuals, church communities, schools and agencies.

All this has given me some insights, perhaps even the beginnings of an understanding, of some of the issues we face in cooperating with God in his mission in this Diocese. In some places it's clear that the church community has confidence that it has something to share. In these communities the Good News is shared with passion, confidence and love. They are invitational and even magnetic. There is a culture of following up every opportunity to engage with individuals, with different demographics and groups, and to intentionally make connections. In Parish Profiles this is reflected in an invitational tone that is confident that there is something to offer a new priest. However, in other places this confidence is

not present, and while they might receive a warm welcome, newcomers might be left wondering why they would want to become involved other than to help support the existing programs and structures.

Like many, I am disheartened that the church appears to have lost some of the respect and standing that it formerly had in the community. This loss of confidence can have implications for how we see ourselves and can negatively impact on our mission if we allow it to. Also adding to disillusionment can be increasing age profiles of congregations, reducing numbers, an inability to replace key leaders and workers with a new generation of disciples, and a lack of clergy offering to take on vacant parishes. In this vein Greenwood writes that churches are easily distracted from their truest identity and purpose by falling numbers, rising damp, too few clergy, old hymns, new hymns, disputes about who is right and who is welcome. I don't pretend to have all the answers. However, none of these contextual factors should distract us from the importance of a deep personal faith commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ. If we have this, and we truly believe in him, then we should be convinced that we have something precious to share, and equally convinced that people might want to be part of it.

There are many voices that call for, and strategies that can assist with, the renewal of the church's

commitment and capacity for communicating the Gospel with passion, persuasion, inspiration and conviction but unless we each have a passionate personal faith they will lead to nothing. As I said above, mission is God's transforming love in which we are swept up. If we have a passionate personal commitment to Christ, mission is exciting and even breathtaking. *Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est!*

## STATISTICS

In Grafton Diocese we have seen a decline in church attendance over a number of years. Total attendance on an Average Sunday in our Diocese was 3,305 in 2006. By 2011 it was only 2,370. The same period saw a decline in the number of Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. Most Australian Dioceses have seen a similar decline. As a further example of this decline, a typical parish in our diocese (Casino) had a total church attendance in 2018 of 8,109. 35 years earlier, in 1983, that figure was 10,129. For South Grafton the 2018 figure was 5,583 versus 7,943 in 1983. The Anglican Church of Australia has been engaged in a conversation about its growth and decline since the early 1990s. As Robin Greenwood warns, Anglican habits of mind are being seriously dislodged from complacency. The changes that confront us are serious and they're not going to disappear so we need to respond in a well thought-out, strategic way.

**Continued Page 9**

# RESOLUTIONS OF SYNOD 2019

## RESOLUTION 31: GLOBAL GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This Synod notes the success of the Millennium Development Goals which included more than halving the number of people living in extreme poverty since 1990 and:

- a) Welcomes the new Global Goals for Sustainable Development, which aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and pursue the common good;
- b) Encourages Anglicare North Coast, parishes and schools across the Diocese to engage actively with the sustainable development goals as part of our commitment to the following three marks of mission adopted by the Anglican Consultative Council in 1984:
  - i. To respond to human need by loving service
  - ii. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
  - iii. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth
- c) Calls for a fair share of Australia's national budget (0.7% of gross national income) to be dedicated to overseas development assistance that aims to reduce poverty; and
- d) Asks Bishop-in-Council to report to the next Synod on provisions made to ensure that not less than 0.7% of eligible diocesan income, including income from the sale of church properties, is dedicated to projects which contribute to the global sustainable development goals.

## RESOLUTION 24: "STATEMENT FROM THE HEART"

That this Synod calls upon our Federal Government to honour the recommendations in the "Statement from the Heart" from the First Nations Constitutional Convention at Uluru in May 2017, the Convention of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes, to:

- Establish a First Nations Voice to be enshrined in the Constitution;
- Enable a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history;
- To acknowledge the First Nations statement and right to "seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country".

## RESOLUTION 38: THE RIGHT TO VOTE (75.2 OF THE DIOCESAN GOVERNANCE ORDINANCE 2008 AS AMENDED FEBRUARY 2019)

That Synod requests the Bishop-in-Council to investigate the implications of lowering the voting age from 16 to 14 to allow greater participation in the life of the parish by youth and report back to Synod 2020.

## RESOLUTION 28: AFFIRMING ALL GOD'S PEOPLE WITH RADICAL HOSPITALITY

That this Synod:

- affirms that all humanity in its diversity is made in the image of God and is called to share full honour and equity with one another;
- with God affirms the goodness in the gender and sexual identity of all people; and
- welcomes all LGBTQIA+ people into full participation in the life of the Church.

## RESOLUTION 34: FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

That this Synod:

- does not condone any form of family and domestic violence;
- affirms the work of the General Synod Family Violence Working Group;
- supports the National Anglican Family Violence Study to be undertaken by National Church Life Survey Research; and
- continues to work with Australian dioceses in the prevention of family and domestic violence.

## RESOLUTION 23: FORMAT OF THE DIOCESAN GOVERNANCE ORDINANCE

For the purpose of making the Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008 clearer for its users, this Synod authorises the Registrar, under the guidance of the Ordinance Review Committee, to amend and re-issue the Diocesan Governance Ordinance with the following format changes:

- Clause numbering that correlates to the chapter numbering of the ordinance;
- Defined terms being identified in the text of the ordinance by underlining or other suitable change of format;
- Deletion of redundant clause numbers; and
- Any other editing that proves necessary as a consequence of the above.

## RESOLUTION 13: OP SHOP SUPPORT

That this Synod, in recognition of the valuable ministry of parish op shops and the increasing regulatory demands and the expectations of society, call upon the Bishop-in-Council to conduct a review of the op shops across the Diocese to recommend areas of support, training and cooperation that would benefit the op shop operations and the volunteers that serve in this ministry.



## RESOLUTION 32: REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

That this Synod:

- recognises our imperative as Christians to:
  - a) love the refugee as we love ourselves,
  - b) to welcome the refugee and asylum seeker,
  - c) and to ensure justice for the refugee and asylum seeker;
- continues to advocate for refugee and asylum seekers; and
- will lobby the Government to bring the women and men currently in detention on Manus Island and Nauru to Australia, to close offshore processing facilities, and to expedite applications that pre-date 1 January 2018 awaiting decision for refugee status.

## RESOLUTION 33: RECOGNITION AND BLESSING OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

That this Synod encourages the 2020 General Synod:

- i) to authorise Anglican clergy to participate in civil marriages;
- ii) to move towards providing optional provisions for the blessing of civil marriages; and
- iii) to move towards providing an optional liturgy for the solemnisation of Holy Matrimony where the parties to the marriage are of the same gender.



RESOLUTION 36: CONVERSION THERAPY

That this Synod:

- acknowledges that all people are made in the image of God, regardless of sexuality or gender identity;
- endorses the position of the Australian Psychological Society that “strongly opposes any approach to psychological practice or research that treats lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people as disordered, and any approach that attempts to change an individual’s sexual orientation;”
- will be sensitive to, and to listen to, diverse expressions of sexuality and gender identity, and never recommend “Conversion Therapy” to anyone; and
- calls on the government to ban the practice of “Conversion Therapy”.

Conversion therapy is the practice of trying to change a person’s sexual orientation from homosexual or bisexual to heterosexual using psychological or spiritual interventions. It is sometimes called reparative therapy.

This kind of therapeutic program has a history of taking place in religious institutions, and an example of such a program was the focus of the award-winning 2018 film starring Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe titled *Boy Erased*.

The peak professional bodies representing Medical Professionals (AMA), Psychologists (APS), Psychotherapists (PACFA), Social Workers (AASW) and Christian Counsellors (CCAA) in Australia have all called for this practice to be banned, and indeed

there is movement in government for this to take place. Earlier this year the Victorian government announced a ban on gay conversion therapy and the NSW Health Minister has expressed support for this move. In the lead up to the federal election Bill Shorten promised a national ban on gay conversion therapy.

The core criticisms lodged against conversion therapy are twofold. Firstly, professional bodies locally and globally have expressed concern because of the documented harmful effects of these programs, and secondly they regard the programs contrary to ethical research-informed therapeutic practice.

Codes of Ethics require medical, psychological and counselling professionals to do no harm to clients, and label the practice of gay conversion therapy as unethical because of the harmful effects documented

to be associated with it.

The Christian Counsellors Association of Australia affirms Christian faith as part of their Code of Ethics by saying, “All people are created in the image of God,” but goes on to caution Christian counsellors to be “aware of the power differential that exists between them and the client” for the client is in “vulnerable position”. Their code of conduct, in the section called Unethical Conduct, makes the following assertion: “8.8 Counsellors shall not do therapeutic interventions aimed at modifying or changing the sexual orientation of clients.”

While it is regarded as unethical to aim to change the sexual orientation of clients, this is not to say that individuals who experience pain or confusion around their sexual orientation should be not be seeking counselling. It is entirely appropriate for people who desire to make changes to their own identity and behaviour to meet with their own therapist for counselling, psychological support, or psychotherapy, however there are strict ethical guidelines around the therapist’s role.

It’s important to note that not all people who have been through gay conversion therapy have had harmful experiences. There may be stories of positive success for individuals who have gone through this therapy. However, the fact that some people have reported associated harm as a result of this therapy is enough of a warning bell that we shouldn’t have these programs. Vulnerable people are involved. The Royal Commission has reminded us that the Church has a heavy responsibility to do no harm and protect against the potential for harm. It would be irresponsible to ignore the evidence and cautioning of bodies such as the Australian Psychological Society, Australian Medical Association, Christian Counsellors Association, Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia, all who are experts in this field, who urge for the practice to be banned.



The Reverend Canon Matthew Smedley



The Reverend Canon Zoe Everingham



Mrs Leone Hanger



Mr Mark Stuckey



RESOLUTION 35: FIRST NATIONS

That this Synod:

- affirms and acknowledges the Bundjalung, Arakwal, Yaegl, Githabul, Gumbayngirr, Dunghutti and Birbai peoples as the First Nations of this Diocese;
- affirms that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes are the first sovereign Nations of Australia from the time of Creation, and, according to science, more than 60,000 years ago;
- will lobby the Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister to work towards a referendum on constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- asks Ministry Units to use their local Acknowledgement of Country in liturgies, websites, and printed material; and
- encourages Ministry Units to lobby their local member of parliament to ensure that Australia observes its commitments under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with freedom from discrimination, self-determination, participation in decision-making, and the protection of their language and cultures.

RESOLUTION 25: RECOGNITION OF FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES AS PART OF THE CONSTITUTION.

That Synod notes with pleasure the decision of the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, to proceed slowly towards a referendum related to the level of constitutional recognition of our First Nations peoples and thereby to build up the support within the Australian community for this change in the same way the very strong support was built before the 1967 successful referendum on the first federal recognition as human beings of our First Nations peoples.

RESOLUTION 30: ST CUTHBERT’S RETIREMENT LIVING COMPLEXES

That Synod acknowledges with thanks the ministry over the past 40 years of St. Cuthbert’s Retirement Living Complexes in Tweed Heads and expresses the gratitude of the Diocese for:

- the visionary and strategic leadership of the people of the Parish of Tweed Heads in establishing the 74 units in retirement villages to provide affordable retirement accommodation in a safe Anglican Christian village environment in the Tweed Heads/Gold Coast area without discrimination;
- the dedicated and skilful manner, in which many volunteer Board members have managed the complex over the years and cared for residents;
- the mutual support and cooperation of the Board and the Diocese together
- the extraordinary financial benefits that the complex has delivered to the Diocese in support of Diocesan ministry initiatives including support of Diocesan Ordination Candidates, the saving of Clarence Valley Anglican School, and future Diocesan initiatives to come.

RESOLUTION 26: CANONS OF THE 17TH GENERAL SYNOD

That this Synod requests the Bishop-in-Council to consider the following Canons passed by the 17th General Synod and if the Bishop-in-Council considers it appropriate, provide the assent of the Diocese of Grafton by ordinance:

- Canon 2 Constitution (Appellate Tribunal) Amendment Canon 2017
- Canon 6 Constitution (Jurisdiction of Special Tribunal) Amendment Canon 2017

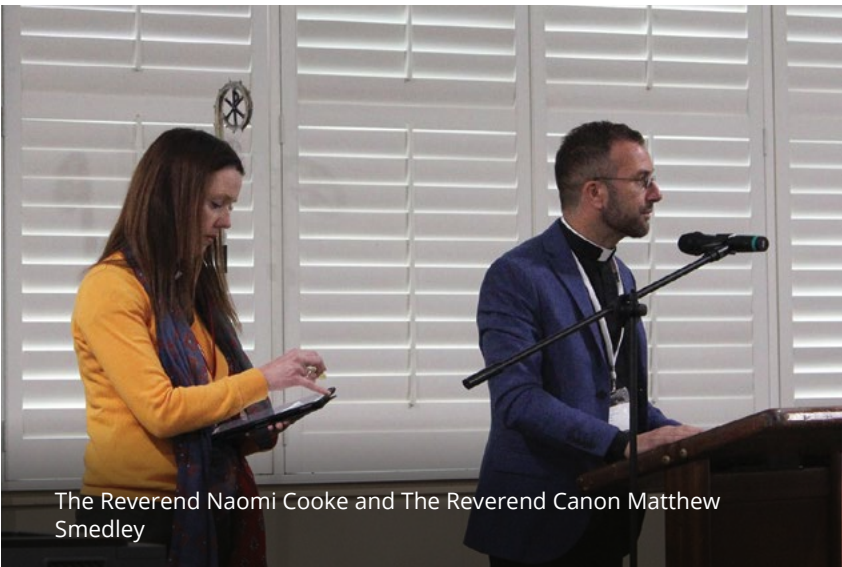
RESOLUTION 27: GENERAL SYNOD DOCTRINE COMMISSION - GENERAL SYNOD RESOLUTION 48/17

That this Synod:

- a) Notes that the General Synod Doctrine Commission, in response to General Synod Resolution 48/17, has published the book Marriage, Same-Sex Marriage and the Anglican Church of Australia.
- b) Notes that this book is available for free download from the website of Broughton Publishing [www.broughtonpublishing.com.au/marriagedoctrineessays](http://www.broughtonpublishing.com.au/marriagedoctrineessays)
- c) Encourages all members of the Diocese to engage closely with the essays in this book, which seeks to inform and facilitate a respectful conversation in the Anglican Church of Australia about marriage, same-sex marriage and the blessings of same-sex unions.



Ms Roz Rogers



The Reverend Naomi Cooke and The Reverend Canon Matthew Smedley



Archdeacon Matthew Jones

RESOLUTION 37: PRE-SYNOD PRESENTATION

That this Synod, with gratitude, records its appreciation to the Registrar, Chris Nelson, (and his team) for the professional and polished delivery of pre-Synod workshops.

ELECTION RESULTS

**Bishop-in-Council:** The Reverend Canon Zoe Everingham and The Reverend Angela Dutton

**Panel of Triers:** Professor Robert Weatherby

**Corporate Trustee:** Mrs Kelley Malaba

**General Synod:** The Venerable Tiffany Sparks

RESOLUTION 39:

That this, 36th Synod, thanks the following for their important contribution to the successful coordination of its Third Session:

To all involved preparing the worship at Synod;

To Canon Terry Shorten as Chair of Committees;

To Mr Stephen Campbell as Deputy Chair of Committees;

To Canon Lee Archinal as Clerk of Committees;

To Mr Greg Miller as Timekeeper;

To Rev Christian Ford for his continued wrestling with and mastery of the audio visuals for this session of Synod;

To The Reverend Canon Matthew Smedley and Canon John Bryen and for their tireless work as Synod Secretaries;

To the Minutes Committee: The Reverend Michael Ridge, The Reverend Canon Zoe Everingham and Mrs Pamela Langford;

To the Elections and Qualifications Committee: Mr Stephen Campbell, Mrs Cilla Boyd, The Reverend Sally Miller, Mr Alex Purvis and The Reverend Christian Ford;

To the Scrutineers: The Reverend Bronwyn Marchant, The Reverend Paul Hodge, Mr Mark Stuckey and Mrs Barbara Cheers;

To the Honourable Judge Richard Cogswell SC, Chancellor, and Mr Stephen Campbell, Advocate, for their contribution and knowledge of legal matters and their wise guidance;

To the staff of the Registry, especially Mrs Maree Collett, Mrs Kaytrina Jessup and Ms Linda Butler for their preparations for the efficient running of Synod, and to our Registrar, Mr Chris Nelson, for his thoughtful and measured responses and contribution to the smooth running of this session of Synod;

Thanks must go to Bishop Murray who has presided over this Synod with wisdom, compassion and a quiet strength. We thank you for your leadership in this time of rough water and growing pains, for encouraging us to be mindful of the fullness of all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

To members of Synod who have participated in the business of Synod with care, patience and grace.

Even as family, we do not always act in love and kindness towards each other and we do not always like to face our often very different positions but painful conversations have to be had.

In this Synod we have entered into hard spaces with an awareness of our diversity, Bishop Murray asked us to speak and act with respect for the person even in our difference; in doing so I believe we more closely model the relationships called for in the kingdom of God. I thank God for our capacity to reflect the full spectrum of what it means to be a child of God.



## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

The issues we face are also faced by other rural dioceses. A report on rural ministry commissioned by the Australian Bishops at their 2018 meeting shows that we are all struggling with a significant demographic shift away from rural communities that has taken place over at least the last 40 years, aging and inadequate church properties, shortage of clergy prepared to serve in rural areas, older age profile of congregations, smaller congregations and the ever increasing demands of compliance. All this needs to be considered in our restructure proposal.

On my recent visit to the Anglican Communion Office in London I learnt that the average Anglican is a woman, aged 32 who lives in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is vastly different from our Australian Anglican demographic profile. A similar picture was reflected in the bishops attending the recent Canterbury Bishops' Course. Of the 30 bishops present, only eight of us were from Western English speaking countries. The rest were from Africa and Asia. While they made up more than 2/3 of the attendees, the African and Asian bishops were vastly under-represented because of the cost of attending the event and the difficulty of obtaining visas. A Sri Lankan Bishop on the course told me that he has consecrated ten new churches since becoming bishop six months earlier. In the same period, I had deconsecrated two.

Yet despite reducing church attendances, there are signs of hope that there is still room for the Christian message and even a continuing respect for the church as an institution. A suspicion of organised religion, or of a religious account of God, does not necessarily mean that people have given up on the idea of God altogether. In the recent YouGov survey of 1,660 people in Britain, while 19% of people said they don't believe in God, almost half of

those believe in a universal spirit or power behind the universe. This means they are not atheists in the strict sense. A particularly encouraging statistic comes from McCrindle research in Australia into local neighbourhood facilities and services. When asked whether churches were beneficial for their neighbourhood, 88% of respondents (excluding regular church attenders) said they were beneficial. Another source of encouragement that people often overlook is that parental confidence in Independent Schools, most of which (84%) are operated by religious organisations (25% of them are Anglican) continues to grow. In 1980, 22.3% of children were being educated in an Independent School. By 2000 the percentage had increased to 30.8% and last year it was 34.4%. Amongst other things this indicates that there is still a level of trust in the community towards the Christian church. Why would you entrust your child to a school run by the church if you did not have a decent amount of respect and confidence in the church as an institution? After all, most Australians (65%) realise that "the Media and the Press negatively affect perceptions of the church." All this should give us continuing hope and purpose in our evangelism. In the 2018 Australian Community Survey of 1,200 people, 30% of those who described themselves as not practising any religion said they were open to an invitation to attend church from a family member or close friend. Of those who described themselves as Christian but not currently attending church, 27% were open to such an invitation. This is another sign of hope that the Christian message will be heard.

### CONFIDENT DISCIPLESHIP

Sometimes those who do have a personal faith commitment don't feel confident in making it known, least of all with a non-Christian. Not surprisingly this is a common problem amongst Anglicans. In this regard it was refreshing, on my recent

visit to the United Kingdom, to find that Canterbury Diocese has recently launched a simple approach to help with this, entitled Changing Conversations. It consists of just two questions that we can share within our church communities to help us get used to talking about our faith commitment with others: How has knowing Jesus changed your life? How can you and I help each other to be seven day a week disciples? In a similar vein the Australian evangelist John Dickson asks people to identify one person whom they personally know who is a person of faith. He then asked the question, would the world be a better or a worse place without that person? He tells the story of a young Gen Y man who was a committed atheist. When asked this question he was overwhelmed and made a commitment to Jesus that night. It turns out that his aunty had been a lovely Christian woman and he couldn't conceive how the world could possibly be a better place without her. In this regard I was glad that we were able to participate recently in the worldwide wave of prayer known as *Thy Kingdom Come*. This initiative challenges us to think of five people who currently do not know Jesus and then to pray that they might come to know him.

Given the failures of the church in the past as well as the challenges we face, do we dare to even envisage a future for the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Grafton? Yet I firmly believe that Christianity has something to offer and that the church is here to stay. I'm glad that we're facing up to the church's past failings but in order to live out God's mission of transforming love we need to regain our sense of confidence that we have something to share and we need to learn how to share it graciously yet with confidence.

### DIOCESAN LEADERSHIP

As I have stated elsewhere, I am immensely grateful to

The Venerable Gail Hagon for her long and fruitful ministry as Diocesan Archdeacon and Ministry Development Officer. The Diocese was able to give thanks and celebrate with Archdeacon Gail in December as she stepped down from this responsibility. After a period of leave Gail became Special Assistant to the Bishop. In both capacities she has been a much valued colleague and source of wise counsel for me as a new bishop. I am also grateful to Mr Chris Nelson who so ably serves as Registrar of the Diocese and who is systematically addressing a number of complex governance issues. This includes the enormous body of work that surrounded joining the National Redress Scheme, continuing to improve and stabilise diocesan finances, ensuring best practice in a number of areas including financial management, Human Resource management and strategic management of property and investments, responding to recent changes in the regulatory environment in which Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese (AFGD) operates and establishing a partnership with Anglican Funds South Australia (AFSA), overseeing the sale of St Cuthberts Retirement Living and contributing to the improved governance of Anglicare North Coast. The Registrar and I are supported by a gifted team at the Bishop's Registry whose dedication and professionalism serve the diocese well. A particular area of concern to all of us has been Professional Standards and in this regard we have been well served by Director of Professional Standards, Amanda Hickey and the Professional Standards Committee.

When I commenced as Bishop I made it clear that I wanted to foster a collaborative model of leadership by intentionally involving the Senior Clergy Team (including Regional Archdeacons, MSOs, the Dean) in diocesan leadership. With Archdeacon Gail stepping down

this also became practical and timely because this wider group could share the senior leadership of the diocese. I appreciate the collegiality, time commitment and advice of The Ven. Matthew Jones, The Ven. Stuart Webb, The Very Rev'd Dr Greg Jenks, Canon Matthew Smedley, The Rev'd Lyn Bullard, The Rev'd Ross Duncan and The Rev'd Christian Ford who have been willing to come on this journey with me as we explore new territory together.

Finally, since becoming bishop I have spoken out on a number of Social Justice matters, including a statement calling for #KidsOffNauru (the related social media post reproduced below from around this time received a remarkable 159 shares and a reach of 12K), a statement (in response to the Christchurch attack) expressing concern at the rise of racial intolerance, a statement welcoming the Prime Minister's Apology to Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, a statement (in response to a debate about gender issues in Anglican Schools in Sydney) released in consultation with the Principals of each of our schools, that our schools affirm the dignity and worth of all people, aspiring to be inclusive, open and responsive to diverse needs and abilities and that we foster compassionate and respectful relationships within a safe, disciplined, caring Christian learning community, and a statement urging high profile role models to speak the truth in love. Each of these is available on the Diocesan Website. Admittedly, each has been reactive rather than proactive, and the wording is not always quite right, but nevertheless each has been my attempt to contribute in the public square on these important issues of social justice.

**Read the Presidential Address together with the Synod Sermon on the Diocesan Website.**



Archdeacon Greg Ezzy



Ms Emma Webb



Mr David Ford



The Rev'd Anne Goode



# Human rights and the limits of religious freedom

By Simon Longstaff

As the Commonwealth Government ponders its response to the Ruddock Religious Freedom Review, it's worth considering what people of faith may be seeking to preserve and what limits society might justifiably seek to impose.

The term "religious freedom" encompasses a number of distinct but related ideas. At the core is freedom of belief - in a god, gods or a higher realm or being. Many religions make absolute (and often mutually exclusive) claims to truth, most of which cannot be proven. Religions rely, instead, on acts of faith.

Next comes freedom of worship - the freedom to perform, unhindered, the rituals associated with one's faith.

Then there is the freedom to act in good conscience - to give effect to one's religious beliefs in the course of one's daily life and, as a corollary, not to be forced to act in a manner that would violate one's sacred obligations.

Finally, there is the freedom to proselytise - to teach the tenets of one's religion to the faithful and to those who might be persuaded.

In a secular liberal democracy, the four types of religious freedom outlined above - to believe, to worship, to act and to proselytise attract different degrees of liberty. For example, people are generally free to believe whatever takes their fancy, no matter how ill-founded or bizarre. This is not so in all societies. Some theocracies will punish "heretics" for holding unorthodox beliefs.

Acting out of belief - in worship, deeds and proselytising - is

often, however, subject to some measure of restraint. For example, pious folk are not permitted to set up a pulpit (or equivalent) in the middle of a main road. They are not permitted to beat a woman, even if the teaching of their religion allows (or requires) her chastisement. They are not permitted to let a child die because of a religious objection to life-saving medical procedures. Nor are they able to teach that some people are "lesser beings," lacking intrinsic dignity, simply because of their gender, sexuality, culture, religion and so on.

In other words, there are boundaries set for the expression of religious belief, whatever those beliefs might be. It is precisely the setting of such "boundaries" that has become a point of contention.

Some Australian religious leaders claim they should be exempt from the application of Australian laws of which they do not approve, such as anti-discrimination legislation. This is nothing new. As it happens, in Australia, a number of religions have long denied the validity of secular law, even to the extent of running parallel legal systems. The Catholic Church regularly applies Canon Law in cases involving the status of divorcees, the sanctity of the confessional and so on. The Government of Australia might recognise divorce, but the Church does not. So, according to the official website of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney:

A divorce is a civil act that claims to dissolve a valid marriage. From a civil legal perspective, a marriage existed and was then dissolved. The Catholic Church ... does not recognise the ability of the State to dissolve a marriage.

An annulment, on the other hand, is an official declaration by a Church Tribunal that what appeared to be a valid marriage was actually not one (i.e., that the marriage was in fact invalid).

In a similar vein, the Jewish community maintains a separate legal system that oversees the application of Halakhic Law through the operation of special Jewish religious courts called Beth Din. Given the precedents set by Christians and Jews, it's not surprising that adherents of other faith groups, notably Muslims, are seeking the same rights to apply religious laws within their own courts and to enjoy exemptions from the application of the secular law. Given all of this, are there any principles that we might draw on when setting the boundaries to religious freedom?

## A BUNDLE OF RIGHTS

Fortunately, the proponents of freedom of religion have provided an excellent starting point for answering this question. It begins with the core of their argument - that freedom of belief (religion) is a fundamental human right. Their claim is well founded. However, those who invoke fundamental human rights cannot "cherry pick" among those rights, only defending those that suit their preferences.

Fundamental human rights come as a "bundle." They are indivisible. It follows from this that if people of faith are to assert their claim to religious freedom as a fundamental human right, then the exercise of that freedom should be consistent with the realisation of all other fundamental

human rights. Religious freedom is but one.

It also follows that any legislative instrument designed to create a legal right to freedom of religion must circumscribe that right to the extent necessary to ensure that other human rights are not curtailed. For example, a legal right to religious freedom should not authorise violence against another person. Nor should it permit discrimination of a kind that would otherwise be considered unlawful under human rights legislation.

If there is to be Commonwealth legislation, then it should establish an unrestricted right of belief and a rebuttable presumption in favour of acting on those beliefs. The limits to action should be that the conduct (either by word or deed) does not constrain the liberty of another person, does not subject another person to any form of violence, does not deny the intrinsic dignity of another person and does not violate the human rights of another person.

Finally, it is essential that, as a liberal democracy, any Australian legislation specify that the tenets of a religion only apply to those who have freely consented to adopt that religion.

So, what might this look like in practice - say, in relation to same sex-marriage now that it is lawful?

## PERFORMING A MARRIAGE VS. BAKING A CAKE

Nobody should be compelled to believe that same-sex marriage is "moral." That is a matter of personal belief unrelated to the law. Moreover, it should be permissible to teach, to members of one's faith group, and to advocate,

more generally, that same-sex marriage is immoral (a view I do not hold). The fact that something is legal leaves open the question of its morality.

Furthermore, no person should be required to perform a marriage if doing so would violate the dictates of their conscience. Catholic priests, for instance, refuse to marry heterosexual divorcees. Such marriages are allowed by the state, yet no priest is forced to perform such a marriage because to do so would make them directly complicit in an act their religion forbids.

But such an allowance, I argue, should only extend to those at risk of becoming directly complicit in objectionable acts. For example, such an allowance should not be granted to a religious baker not wanting to provide a wedding cake to a gay couple. Cakes play no direct role in the formalities of a civil marriage. So, unlike a pharmaceutical company that might justifiably object to being complicit through the supply of drugs to an executioner, a baker is never going to be complicit in the performance of a marriage. As such, a baker should be bound by law to supply his or her goods on a non-discriminatory basis.

Of course, there will always be some who feel obliged to put the requirements of their religion before the law. To act according to one's conscience in an honourable choice. But this should only be done if one is willing to bear the penalty.

**As published on ABC:**  
<https://www.abc.net.au/religion/human-rights-and-the-limits-of-religious-freedom/10286070>  
**Simon Longstaff is Executive Director of The Ethics Centre.**

# BDC and Round Square, a partnership to inspire

Bishop Druitt College has formed a new partnership with the internationally recognised Round Square organisation. Round Square is a collective of over 150 schools across the globe that value the ideals of international understanding, democracy, environmental stewardship, adventure, leadership and service. Bishop Druitt College and Round Square will inspire their young people to build capacity in the areas of personal responsibility, resilience, self-discovery in a context that is practical, cross-cultural and collaborative.

Bishop Druitt College and Round Square will provide students with conference

opportunities, student exchanges and service opportunities throughout Australasia and across the whole world. "This is fantastic news, we are absolutely delighted to be joining the Round Square community," said Professor Dr Stuart Smith, Chair of Bishop Druitt College Council's Education Committee. "With only 18 schools representing Australia in the Round Square community we are truly honoured to have been accepted as a candidate school and look forward to developing a long-lasting partnership that benefits our students and our region," said Principal Nick Johnstone.



Pictured from left: Stuart Walls, Round Square Schools' Support Director, Mary Anne Evans, Principal NEGS, Nick Johnstone, Principal Bishop Druitt College, Tully Black, Olivia Brown.



## SNAPSHOT



St James Church Kyogle had a lovely service to celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The church was filled with red. The parishioners had planned for weeks what they would wear, and after the service was over, they shared a morning tea with Jaffas, raspberry lollies, and strawberry cheesecake.



The Ballina Parish recently hosted a Biggest Morning Tea to raise money for cancer research. This was organised by the Craft Group and raised over \$2,000. The entertainment included several members of the Headliners Singing Group who delighted the audience with beautiful singing and some comedy skits, as can be seen from the photo.



All Saints Church Murwillumbah Knit and Natter Ladies meet every second Friday. Narelle and Jan are exhibiting throws and coat hangers which they sell for church funds. They also provided new table cloths for use in church.



All Souls' Bangalow shared this great photo of Fr Matthew Smedley leading the Pentecost service on 9 June 2019.

# Music Connects and Brings People Together

Over the last few months St Mary's Church in Ballina has started to become a known community meeting space through music.

With a bursting full house for the much anticipated Amatori Choir & Orchestra's *Vivaldi Gloria* the initiative kicked off with a heart-centred 'bang' in May.

Directed by Ian Knowles, the concert brought parishioners, friends and music lovers from all over the Northern Rivers together for an afternoon of musical upliftment enjoyed by all who attended.

In June the Church was graced with another high-quality and outstanding musical concert when Vox Caldera Chamber Choir, under the direction of renowned choir-master Nicholas Routley performed a program of Monteverdi's great works. Both concerts highlighted the beauty of the Baroque musical period and transported the audience to another time and era.

These concerts were the first of what is to become an ongoing monthly concert program at St Mary's Ballina, as an active effort of the parish to open the doors beyond its regular ministry and connect to a wider community through music.

Music has the ability to bring people from all walks of life together, and the modern architecture, wonderful acoustics and beautiful pipe organ makes the sacred space of St Mary's Ballina an ideal musical meeting point.

Our next event is on Sunday 1 September, which will be an organ concert, featuring the organists of St Mary's, Ian Brown, Hamsa Arnold and Marius Mulder. This will be an exciting concert of unique organ pieces that many people may not have had the pleasure to hear, including some organ duets.

Please come and join us for our musical events planned in the coming months:

- 20th October – Harp



Concert by Louise Johnson

- 24th November – Brass Quintet and Organ
- 14th December – Christmas Concert with

Vox Caldera Chamber Choir

Stay tuned for our 2020 Music program – coming soon! For further information, or if you

would like to receive updates of future events please email our Music Coordinator: [hamsa.arnold@gmail.com](mailto:hamsa.arnold@gmail.com)



# Anglican Funds Strengthened Through Cooperation



Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese (AFGD) is building upon its long and positive association with Anglican Funds South Australia (AFSA) to create a stronger AFGD for the benefit of its customers.

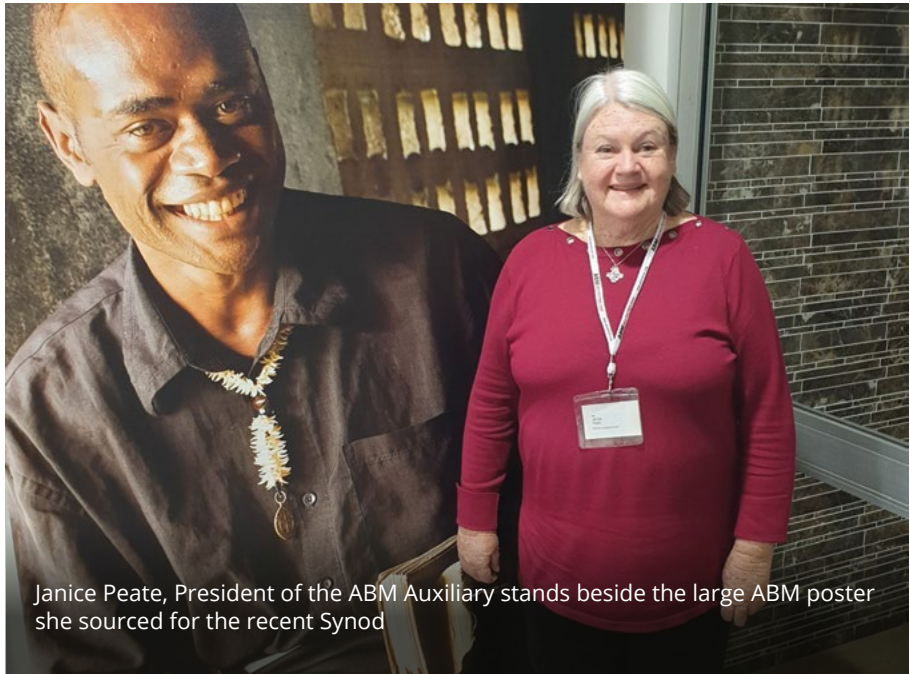
On 13 June, Mr David Ford, AFGD Chair, and Mr Chris Nelson, Diocesan Registrar, met with the AFSA Chair, Mr Kevin Stracey, and others to strike an agreement for greater cooperation between the two organisations. Since 2012, AFSA has been providing banking systems support to AFGD and the new agreement extends support to management activities including working with key clients, interest rate

management, and policy and procedure development.

“This is an exciting development for AFGD”, says Mr Ford. “It puts AFGD in a better place to continue good service to our customers within a tightened regulatory environment.”

The head of AFSA, Mr Blaine Fitzgerald, is very familiar to the Diocese of Grafton having being AFGD’s Fund Manager up until January 2018. Mr Fitzgerald’s involvement means that the new arrangement can build upon existing corporate knowledge and the already strong links between AFGD and AFSA.

# Needy Folk in the Middle East to Benefit from ABM Big Day at the Cathedral




Many of us wish that we could help in some way when the news media present us with endless sad images of life in the Middle East.

The Anglican Board of Mission Auxiliary, the voice of ABM in the Diocese of Grafton, plans to devote the proceeds of this year’s Big Day: the Cathedral offering, Luncheon and Bring and Buy Stall, to the work of ABM in the Holy Land. Peace initiatives in Israel and the Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza are among the projects ABM supports.

You are invited to join us at the Cathedral on Saturday 21 September for the ABM Big Day from 10am. The day will include a welcome cup of tea, a service of Holy Communion and a luncheon in the parish hall. The Rev’d John Deane, Executive Director of Anglican Board of Mission is our luncheon guest speaker.

Plan now and ring Jackie Draffan 6582 5040 to reserve places for the luncheon.



# Anglican funds

## GRAFTON DIOCESE

### Term Investment Accounts

Term	Interest Rate
90 days	2.35% p.a.
180 days	2.45% p.a.
365 days	2.50%p.a.

\*Interest paid at maturity

Note: Special Interest Rates on Term Investments are available on request for funds \$100,000 & over

### Cheque Accounts (Parishes, Ministry Units & Anglican Affiliate Entities Only)

Entity	Interest Rate
Parish	1.00% p.a.
Anglican Affiliate	0.25% p.a.

\*Interest paid monthly

### Saver Accounts

Balance	Interest Rate
Balances up to \$4,999	0.10% p.a.
\$5,000 to \$49,999	0.25% p.a.
\$50,000 and over	0.50% p.a.

\*Interest paid six monthly

### Cash Management Accounts (Parishes, Ministry Units & Anglican Affiliate Entities Only)

Entity	Interest Rate
Parish	1.50% p.a.
Anglican Affiliate	1.25% p.a.

\*Interest paid monthly

**\*All Interest Rates are current as at 11<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and are subject to change**

**Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese \* 50 Victoria Street Grafton NSW 2460 \* PO Box 4 Grafton NSW 2460 \* ABN 42 489 753 905**

**Phone FreeCall 1800 810 919 (NSW Only) or 02 6642 4480 \* Fax 02 6643 2391 \* office@afgd.com.au \* www.anglicanfundsgraftondiocese.com.au**



# A meaningful partnership of learning and growth for BDC and Krou Yeung School in North East Cambodia

For 16 years Bishop Druitt College has taken students to Cambodia as part of our rites of passage philosophy and to encourage their development and awareness of the wider world. Over the last four years BDC has developed a strong partnership with Krou Yeung School, a school in the Ratanakiri Province in North Eastern Cambodia. This partnership is unique and meaningful. It is making a genuine difference to the teachers and students of Krou Yeung School and is also having an incredible impact on the teachers and students of BDC.

BDC has welcomed a student and teacher from Krou Yeung School each year for the past two years. In 2019, BDC welcomed teacher Sokkhoeun Meas and student Rina Kheav. Next week Sokkhoeun returns home, having spent ten weeks in classrooms learning strategies and developing resources. Rina has been immersed in BDC student life during her time here.

This exchange program relies on the hospitality of families to host these students and teachers, so BDC extends a huge thank you to those supportive families.

"After 15 years of teaching at BDC I have questioned the impact that international relief programs or fundraising has on individuals in places like Cambodia. To see the changes that the BDC community is having on this school, and in the long-term for the community, is overwhelming," said Joel Blythe, Design and Technology teacher at Bishop Druitt College.

Since the start of this partnership a past BDC student revisited the school and set up a library. And since this time a number of ex-students from BDC have travelled there and offered support in various ways. Last year BDC donated funds (all through student fundraising) to establish a music program for the Cambodian school.

This year in July, Joel Blythe will be returning to the school to set up a small woodworking program. Joel will provide tools



Sokkhoeun Meas, teacher from Krou Yeung School

and teaching programs and will train a teacher to deliver basic building/workshop skills. This will be a valuable program for increasing employment opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach for most Krou Yeung School students.

## Bishop Murray Visits Heartfelt House

In June, Bishop Murray visited Heartfelt House at Wollongbar near Alstonville to hear about their important work. Heartfelt House is a not-for-profit organisation that provides therapeutic group program services for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse and seminars for family and friends of survivors, as well as for professionals in the community. The Bishop heard about the programs offered and hopes for the future as outlined by CEO Kate Lambert and some members of the Board. It's encouraging to know that Heartfelt House can provide an environment that is conducive to healing where survivors of child sexual abuse can feel heard, nurtured, understood, validated, supported and accepted. Funding of service delivery to adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse remains uncertain and now more than ever Heartfelt House is at the mercy of budget constraints at both federal and state levels. To meet funding shortfalls and to ensure that service continues in the future, they rely on the community for financial support.



Donations over \$2 are tax deductible. There are multiple ways to donate including online at: <https://heartfelthouse.org.au/donate/> or a cheque made out to Heartfelt House can be posted to PO BOX 904 Alstonville NSW 2477.

## IN BRIEF

### COMMISSIONING:

The commissioning of **The Rev'd Tim Waghorn** as Rector of South Grafton will take place at St Matthew's South Grafton on Tuesday 13 August 2019 at 6pm. The liturgical colour will be white.

### ORDINATION:

**The Rev'd Paul Hodge** will be ordained to the Priesthood on Friday 18 October in the Cathedral. Paul is the Chaplain at St Columba Anglican School.

### RESIGNATIONS:

**The Rev'd Ross Duncan** has resigned as Associate Minister in the Parish of Port Macquarie and Mission Support Officer for the South. Ross and Deb are moving to the Diocese of Melbourne.

**The Rev'd John Power** has resigned as Rector of the Parish of Byron Bay. John's last Sunday in the Parish is 25 August.

### DEATHS:

**Mrs Val Grant** died on 1 July. Val was the wife of The Rev'd Ken Grant who died earlier this year. Ken and Val faithfully served St John's in Coffs Harbour for many years.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**3-4 August** – LLM Conference in the Cathedral Precinct at Grafton

**5-7 August** – Ministry School at Opal Cove Resort in Coffs Harbour

**11 August** – Wauchope 50th Anniversary

**22 August** – Retired Clergy Morning Tea at Macksville

**22-25 August** – Women's Cursillo at Evans Head

**5-8 September** – Men's Cursillo at Corindi

**10 August** – The Anglican Mothers Union Australia is running a Mini Conference open to everyone at All Saints Anglican Church Kempsey commencing at 9am

**21 September** – ABM Day in Grafton. A service in the Cathedral followed by a luncheon in the Parish Centre. The guest speaker will be the Rev'd John Deane, Executive Director of ABM. Commences at 10am.

**28 September** – Pioneer Ministry - A workshop presented by The Rev'd Dr Wayne Brighton for all clergy and leadership teams. Saturday 28 September 9.30am for 10am – 3pm in Edward's Hall, Christ Church Cathedral.

**18 October** – Ordination of Paul Hodge to the Priesthood

**12 October** – LLM Formation Day in the North

**19 October** – LLM Formation Day in the South

**21-24 October** – Clergy Retreat in Coffs Harbour

## Anglican Diocese of Grafton

**Do you have an up-to-date will? Please consider giving to the work of the Church in your will.**

Our diocese has been blessed by the generosity of benefactors in times past. As we seek to expand Christ's Mission in the 21st century, please consider how you might contribute. You should get legal advice before making your will. You may wish to consider the activities of the Anglican Diocese of Grafton as the recipient of either a specific gift or the residue of your estate.

The following wording may be useful for you and your legal advisor when making your will: "I bequeath to the Corporate Trustees of the Diocese of Grafton in the State of New South Wales the sum of ..... to be used for the general purposes of the Diocese of Grafton in such manner as the said Trustees may approve."





REFLECTIONS

Thinking About Mission

By The Very Rev'd Dr Gregory Jenks, Dean Christ Church Cathedral Grafton

The Cathedral has recently developed a prayer partnership with the Living Hope Church in Nepal, an active young faith community led by a local Anglican priest who had converted from Buddhism in his late teens.

During the recent Synod our Diocese strongly supported a motion affirming radical hospitality for all God's people, irrespective of their ethnicity, cultural background, gender or sexual orientation.

In a few weeks the Cathedral will be hosting two diocesan events: the first a mission workshop with ABM, and the other a pioneer ministry seminar led by Archdeacon Wayne Brighton.

Before then both the Lay Ministers Conference and the Ministry School will have been exploring missional imagination.

"Mission" seems to be in the air at present, and that is a good thing.

If we lose sight of our mission, we have no purpose and no sense of direction.

I find myself drawn to a whole-of-creation understanding of mission, grounded in the foundational texts of *Genesis* where God has a mission and humans are given a role to play within the mission of God, the *missio dei*.

The scope of that mission is nicely captured by the five marks of mission adopted by the Anglican Consultative Committee way back in 1984:

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom



- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need by loving service
- To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

It is good to note that the final three marks of mission are all directed outwards, for the sake of others; indeed for the sake of the Earth and all planetary life forms. Not just humankind. Since the first of these marks is also essentially for those not yet part of the explicit community of faith, we can note that four of the five marks are about the wellbeing of others. Only the second mark is exclusively directed towards the internal life of the church.

Now there's an interesting benchmark for missional energy. Is 80% of our best energies—our passion and our compassion—directed towards the benefit of the local community, the wider society and whole of creation?

I suspect many of us would find that less than 20% of our activity is dedicated to people and projects beyond the life of our local church. Perhaps far less than 20%. If it were even 10% we might feel that we have done rather well.

When we take seriously the creation stories in *Genesis* we see that God has a passion for creation, for the cosmos, and that humankind is called into being for the sake of creation. We bear the image of the God who calls life out of nothingness, and we share God's mission to generate, heal and restore. We exist to serve the cosmos. We are gardeners in paradise.

When churches are agents for creating and sustaining healthy communities, then we have earned the right to proclaim the good news of God's active presence in all of life, a presence at the very centre of Jesus' own mission. If our churches are not healthy, safe and transformative communities, how dare we presume to preach to others about forgiveness and deep healing?

As NT Wright has reminded us in *The Day the Revolution Began*, the purpose of faith is not to escape this world and "go home" to heaven. We are of this place and God's loving purposes are directed towards the total renewal and transformation of the cosmos. "All creation is groaning" as Paul reminds us, as it awaits its final liberation and comes to its full glory in God's loving purposes (Romans 8:19-23).

We are not selling fire insurance or promoting unlimited time share options in 'a better place', but rather engaged in God's own sacred work of completing, renewing and transforming the whole cosmos. Every last particle is beloved of God.

That's an exciting mission. It is God's mission. And it is our mission.

PRAYING WITH THE SAINTS

John Bunyan - Preacher and Spiritual Writer

By Rev'd Camellia Flanagan  
DIED 1688. FEAST DAY 31 AUGUST

John Bunyan was famous for his book *The Pilgrim's Progress* and wrote more than 60 other books and expanded sermons mainly with a Puritan outlook to encourage the Christian life. In many households of our great-grandparents this book lived on the same shelf as a well-worn Bible and a copy of the Book of Common Prayer with or without hymns Ancient and Modern included. It is said that *The Pilgrim's Progress* was written while Bunyan was in Bedford gaol for preaching without a licence and for

refusing to attend a church service.

John Bunyan is credited with writing only one hymn the first line being: "He who would Valliant be - let him come hither" and commonly known as "to be a Pilgrim." For a time, Bunyan's original version was not sung in churches, but I remember as a child delighting in singing about "hobgoblins" and "foul fiends" and "fighting giants" as part of that hymn. But it must have appeared impossible to re-write into inclusive appropriate language, so it did not make it into *Together in Song*.

John Bunyan was born in 1628 near Bedford, before the

English Civil War. His family was poor and he had little formal education. He learned to read, mainly medieval romances, loved to dance, bell-ring, swear, and lead Sunday sports - not proper pursuits for a Puritan. At 16 he joined the army and was shot at, but another had taken his place and died. John took this to be the work of God. He married at age 20 and his wife was also poor, but her father had given them two Christian books which John read with a troubled conscience. One Sunday as he played he heard a voice. "Will you leave your sins and go to Heaven or have your sins and go to Hell?" and

struggled to find peace with God. Later he heard some women speaking of their inner religious experiences and he realised he lacked something. He left the Church of England, joined their fellowship and realised after reading Luther's commentary on Galatians, that he could be justified by faith alone. He found some relief for his distress in this and became a field preacher, his fame spreading that many people would arrive at dawn to hear him preach at noon.

In prison he continued to write and preach, slipping out of prison and returning from time to time. And his fascinating story of Pilgrim has captured

generations, children and adults, with vibrant imagery and creative genius, crossing cultures, languages and centuries. Bunyan helps us see the gifts and glory of God. He died after preaching in the rain on 31 August 1688.

Can we pray as John Bunyan said, "Prayer is a sincere sensible affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength an assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God hath promised, or according to the Word, got the good of the church, with submission, in faith, to the will of God?" (*Works 1. Page 623*)



REFLECTION

God’s Radical Hospitality

By The Rev’d Canon Matthew Smedley, Rector Anglican Parish of Bangalow

When a friend of mine in Melbourne sets the table for a meal, she always sets an extra place. “Who is that for?” I ask. “For Elijah,” she replies. When I lived in Mudgee, I usually would have Sunday evening dinner with friends in Leura. The prescribed time was 7pm and I always knew that I had to be punctual, I had to be dressed for dinner, and I had no idea who would be at dinner — one of the hosts is a former Federal politician, so invariably those at the table included other politicians and activists. In Luke’s Gospel of Hospitality, Jesus is often eating and drinking. On one occasion when Jesus is in the house of a leader of the Pharisees, he challenges his host, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed”, (Luke 14:12-14a).

In preparing a Synod Motion on God’s Radical Hospitality, I reflected upon who God invites to the table.

Our first account of creation in the book of Genesis is very powerful: God speaks and it comes into being. The final command of God is to create living creatures of every kind; God creates humankind in the image of God, male and female humankind is created. In this

one command humankind is created, male and female, in the image of God. “I am who I am.” (YHWH) makes all things to be, such that we can say, “I am what I am,” I am male and female created in the image of God, what I am is of God, and I will be what I will be. And God saw everything... and indeed, it was very good (Gen 1:31).

The deceptively simple story of Ruth and Naomi can be read as a parable of inclusion. The marriage of Ruth and Boaz counters the prohibition of the Hebrew Scriptures against marrying Moabites. Ruth is one of the excluded minority. It is within the canon of Scripture that the marriage of Ruth and Boaz is not only tolerated but described as being blessed with a son who becomes a forebear of Jesus. There is immense intimacy between Ruth and Naomi: they are concerned for one another’s welfare. Ruth makes a lifelong commitment to Naomi, which she lives out by acting as the breadwinner and going out to glean for grain. Boaz recognises the quality of Ruth’s commitment to Naomi when he accepts the role of being a redeemer (Ruth 3:10). And when the son is born he is described as being born to Naomi. Both the marriage of Ruth the Moabite and Boaz of the family of Judah and the quality of the relationship of Ruth and Naomi provide a biblical precedent of re-interpreting Scripture to favour inclusion rather than exclusion, goodness over purity.

One of the Gospel stories I return to time and time again



is Jesus and the woman at the well. Jesus meets and is alone with a woman, a Samaritan, and the text tells us that “Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans” (John 4:9). Jesus and the woman converse, and their dialogue is one of respect and exchange, even with their differences. Jesus affirms the woman’s honesty and truth when she says, “I have no husband” (John 4:17). Jesus does not judge and Jesus does not discriminate. And in fact, this outsider-woman brings many more outsiders to believe in Jesus because of her testimony.

These, and many other stories

in the bible, are glimpses into the character and nature of God. In our reading of the Scriptures, the bible as a whole speaks of God’s unconditional love for all people, including those who very often do not fit either a religious or a moral norm, as defined by the society of the time, or by the biblical text, or by the interpretation of that text. God’s choice of where to place God’s love is something that we, who like to create boundaries or binaries, and to believe that we know where God’s love and acceptance should be directed, find difficult to understand.

The Brisbane priest Gillian

Moses reminds us that theology is our attempt to speak not of ourselves but of God. Our primary concern is not to justify our own interests but to look for the ways in which God has revealed Godself to humanity, including through scripture and experience. She says that while we experience God through our own humanity and our interactions with each other, we constantly strive to glimpse this revelation: how do our experiences, our lives and the lives of others allow us to understand something more about the God who creates, loves, and calls us?

THREADS LAID BARE

Precious and Beautiful Stones

By Rev’d Camellia Flanagan

There are many different names of precious stones in the bible and some denote value (1 Kings 10:2 the queen of Sheba brought stones of value to Solomon, 2 Chronicles 9:10.) wealth, (Revelation 18:1.) beauty, (2 Chronicles 3:6 Solomon adorned the temple with beautiful stones; Revelation 21:19 the beauty of the New Jerusalem) and

durability, (Isaiah 54:11,12 the durability of the eternal covenant of peace) and lamenting the one-time beauty and durability of the people of Israel (Lamentations 4:7)

With the long history of change in religious practice over the centuries no accurate records remain of the exact significance attached to precious stones. Even the breastplate mentioned in

Exodus 28: 10-30 would have changed over the centuries. Jerusalem was captured by Shishak, King of Egypt about 973 BC, by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, about 586 BC and by Ptolemy I Soter, King of Egypt about 320 BC. The original breastplate may have been part of the spoil on these occasions and may have then disappeared forever. Between the times of the Septuagint translators of the

Torah and the ancient Hebrew writings (3rd century 132 BC) and Josephus, a historian (1st Century of the Christian era), Jerusalem was more than once in the hands of its enemies. In 193 BC the city was captured by Antiochus the Great, in 170 BC it was stormed, and its temple plundered by Antiochus Epiphanes and in 54 BC the temple was desecrated by Crassus. We know in our own life times

that church furnishings, robes and precious sacred articles change according to the artistic temperament and availability of finance of the day. It is reasonable to believe that such changes have a long history but as we look at our religious accoutrements we still see precious stones denoting the value of love and faith, the beauty of the glory of God and the durability of everlasting life and peace.

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Grafton Diocese has established formal procedures to deal with sexual misconduct. Persons aggrieved by the sexual misconduct of a church worker - whether they are an ordained or lay person - should report it to Police, or if not a potential crime, to our Director of Professional Standards. If you wish to speak to someone about sexual abuse by a church worker please phone 1800 370 757 or email dps@graftondiocese.org.au to reach our Director of Professional Standards who can receive your report with confidentiality.



# ANGLICARE NORTH COAST CONNECTION

## THE 10 YEAR CLUB

A number of Anglicare North Coast staff have been employed with the organisation for more than 10 years and have worked longer with Anglicare than any previous employer. Our roving reporter recently caught up with some of them to see what has motivated them to stay for such a long time.



**ESTELLE GRAHAM** was asked by then Executive Officer, Rev'd George Markotsis to "come in and help for about 3 weeks", back in 2002. Estelle was initially employed to manage the Community Housing division, then moved on to the CEO role in 2007. When asked what motivated her to stay for so long, Estelle commented that "the work that Anglicare does is vital to many members of the community and is very worthwhile". She also noted that "the staff I've worked with over the years have been truly dedicated to helping those in need, and an absolute pleasure to lead".



**CHRISTINE EASTMENT** is Anglicare's Administration Coordinator. Christine initially started as a volunteer, re-entering the workforce after being a stay-at-home mother for many years. Christine has now been employed for more than 14 years. She is extremely dedicated and very helpful to other staff, often being the "go-to" person to help out with a range of issues and to answer questions about just about anything.

When asked what motivated her to stay with the organisation for such a long time, Christine said, "I would have to say that I look forward to coming to work knowing that the team I work with has the

same drive to assist people in need. That team also pulls together, supporting each other and contributing practical help, knowledge and experience to other workers. I gain great satisfaction in knowing I give of my best every day and that it is appreciated by others."

Christine also noted that, "What the ANC team do as individuals comes together as the intentional enactment of Hope in Action. As the organisation has grown over the years some changes have been more of a physical nature than anything including the need for increased office space and the introduction of new technology. One of the things that does stand out for me over the time, is the loyalty of the workers with some current staff having returned to Anglicare North Coast after a number of years working elsewhere. That indicates to me that Anglicare North Coast is an organisation that individuals aspire to be a part of."



**ELIZABETH MERCY-BUSHELL** was employed by Anglicare in 2007 and remains in the role of Community Housing Officer. Elizabeth is based in our Maclean office and is the friendly face at the counter and on the phone, helping those who call or visit the office.

Elizabeth told our reporter: "I started working for Anglicare in 2007, and found staff very welcoming and the office environment friendly. So I haven't looked back. I believe developing great rapport with our Community Housing tenants is very important as it develops respect and understanding between both parties. What is also

rewarding is achieving outcomes within Community Housing; even though we are a small program, we work hard to ensure tenant satisfaction is a priority and our properties are maintained to a high standard. I also am thankful to have worked under great managers throughout the years who have also provided support and guidance when needed."



**LESLEY GRANT** commenced in 2009 and has been involved in a number of program areas, including our homelessness service, and her current role as Coordinator of the Emergency Relief program. Lesley has a strong sense of justice and has found that, in working with Anglicare, she has an opportunity to follow that desire for equity in the service of the community. She finds that the team at Anglicare is supportive and friendly, with management keen to nurture staff to realise their potential. She believes that Anglicare North Coast has a client focussed outlook, with strong local presence and knowledge, and because of that, has been able to build meaningful relationships with

our communities. All of this is why she has stayed so long with Anglicare North Coast, which she says "is like a second family now". She also pointed out that "this little 'gang of 4' has racked up over 50 years of ANC experience between them!"

## NAIDOC Week Celebrations

Anglicare North Coast was delighted to join local celebrations for NAIDOC Week 2019, including events at Grafton and Cabbage Tree Island.

NAIDOC Week is an annual Australia-wide celebration of the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, involving Australians from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds. The week provides a great opportunity for all Australians to participate in a range of activities and to support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The 2019 theme for NAIDOC week was *Voice. Treaty. Truth. Let's work together.*

The Indigenous voice of this country is over 65,000 plus years old. It's that Indigenous voice that include know-how, practices, skills and innovations - found in a wide variety of contexts, such as agricultural, scientific, technical, ecological and medicinal fields, as well as biodiversity-related knowledge. They are words connecting us to country, an understanding of country and of a people who are the oldest continuing culture on the planet.

Pictured are Amy Byrnes and Evelyn Hurford-Allen, manning the Anglicare North Coast stall at the Grafton NAIDOC Week celebration.



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## AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOUNDATION

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOUNDATION DONATIONS

Our mission is to provide appropriate, affordable accommodation to disadvantaged persons throughout the North Coast of NSW. To donate or for further information please view our website or contact our office.

ALL DONATIONS TO ANGLICARE NORTH COAST OVER \$2.00 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE AND ARE USED TO HELP US FULFIL OUR MISSION