



Gap Year at St Nick's!

by Reverend Paul Davey

How does a smaller parish create a gap year program without lots of staff or the financial resources of the bigger parishes?

'I was asking that question whilst looking at the handful of young people in our church and knowing that we needed to do more to disciple them,' said Reverend Paul Davey from St Nicholas' Anglican Church Goulburn. 'I looked at the normal gap year programs and couldn't see how our people could afford to pay for them. What's more, they required extensive time in Sydney which would take them out of our parish for considerable amounts of time. That would make it difficult to work part-time and serve in our parish as well. It seemed like everything was once again too difficult for rural parishes. But then we discovered the Diploma of Christian Ministry and Theology (DCMT) at the St Mark's National Theological Centre. All of a sudden, it became doable!'

The DCMT is a majority-online course that only requires four days of in-class intensives in Canberra. The rest of the course is completely

online and can be done at the hours that suit each student, so there's great flexibility. 'This means it's perfect for rural parishes like us as well as the Canberra ones,' said Reverend Davey. 'Also, it was roughly 10% of the cost of other gap year programs. So our young people could afford it!' The DCMT is a foundational course that offers introductory theological and practical ministry subjects. Unlike courses that are designed to create the next generation of ministers, the DCMT is at a VET level so it's accessible to



Carina singing in church

almost all levels of academic ability. Its aim is to educate and train the next generation of serving church members. 'It serves perfectly to fill out any knowledge gaps from Sunday School and Youth as well as prepare the young adult church member to be active in serving in their local church,' said Reverend Davey. 'That's exactly what we needed at St Nick's for our young people.'

At St Nick's the church then added two other strands to complete the St Nick's Gap Year experience. Daily Bible reading using an online app was the second strand. This teaches the basic Christian discipline of reading the Bible daily. The third strand was a ministry placement at church where each gap year participant got to immerse themselves in a church ministry and really get stuck into serving. The gap year enables participants to work part-time as well. And so the St Nick's Gap Year was born ... except it needed some participants.

James, Carina and Lachlan signed up to do the St Nick's Gap Year in February this year and became the program's inaugural participants. James has continued to do fencing

and farm work whilst taking on school Scripture teaching as his ministry placement. Lachlan has worked in the family butcher shop whilst choosing telecare as his ministry placement. Carina has taught dance and studied at TAFE in addition to leading the singing at church. 'It pushed me out of my comfort zone ministry-wise and I've become more a part of my church than I used to be,' said Carina.

Thanks to the DCMT at St Mark's, a gap year program is something every rural or smaller parish can now add to their ministry. It's no longer the preserve of big city parishes in wealthier areas. Any parish anywhere can now run a gap year program thanks to the DCMT at St Mark's. And that's a game changer for smaller parishes or rural parishes. 'It means that when our youth leave for the city they will be strong in their Christian faith and looking for a church to serve in,' said Reverend Davey. 'Some of them may also choose to stay in the parish and the program means they will know they have a role and a place at St Nick's. It's my hope that this will become the standard thing everyone in our parish does when they finish school. It will prepare them for a lifetime of trusting and serving Jesus in the context of their local church.'



James playing guitar

For James, the St Nick's Gap Year has been an effective discipleship tool. 'I feel like I understand my Bible better and I feel like I have better skills for ministry,' says James. As Carina puts it, 'It's definitely an experience worth doing!'

Find out more about DCMT: <https://stmarks.edu.au/our-courses/>

Bishop Carol Writes ...



Picture by Bror Anders Eriksson on Unsplash.com

Drinking from the Source

I have a friend who speaks often of 'the vagaries of life', which, he says, beset us all. This is so true.

This week has been a bit like that for me. Last night, as I was writing this article, I received a phone call to say that a lovely young friend, someone I baptised, confirmed and married, was expecting the imminent arrival of their first child. As soon as this couple knew they were pregnant, they had asked me to baptise their baby when the time came. It was an experience of much joy.

During this same week there has also been much sorrow. I received a phone call a few days ago from a colleague who told me that a dear saint in one of our parishes had just lost his battle with illness and had gone to be with the Lord. I knew the person well and was saddened. He was a loved leader and an integral part of his church community. His family, friends and church will grieve for him.

Such is the breadth of our human experience. We can know the heights of joy and the depths of sorrow, as well as everything in between, in one lifetime. Sometimes, it seems, in one breath.

I have long been convinced that there is no separation between our physical, mental and spiritual lives. In that sense, we are trinitarian beings – body, soul and spirit – and

like the divine trinity, these parts of our identity are both distinct and unified. I have often observed a strong correlation between what is going on in our mind and body and how we are travelling in our spiritual experience.

There can be a real connection between things like traumatic events, or poor physical or mental health and our spiritual well-being. Many of us have had more than our share of trauma of late, when we think of the fires, floods and viruses that are part of our present world. Add to this the prevalence of mental health issues and physical ailments that are common among us and it is not surprising when a person finds they are feeling spiritually low. We experience the 'vagaries of life' in every part of our being.

Last weekend, I had the privilege of sharing a time of retreat with a group of wonderful, faithful women from one of our parishes. The group had requested a particular theme – how to 'drink from the source'. These women, like so many of us, were feeling a little worn and weary from the constant demands of life. They sought a time of rest and refreshment for their souls.

In John 4, Jesus told the woman at the well, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the

water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'

We reflected on how we could drink deeply from this living water and how we could maintain its flow within us; how we could find refreshment from this spring in our difficult times.

Jesus told the Samaritan woman that if she'd known the gift of God and who she was speaking to, she could ask for this living water. In John 7, where Jesus again invites the thirsty to come to him and drink, John adds that Jesus 'said this about the Spirit, who believers were to receive'.

To drink deeply from the living water is to recognise the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit in those who believe. The spring is already within us as believers. We can drink of this stream through communing with the God within us. However, this can be difficult if we are not in a good place spiritually. How can we drink of this living water, if we no longer recognise our need of it? How can it gush from within us when we feel it is but a trickle?

One of the things that can keep us grounded in times of mental or physical struggle, is routine. Things like brushing our teeth, showering, eating – all have the ability to help us keep going when the going is tough. If we apply this principle to times of spiritual struggle, it is reasonable to suggest that 'spiritual' routines might have the same helpful effect.

The early church fathers spoke of an experience called 'The Dark Night of The Soul'. This was their name for a time of deep spiritual depression, a descent into spiritual blackness; a time where

God seemed distant and where confidence in him was lost. The early church fathers also spoke of the value of the 'rule of life' which was a name for the devotional practices that formed the rhythm of their daily lives.

The early church fathers and mothers knew and experienced life as we all do; a life full of joy and sorrow, agony and ecstasy, elation and depression. They also knew the value of their particular 'rule of life', and how it could ground them in their heights and depths.

A little 'rule' or routine could help us also. We may decide to run and pray, or walk and pray; we may commune with God through our art; we may find refreshment in Christian company; we may read, write or listen to podcasts; we may ruminate, contemplate or meditate.

May I suggest that if we establish devotional practices as routines or habits, they will be valuable in seeing us through our own spiritual lows. The fitness exponents talk of a 21/90 rule. That means it takes 21 days to establish a habit, and 90 days for it to become a lifestyle change. Health practitioners are a little more conservative, and say that it can take between 18 and 254 days to establish a habit, but say that generally takes at least 66.

If we can develop sound devotional practices as habits in our lives, we will be daily drinking from this stream of living water. It will keep us thirsty as we will long for more, and we will see it gushing from within us to splash others.



CLERGY MOVES

The Reverend Paul Black has been granted an ATO (31.07.2021).

The Reverend Christopher James Butt has had his ATO renewed (30.07.2021).

The Reverend Nick Colyer has been appointed Rector, Weston Parish, commencing in October 2021.

The Reverend Dr Guerin Tueno has had his license as Acting Rector, Weston, extended till October 2021.

The Reverend Andrew Taylor completed his term as Area Dean, Belconnen (14.07.2021).

The Reverend Tim Hall was elected by his peers as Area Dean, Belconnen (14.07.2021).

The Reverend David Hilliard was commissioned and licensed as Priest-In-Charge, Junea (03.08.2021).

The Reverend Rob Lindbeck has had his ATO renewed (05.08.2021).

The Reverend Dr Chris Simon has had his ATO renewed (02.08.2021).

The Reverend Emma Street has resigned as Priest-In-Charge, Charnwood (02.08.2021) to take-up a full time RAAF Chaplaincy position.

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CLERGY RETREAT RECHARGE REFLECTIONS

by Reverend Paul Davey

Last November, all clergy were invited to the annual clergy retreat at Galong. I have to admit that as both a newcomer to the Diocese and an evangelical Anglican I was a bit unsure about a silent clergy retreat. It wasn't something that was part of my tradition and the whole concept was foreign. It also seemed counter-intuitive. Why gather every-one together and then not let them speak to each other? It didn't seem to make sense!

If I'm honest I was also a little apprehensive that I might do the wrong thing at some point and put my foot in it. But I decided to give it a go anyway and went along.

Some of my fears were relieved immediately. On the first afternoon and evening we were able to chat and catch up. Only after the first evening did it become a properly silent retreat. That was a relief!

The first two days of the silent part of the retreat I struggled. Everything was new and I struggled to know where to be and what to do. Initially, the inability to speak exacerbated this problem for me. And so I struggled. But after a couple of days I understood everything and was in a rhythm. And all of a sudden I started



to find the clergy retreat refreshing.

The silence part of the retreat actually became one of the best things about it. As a minister I normally communicate and listen a lot every single day. And this doesn't ease up at home with my family. And even though I love this about my role (and my family!) it can get draining. The silence therefore meant a complete break. The hours and hours of time to myself in silence meant I could truly rest and recharge. So I read, and prayed and thought and walked around the grounds all by myself. It was truly refreshing. I now understand why the ancients used to do this!

I also enjoyed the regular daily liturgical services. They injected into each day more readings from the Scripture and more prayers. They also provided a restful rhythm so the days didn't just drift.

about the next year and drew up a broad timetable for various events and activities. I prayed and thought and wrote about random ideas for my ministry role and for my parish. So much that had been swilling around in my head was able to be organised and put down on paper. It was an incredibly useful prayer and planning time. In the maelstrom of normal parish ministry it's so hard to find time to just sit and do this ... and yet here I was able to do it at length and while refreshed.

So, I came away from the annual clergy retreat deeply refreshed, rejuvenated in my relationship with God and with a workable plan for the year ahead. I am so grateful for the annual clergy retreat and for my parish who paid for it. I would recommend it for any clergy but especially for the busiest of clergy.

"So, I came away from the annual clergy retreat deeply refreshed, rejuvenated in my relationship with God and with a workable plan for the year ahead."

And towards the end of the clergy retreat I opened a blank book and began to write. I prayed and thought and wrote about people to pray for, people to invest in and people to care for. I prayed and thought and wrote

In fact, I believe the busier you are the more value you will get from the annual clergy retreat. God willing I'm going again this year. I hope to see you there!

COOMA PARISH FAREWELLS RECTOR

by Heather Jauncey
Long-time Rector's Warden

A Farewell Lunch for Reverend Lance Lawton and his wife Rosemary was held in Cooma on 27 June with 40 folk, masked and socially distanced! Ministerial colleagues from Baptist, LifeGate (Assembly of God), Lutheran and Salvation Army Churches were guests. I was invited to speak as the Rector's Warden (and former Parish Chair) for the majority of Lance's ministry in Cooma Parish.

Representing the Parishioners as Parish Chair and representing the Rector as his Warden was at times challenging! But Lance made it easier with his congenial personality and wonderful knowledge of Anglican administration and organisation.

Lance is a Man of God. Lance has a quirky sense of humour making him a regular guy! Lance had visions for Cooma Parish. Lance had visions for each Church. I had the privilege of being an integral part of the commencement of

Bredbo Christian Community, an Anglican/Baptist outreach initiative, a culmination of one of his visions.

Lance embraced ministry in the Cooma Parish Churches with his sound teaching and even in half-time capacity with limited hours he ministered to the Seniors Mature Mob group by being on the coach to welcome Mobbers, wish them a good trip and then being present on arrival back at St Paul's to greet them. He conducted a beautiful simple memorial time for a Mobber, Graham Henderson, who died alone and for whom no kin could be identified. During his seven years at Cooma Lance did many varied things such as socially commencing his ministry with the annual Super Bowl Party (a fun day!); helping out at the Evacuation Centre at the showground during the 2020 fires; revelling in contemporary worship songs at the Bredbo Christian Community Services, and at times, in the wee hours being called to the Cooma Hospital to pray with someone unknown to him, but someone who needed a minister – all



Reverend Lance and Rosemary Lawton

coupled with ministry to parishioners in the six Parish Churches.

It has been lovely to have Rosemary, Lance's wife, sharing the ministry through her support and caring. Cooma Parish will miss Rosemary; her sincerity, graciousness, creativity and warm friendship!

Cooma Parishioners recognise that Lance's skin condition has forced his retirement earlier than he and Rosemary would have wished. Nevertheless, as Lance and

Rosemary enter the new era of retirement from formal ministry we all know that God has more, much more in store for them. Their ministry will go with them wherever they go!

Lance and Rosemary may God's arms of everlasting love and caring always surround you and may you always feel comfort in His presence. May you know His guidance for His next ministry for you and may you always know His Blessings!

MEET VOCATIONAL DEACON LEONIE WHITE

by Reverend Leonie White

Recently I was struck by an image posted on Facebook of a person leaning on a shovel in a very large paddock. The comment was that prayer without action is equivalent to this character with a huge task ahead of him, leaning there on his shovel waiting for something to happen without any input from himself.

It reminded me of the quest for a place of prayer in the redevelopment of my local hospital at Wagga Wagga where I have worked in Pastoral Care for over 20 years; beginning as a volunteer, then as Assistant to the Coordinator of Pastoral Care, then Coordinator.

In 2006 we began planning for the redevelopment of our tired hospital buildings. Our department of Pastoral Care was asked to 'dream up big' what we would like to see for us in the new build and we boldly outlined our desire for a space big enough for small services, a mass or morning prayer, with a place to meet privately with families, an office space and a courtyard or garden. The team began praying, spreading the word and using every opportunity to bring the need of a new prayer space to the attention of those who needed to listen – executives, faith leaders, members of parliament and others. We planted the seed.

There were times that we thought

we would never see our prayers and dreams come to anything; that we might well not have a place at all. But we kept on, patiently and with hope, doing the best we could for the patients and staff, doing all our training, not complaining when we were moved from place to place, being grateful that we had a spot at all and that we did have a humble little chapel that used to be one of the theatres in the old multi-storey building. Tilling the soil – no leaning on shovels here.

We patiently mulched and added nutrients, getting rid of the weeds that would choke our growth. We waited for our new place to pray for 15 years, and a month ago we moved in. Praise God.

The staff, patients and their families have everything we dreamed of having and more. Added to the list that we asked for is a kitchen and storage space that just blows my mind. We are blessed. We worked hard. We held to our faith and we sowed with love and now I pray that the work of the team will continue to bring others to know and love our Lord a little more nearly and dearly in a much larger and more pleasant place.

The Multifaith Space is on the ground floor near the main entry – in the very heart of the hospital. All people are welcome here to pray, to be, to sit quietly and to reflect. The Prayer Room and glassed area



will be wrapped in film with an artistic design which incorporates the Murrumbidgee River, native flora, praying hands and symbols of healing and wholeness. This film will give the Prayer Room privacy and soften the light. It is due to be completed this month.

I was ordained Deacon in the Church of St John the Evangelist in Wagga Wagga on the Eve of the Feast of St Mary Magdalene on the 21st July, 2002, by Bishop Godfrey Fryar, alongside Elizabeth Sloane. I was baptised and confirmed in St John's and my parents and I worshiped regularly. This is my spiritual home in every way.

I have been involved in pastoral care ministry in Wagga Wagga since 2000 including Calvary hospital twice a week and Gumleigh Gardens Nursing Home whilst working full

time at WWBH.

My love for this ministry grew out of my involvement in Mothers' Union while my husband and I lived in Griffith NSW and I worshiped at the Cathedral Church of St Alban the Martyr in the Diocese of the Riverina. The MU gathered me up as a young mum and nurtured me into ministry to the sick and the aging. I recently had the privilege of giving the address at St Alban's Cathedral where I was able to acknowledge the role the parish and in particular the MU had in preparing me for my ministry as a Vocational Deacon.

Until recently I lead a Prayer, Praise and Proclamation service in the beautiful country church at Ladysmith on a fortnightly basis but the need to slow down a bit has seen me welcome Barbara Geale into a job-share position at WWBH where I now work three days a week and on-call and have taken a step back from St Saviour's. I now enjoy sitting in the company of the congregation that I have grown to love so dearly.

I am also part of the Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network and served in the Snowy Mountains and Evacuation Centres there and in Wagga Wagga during the Black Summer fires of 2019-20.

I continue to have a liturgical role in St John's and assist with baptisms and funeral services. My life is full and I feel blessed to have been called to serve our Lord in this way.

BISHOP GENIEVE HONOURED IN HOME TOWN WITH HOUSE



This story and photo was first published in The Melbourne Anglican. Reproduced with permission.

Melbourne Assistant Bishop Genieve Blackwell has been honoured in her home town, Wagga Wagga – but Melbourne's fourth lockdown last month meant she couldn't return to the Riverina in person.

Bishop Genieve spoke by video at the inaugural Blackwell House Day

School Assembly at The Riverina Anglican College, where she was represented by her daughter Baith – a former student of the college (though Bishop Genieve went to the local state high school).

'I grew up in Wagga ... We moved here from Coolamon after my father died when I was six (our

house in Coolamon went with his job as a church minister)', Bishop Genieve, who arrived in Melbourne from Wagga six years ago, told the Assembly. 'So it was amazing 30 years later to be asked to come back to Wagga as Rector of St Paul's Turvey Park (now South Wagga Anglican Church) and to be the Regional Bishop.

'I was the first woman in NSW to become a bishop in the Anglican Church (in 2012), the third in Australia and the 31st in the world – to give you an idea of the significance at the time.

'And actually, St Paul's was the fourth church I had been the first woman to be in charge of.'

Bishop Genieve said she chose as the verse for Blackwell House St Paul's Letter to the Romans, chapter eight verse 28: 'All things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.'

'It was a tragic event in my life that

brought me to Wagga in the first place – the death of my father at a very young age. And yet it is just one example in my life where I can say all things – the good things and the bad things – work together for good.'

Bishop Genieve said it was really important to her that the achievements of both women and men, boys and girls, were celebrated.

'So I am very glad to be honoured in this way as it means there is not just one house named after women but two (Stanley). As Christians, we believe all people are created in the image of God. All are precious, all are equally loved. All should have the opportunity to use their gifts according to their God-given potential.

'... I have to say it is frustrating I can't even cross the Murray River to NSW.

'I hear Blackwell House won the cross country – well done. Congratulations to everyone receiving an award today.'

NEW PRINCIPAL FOR THE ANGLICAN SCHOOL GOOGONG



Colin May is a highly regarded educator and experienced Principal of more than four decades. After a long teaching career in Primary and Secondary Education at St Andrew's Cathedral School, including establishing

'Kirrikee' Outdoor Education Centre, and Trinity Grammar School, he became the first male Principal at Arden Anglican School at Beecroft. Over a period of 17 years he led the development of the school from a Primary School at Beecroft to

a three-campus Preschool to Year 12 school with campuses in Oxford Street, Epping, and a Senior Study Centre in the Cambridge Business park. He retired from Arden in 2009.

Colin was also Principal at Al Sadiq College from 2011 to 2014 and at the Italian Bilingual School in 2015, then assisted with enrichment Programmes at the Kesser Torah College in 2016, which saw him honoured by the Teachers Guild of NSW with the award of an Honorary Fellowship (HFTGN) in that year.

He was most recently the Principal of the Sapphire Coast Anglican College from 2017 to 2018 and leads an educational consultancy practice, New Horizons Consulting.

In addition to his leadership roles, Colin has held office in a variety of School and Independent School associations. He is a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators, Inaugural Fellow of JSHAA (Junior School Heads' Association of Australia), an Australia Day Rotary Merit Awardee for services to education and a recipient of the Rotary Vocational Excellence Award and Life Member of the NSW Independent School Sport Association for services to school sport. He has been a Sportsmaster, Outdoor Education Director, coach and referee of many sports.

Colin is as passionate about education today as he was at the outset of his career. He has always prioritised the welfare of students and encourages each child to fulfil their potential by fully immersing themselves in the rich life offered by schools and their communities. His Christian leadership and encouragement of young men and women in faith has been a hallmark of his teaching.

Colin has long been an active member of the Anglican Church, serving in numerous roles including Chair of the St John's Bega Parish Council to 2018 and currently worships at St John's Beecroft. He has also been Chairman of the Board at The Riverina Anglican College in Wagga Wagga and a member of the Canberra Goulburn Diocese Education Commission.

Colin is married to Kay, and they have four adult children and 10 grandchildren.

Colin has been appointed as Principal at The Anglican School Googong (TASG) from July 2021. Googong is a rapid growth area and it is envisaged to be a town of 18,000 people by 2025. In 2021 TASG has 430 students K-10 and will have its first Year 12 in 2023. An Early Learning Centre will also be amalgamated with TASG in 2022.

SPLIT DIOCESE

by Micah Wagner

Micah Wagner is currently doing an internship with the Diocese, assisting in various communication projects.

The landscape of our country seems to fluctuate often these days. We go from periods of relative freedom to sudden bouts of lockdown with seemingly nary a warning. It's a stressful time with daily lives being affected, and people are understandably upset.

What I would like to touch on in this article, however, is the fact that not all locations are seemingly equal in regard to this, and it's an easy thing to forget. Canberra is a separate biome with its own territory, and as a result enjoys many freedoms now that the rest of the country simply doesn't. Masks aren't compulsory, restaurants are open, people are free to travel outside of Canberra – essentially, daily life is to an extent, normal.

This is not the case in NSW. With recent happenings in Sydney, masks

are a requirement in public settings, with fines that can extend up to \$13,000 if not followed. Travel is discouraged, there are limits on gatherings, and space has reverted to one person per four square meters. Compare that to ACT which is still one person per two square meters, and you begin to see the disparity.

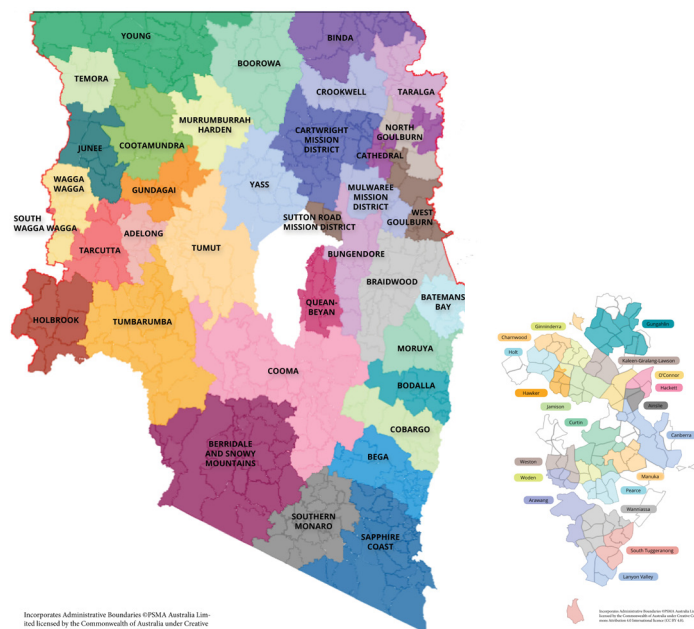
Now I'm not trying to levy an envious mood with this comparison – there are many places that are better, many worse. I'm just trying to shine a light on the fact that our diocese is made up of two areas, regional NSW, and the ACT. And regional NSW falls under the stricter NSW mandates, while the ACT does not.

We need to be aware that though we are living in the same diocese, the environment may not be the same for everyone. Some may be dealing with more stress, more pressure than others, and we need to be conscious of the entirety of the situation as we communicate with one another.

On the opposite side of this, some may not be able to seemingly

understand or relate to the frustrations that are ongoing. Not because they're unwilling to, they just may not have been exposed to it and thus haven't understood the severity.

It's a stressful situation to be in. But we are all in this together, and although at times it may be hard, understanding and love can go a long way in helping to push through this storm.



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OPINION PIECE: FORGIVENESS



Picture by Felix Koutchinski from Unsplash.com

Forgiveness can be thoughtfully examined theoretically through an integrated lens with a knowledge base in social work, sociology, and theology. However, intimately experiencing it seems to me to create a richer awareness of what forgiveness is. My musing on the theoretical and experiential dimensions highlights to me that the act of forgiveness is both describable and indescribable.

Broughton (2014), in his book *Restorative Christ: Jesus, justice and discipleship* capably reminds us, both theologically and sociologically, that forgiveness brings hope, reconciliation and relationship.

Such hope gives us the chance to embrace an improved relationship. For example, if we meditate on what happens when we hear someone humbly and genuinely speak, 'I forgive you – you are forgiven?' and what it feels like when we humbly and genuinely speak into other people's lives, saying 'I forgive you'. Think about the spiritual warmth of two souls connecting or reconnecting and allowing themselves to engage in a restorative relationship. When this happens, an alternative present and future ensue. Forgiveness is beautiful.

For us Christians, forgiveness is also a God-given gift for a complex, pained world. The Bible states that

'since the beginning of creation, all people have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23). I suspect that I do not have to convince people that sin exists in this world in 2021, and consequently, the world needs to contemplate forgiveness. I say words like – violence, abuse, disrespect, harshness, glass ceilings – and sadly, tragic narratives of hurt emerge. Similar to many of us, my heart aches and my mind groans with distress over the numerous accounts of destructive words and actions that continually reverberate in our precious world. Add to this the shame of my own sins. Thankfully division, or worse, caused by our sin are not the final words and actions for Christians.

Our corporate sharing in church and small groups and our private reading of our Bibles regularly remind me that God responded to sin from the beginning of creation and implemented a painful and costly reconciliation action plan addressing sin. That is, through His Son Jesus Christ's birth, death and resurrection, we can have our sins forgiven. The Bible says in 1 John 1:9 – 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness'. And as Anglican liturgy in the Prayer Book states, I do genuinely apologise for 'the times

I have left undone what [I] ought to have done' and 'when [I] have done what [I] ought not to have done'.

Forgiveness is precious to Christians. It is precious to me, especially in my darkest times of regret. Please let me explain this further.

Forgiving and being forgiven gives me hope for a better future for myself and those around me. Forgiveness gives me a chance to try again. It gives me the sense of loving relationships and the opportunity to heal from what I know is complex, challenging and tragic. Author's Keller and Coekin (2017) reinforce this in their Bible Study *'90 days in Judges, Galatians and Ephesians'*, indicating that forgiveness is a promise not to dwell on the hurt but to strive towards reconciliation. Social worker Gray and philosopher Stofberg (2000) in their article *'Respect for persons'*, helpfully point out that time alone cannot heal guilty suffering, but rather list forgiveness as one of the characteristics that can bring healing. Sociologist Professor Peter Kaufman (2013) in his blog *'forgiveness is a social act'*, writes that forgiveness transforms the relationship between the victim and the offender and between the victim and their social setting.

The act of forgiveness and entering into the process of purging hurts and heart-felt healing is an ancient and primary Biblical tenet.

The act of forgiveness and entering into the process of purging hurts and heart-felt healing is an ancient and primary Biblical tenet. Firstly, forgiveness is part of God's Character. As Jonah states, 'I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity' (Jonah 4:2).

Secondly, Jesus sees forgiveness as essential, as seen:

- ▶ Through Jesus words Matt 6: 14-15 'For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.'
- ▶ In Jesus' actions on the cross, Luke 23:32-34 'Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the

Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.'

These two quotes highlight that Jesus' teaching on forgiveness is radical and counters the culture of social ideas like 'give back as good as you get' or 'make sure you have the last word' or 'win at all costs'. Bonhoeffer (2015 [1937]) in the *'Cost of Discipleship'* reminds us that Jesus' forgiveness for the world exists even amongst his enemies.

Thirdly, forgiveness is part of being a Christian or a Christian community and being virtuous. A virtuous person and a virtuous church that responds to God's forgiveness shares love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5: 22-23) is attractive. These virtues can help us think through the complexities associated with forgiving. For example, they can help us pause and wonder deeply about any act or words or advice that does not uphold these virtues.

Fourthly, forgiveness is part of the Anglican identity. Recounting the Apostles or Nicene Creed in our churches reminds us to forgive. The Creeds both say, 'I believe in ... the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting ...' (General Synod, 1995, p 37).

Forgiveness breathes hope. The Reverend Rob Haynes, a dear friend, experiences periods of dark thoughts and profound depression. Rob in *'Church, disability and rurality: The lived experience'* reminds us of the precious blessing of a regenerative, life-giving relationship with God grounded in forgiveness (Monica Short, Seiffert, Haynes & Haynes, 2018). Rob prompts:

'Central to Christian thinking is the concept that God knows each person personally and works through His Spirit encouraging each individual to emulate Christ's example to love regardless of weakness or strength ... Essential ... is that we never allow a feeling [of weakness, sense of tragedy or a disability] or a discriminatory label to define any person ... Christians live in hope ... We live in this life, but confidently hope in the resurrection ... I believe in ... the forgiveness of sins.'

To forgive and be forgiven is a participatory experience, and we can learn about forgiveness from others. My beautiful and gentle

OPINION PIECE: FORGIVENESS (CONTINUED)

husband, Bishop Mark Short (2017, p 107), says forgiveness is an action. We can see this by Jesus birth, life, death and resurrection. Further, the social worker and dear friend, Giselle Burningham, reminds me that the act of forgiveness starts with understanding what happened. Next, it is breaking the cycle, so it does not happen again, then forgiving so I/we are not embittered, and then we help someone else understand what happened so they can break destructive cycles.

To forgive and be forgiven is a participatory experience, and we can learn about forgiveness from others.

Forgiveness is to happen regularly, often and generously, such as seen in Matthew 18: 21-22, which states to forgive '70x7 times', and according to the parable of the Prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 forgiveness means it is a time to party.

At the day-to-day level, forgiveness is grouped with peace, empathy, compassion and apology (Monica Short, Dempsey, *et al*, 2018, p 149). It is part of realising imperfections are present in our world, harm exists, and there is a need for restorative actions. This includes remorse, confession, the forgiveness of others, and self-forgiveness (Monica Short, Dempsey, *et al*, 2018, p 152). In our day to day lives, The Reverend Helen Dwyer, in the article 'What is a person? Deepening students' and colleagues' understanding of person-centredness' states that we need to have the 'ability to have regret. Desire to do a better job next time. To improve, to acknowledge how you fail and the need to repair that.' This is so we can move on with our lives and function. Similarly, the Reverend Paul Black (2011) said in one of his sermons:

'I can let anger control me and destroy my relationships. Or I can view my anger as an opportunity to build, relate and grow. Jesus taught us if you are angry with someone do something about it. Get it settled and behind you.'

However, what about those words and actions that are not fixable or the times the words 'I am sorry' will never be heard? Do you ever wonder about these? I do. Judy Taylor (2015), a minister's wife, in the 2015 Bush



Picture by Brett Jordan from Unsplash.com

Church Aid Still Waters Magazine suggests the following strategies for complex situations, which I have paraphrased and slightly extended:

- ▶ Remember you are not alone; Matthew 28:20 says 'And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age'.
- ▶ Read and follow the Corinthians model. (2 Cor 2:6 Forgive and comfort.)
- ▶ Pray for yourself, your situation and that Jesus will change your heart.
- ▶ Talk with someone. Check with a trustworthy and wise family member, friend, older person or leader or counsellor or denominational contact person about the situation, pray with your pastor or chaplain. Connect with Government-based services such as counselling, see a Christian counsellor, meet with a supervisor or mentor, ring Lifeline and/or join a support group.
- ▶ Only carry burdens that are yours and not others. God does the judging (Romans 14:12), so you do not need to take the responsibility of judgement.
- ▶ Accept you cannot be in a right relationship with everyone. Resolution is not always possible.
- ▶ You may not feel love or forgiveness, but try and do something loving for the person. Follow Paul's example of agreeing to disagree (Acts 15:39).
- ▶ Pray to know when to persist and when to walk away (Taylor, 2015, pp 5-6).

I agree with Judy's advice. Let us not be isolated as we journey through the ups and downs of life and deal with forgiveness issues. We have the option of embracing our Anglican community and focusing on forgiveness, patience

and love. As Peacewise (a Christian course) reminds us, forgiveness is about applying the gospel to our relationships. It is about:

'Forgiving others isn't about them; it's about you. Holding on to anger can weigh you down no less than walking through life with a lead ball and chain around your ankle. The act of forgiveness is about deciding that you no longer want to carry the weight from a past event into your future. It's about declaring that you love yourself more than you loathe another human being. And it's about extracting the learning, but leaving the anger behind. (Margie Warrell)' (Peacewise, 2019)

So what happens if I and others dare to forgive others and role model Christ's love and forgiveness and acceptance of others in my Christian community? Then possibly hurt might be confronted, healing embraced, and you and I might have our lives changed for the better. I pray this is so for us all.

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One family's story



Embracing Ministries Chaplain and Director Reverend Andrea de Vaal Horciu (L) and Assistant Director Deb Horscroft (R)

Embracing Ministries is a chaplaincy and pastoral care ministry within the Diocese which supports the inclusion, spiritual growth and discipleship of children and young people with disabilities and their families.

This is a story from one mother, Debbie Smyth, about her encounter with Embracing Ministries:

'I am going to tell you a little about my journey. It has taken me years to be able to share this story without being angry and overwhelmed.

Our family story is about my darling daughter. I guess we would always describe ourselves as a 'normal' happy-go-lucky family, very much part of our local community.

Our daughter was born perfectly healthy, a whopping nearly 10 lbs, our family was complete. She grew

and thrived as normal toddlers do up to when she was just three. She was a busy little girl; I definitely truly had my hands full! She was a little mischief, a blessing and utter trouble!

When our little one was three we were in the back yard playing when she suddenly started to turn blue. She was airlifted to hospital, then our journey of hospitals, tests and exhaustion began.

After several similar episodes and me constantly nagging doctors to listen to me, my baby girl was diagnosed with Epilepsy. It then, over time, became apparent that things were desperately wrong and a battle was ahead of us to find out what exactly was wrong with our little blue-eyed girl.

From being our cheeky, dancing, singing girl who wanted to sing

on Australia's Got Talent, jumping around the house with a plastic microphone and a passion for Peppa Pig, Dora and Fifi and the Flower Tots, we noticed she started to show signs of losing all the skills she had gained. She could once run and dance and twist around – Oh my! She could dance around like the wind – she could talk, count to ten and attended preschool. These milestones were slowly slipping away from us. What was going on?

After hundreds of hospital appointments, and I mean hundreds, from countless blood tests, brain scans, lumbar punctures and EEG's, we eventually got our diagnosis that we had been fighting to get to the bottom of it.

Just before her fifth birthday we received the devastating news that our little baby girl had the terminal brain condition, Late Infantile Batten Disease. Our world was turned upside down, we were completely devastated. The typical early signs are loss of muscle coordination (ataxia) and seizures, along with progressive mental deterioration, though afflicted children may show mild to severe delays in speech development well before other symptoms appear. This form progresses rapidly and ends in death between ages 8 and 12. It is often described as the childhood form of Motor Neurone Disease/ Alzheimer's. Our baby girl was a normal child, now we are a family being torn apart by genetics!

Our little girl's health took a dramatic turn for the worse on her seventh birthday. We cancelled

her party and in a whirlwind we found ourselves watching over our baby girl on life support at Canberra Hospital. We called the Reverend Andrea de Vaal Horciu (EM's Director), whom we had met in the church we had attended for the children's Christmas service. Andrea was by our side supporting us through this horrendous time. If I needed someone to hold my hand she was there. This was a very alien experience to me and I wasn't coping well on the inside, but seemed to be doing remarkably well on the outside. We were sleep-deprived, confused and absolutely exhausted but Andrea knew exactly what we needed without us even asking. She would turn up to hospital with coffee and cakes just at the right time.

After 10 days on life support we knew that our little one's short little life had ended and we had to let her go. Andrea prayed with us and planned her funeral with us. It's been four years since she passed away but it feels like only yesterday. We could never thank Andrea and her community enough for being a constant presence.

Please continue to support this group and the work they do with families who go through what we did. It is essential we have people who have time to offer this care.'

The above story was unsolicited and posted on social media. If you would like to volunteer or support the work of Embracing Ministries please contact us via our website. embracingministries.org



*Illustrating five Australian regions and their flora and fauna:
illuminating the Book of Psalms*

An exhibition of watercolours by Fiona Pfennigwerth

18 August (opening morning tea @ 11) – 12 September 2021
Australian National Botanic Gardens Canberra

A selection of the illustrations of Tasmania, The Kimberley WA, Gariwerd (The Grampians) Vic, The Red Centre NT and The Hunter, NSW, and their flora and fauna, reproduced in her recent *The Book of Psalms illuminated*, on sale during the exhibition at the Botanical Bookshop.

E: fiona@fionapfennigwerth.info

W: www.fionapfennigwerth.info

NEW MICROPHONES FOR SOUTH COAST CHURCHES

by Chris Preston

When the Church Sound Australia Facebook group offered a microphone pack as a prize for a 'show us your sound desk' competition, the Tech Team at Good Shepherd Curtin had one immediate thought: We're In!

Conscious of the south coast churches in the Diocese that did it tough with the bushfires and COVID shutdowns, Good Shepherd entered in the hope of being able to share the love around, and lo and behold, they won!

When three spanking new Sennheiser e835 microphones arrived from Turramurra Music, the Team was only too happy to pass them on to Rebecca Newland, Archdeacon for the Coast, Monaro and Alpine regions, as a gift for

whoever needed them.

'It's great to be able to help out with the tech needs of other churches in the Diocese' said Chris Preston, Good Shepherd Tech Team member. 'These are great mics designed for spoken word vocals, so the Team here prays they will be a blessing wherever they end up. And if I can put in a plug for the Church Sound Australia Group, it is a great resource for volunteers like us trying to pull together good sound and vision for the services each Sunday – everything from how to mic up a drum kit to getting the best out of your livestream.

'So a big thanks to them and to Turramurra Music for the mics.'

Archdeacon Rebecca Newland with Good Shepherd's Kathy Preston passing on the microphones for use down the NSW South Coast.



ST ALBAN THE MARTYR WODEN PATRONAL FESTIVAL

by Reverend Gavin Krebs

On a lovely sunny weekend (26th-27th June 2021), St Alban's Woden celebrated its patronal festival with Bishop Donald Kirk (Riverina Diocese) as our guest preacher and presider. Many of the parish family turned up to one of the four services, and either stayed or returned for the festival lunch. A wonderful time of fellowship was had by all.



BELLS RING OUT AROUND THE WORLD

by Charles Body

2021 is the 200th anniversary of the invention of the Ellacombe Chime, a method of installing and ringing bells invented by the Reverend Henry Ellacombe who became curate at St Mary's Church in Bitton, England, in 1817.

In an Ellacombe Chime the bells are fixed in position, with the ropes being attached to the clapper. This allows one person to ring twelve or more bells, unlike the traditional way of ringing where the bells are rung by a team of ringers with one person ringing each bell.

With traditional ringing, the whole bell swings through 360 degrees. As some bells weigh nearly a tonne, traditional ringing can be thirsty work, and bellringers developed a reputation for partaking of too much strong drink after and even during ringing.

When he arrived at Bitton, Ellacombe already had a dim view of bellringers but he was nonetheless appalled by the unruly and disruptive behaviour of the bellringers in his

new parish. He therefore set to work to develop a system whereby the bells could be rung by one person of trustworthy, decorous and, most importantly, sober character.

To mark the 200th anniversary of the Ellacombe Chime, the Bitton Parish History Group organised an ambitious day of bellringing on Saturday 26th June 2021. Over 130 Ellacombe Chimes around the world rang out at or near 12 noon (local time) on that day, beginning in New Zealand and ending in Canada – a time difference of 17 hours.

There are two Ellacombe Chimes in our diocese – at St John's in Reid and one at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Forrest. Both churches participated in the event. The Bitton Parish History Group has compiled a list of videos and photographs of the day – see <http://www.churchside1.plus.com/EllacombeWorldwideVideos.htm>.

Photo: Charles Body ringing the Bells at St John's in Reid, courtesy of Tim the Yowie Man of The Canberra Times.



CANBERRA IN 1845 WHEN ST JOHN'S WAS CONSECRATED

by Reverend Robert Willson

Last month in Anglican News we remembered the consecration of St John's by Bishop Broughton in 1845. In 1995, the 150th anniversary of that event, the then Rector asked me to speak to the congregation about what Canberra was like at that time.

It is always fun to try to reconstruct the world as it was in a certain year. In 1845 the settled parts of Australia were very much a convict society and it was six years before the beginning of the Great Gold Rush which transformed the country. The total European population in that year was about 303,000, together with many aboriginal nations untouched by European influences.

Sir George Gipps

The Governor was Sir George Gipps who had arrived in the Colony in 1838. He was hardworking, firm but fair, and deeply concerned to support and defend aboriginal people who were sometimes brutally abused by white settlers. A few years earlier he made sure that seven men who were involved in the Myall Creek Massacre in northern NSW were executed for their crimes. Sydney society was horrified. (The book *Waterloo Creek* by Roger Milliss, tells the whole sickening saga.)

Governor Gipps worshipped in St James' Church every Sunday, but he admitted that Bishop Broughton's sermons were beyond him, and he turned his thoughts to official correspondence while sitting in his pew.

In London the Colonial Office exercised remote but firm control over the Colony. The power behind the Colonial Office was 'Mr Under-Secretary Stephen' who was immensely arrogant and dictatorial. He was known behind his back as 'Mr Over-Secretary Stephen'. Many Governors were very happy that official communications between London and Sydney were very slow. They could do what they liked, within reason.

Sir James Young Simpson

Her Majesty Queen Victoria had been on the British throne for eight years and had married her beloved Albert a few years before. About this time the brilliant Scottish medical doctor Sir James Young Simpson, Professor of Medicine at Edinburgh University, discovered the anaesthetic properties of chloroform. Queen Victoria totally approved of this discovery because it took away the agony of childbirth.

Not everyone approved. A Biblical fundamentalist wrote to Simpson that his discovery violated Scripture

because the Bible said that in sorrow and pain shall a woman bring forth a child. Pain in childbirth was the will of God. Simpson replied by pointing out that Almighty God used this technique Himself by putting Adam into a deep sleep when He created Eve!

It was a long time before the blessing of chloroform reached the Limestone Plains.

Around 1845, young Australians, a few from this district, were enlisting for military service to go off to New Zealand and fight in the Maori Wars. For the next 27 years thousands fought and died in these bloody conflicts but most people know nothing about it.

Those who worshipped in the newly opened St John's Church in 1845 would have talked about the news of the decline of the whaling industry along the south coast. The reason was simply that those gentle giants of the sea were being driven to extinction. Today of course whale populations are steadily increasing again.

William Farrer

In 1845 William Farrer, wheat propagator, whose work is part of the Canberra story, was born in Westmorland, England. His family were tenant farmers but he was a brilliant mathematician and won

scholarships which took him to Pembroke College, Cambridge. He started the study of medicine but contracted tuberculosis and arrived in Australia about 1870.

Farrer's first job was at George Campbell's property, Duntroon, where he was tutor to Campbell's family. I wonder if the young Farrer worshipped at St John's Church, accompanying the family to the church built by Robert Campbell, and consecrated in the year of Farrer's birth.

Farrer qualified as a surveyor and worked for about 11 years in various parts of the Colony. However his heart was in the Canberra district. He fell in love with Henrietta Nina, only daughter of Leopold de Salis, the owner of Cuppacumbalong Station, and they were married in 1882.

Farrer settled at Lambrigg Station on the Murrumbidgee River, near the Point Hut Crossing and Tharwa. There, in a laboratory he began his experimental work on improving varieties of wheat, suitable for Australian conditions. His 'Federation' wheat (1901) dominated Australian wheat growing in the first part of the 20th century and was a key to our national prosperity.

MINISTER GETS SHOT!



Reverend Paul Davey from St Nicholas' got his COVID vaccination this week in Goulburn.

'Actually, I'd been eager to get my COVID shot earlier than this ... but this was the first available opportunity for someone with my age profile in Goulburn who's not in the emergency services or health. I got in to get vaccinated as soon as possible.'

'I really don't like needles,' said Revd Davey, 'But getting your shot is a good thing to do as a Christian. Jesus tells us to love our neighbours as ourselves (Matt 22:39). We can love our neighbours by getting

vaccinated as it means we are less of a burden on others if we get the COVID virus, we're potentially less contagious and if enough of us get the shot restrictions will ease and businesses that have struggled during the pandemic will be able to get back to normal. So even if you're like me and you don't like needles, go and see your doctor and get your shot out of love for others!'

Bishop Mark Short expressed his thanks to all Diocesan clergy and laity who have also been vaccinated and his prayers for those still awaiting their dose.



Invitation to Christians for an Ethical Society Dinner with a talk by Genevieve Jacobs AM: The Role of the Media in Australia Today



In an age of rapid change in the Australian media, what are the challenges for a democratic society? A free press is a fundamental pillar of our community but the traditional media's business model is in complete disarray and social media does not share the same values of balance, integrity and fair reporting. Where will our news come from in the future and how can we protect important values while developing an economically sustainable way forward for the business?

Genevieve Jacobs AM is the Group Editor for Region Media, Australia's fastest growing digital news platform. Genevieve chairs the ACT arts minister's Creative Advisory Council and co-chairs the ACT Reconciliation Council. She sits on the boards of the Cultural Facilities Corporation, the National Folk Festival and is deputy chair of the Canberra International Music Festival. She is also a director of the Conflict Resolution Service and the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture. She was made an AM in the Australia Day honours list for her service to public broadcasting and the community. Genevieve has an enduring interest in building community engagement, and is a partner in the family farming enterprise.

6.00pm Tuesday, 17 August 2021 at the Hellenic Club Woden, Apollo Room

\$55 per person for a 3 course meal (Cash bar)

Please register by emailing admin@ces.org.au including any dietary requirements.

Payment to: Christians for an Ethical Society
BSB 325-185
Account 03310199
Noting surname/Dinner

Luke 14 CBM in association with Embracing Ministries Presents:



Inclusion Toolbox for Kids and Teens Nuts and Bolts of Accessible Ministry



**Saturday 14th August
1.30pm-5pm**

**St Mary in the Valley Anglican church
17 Webber Street, Calwell (opposite Kingswim indoor pool).**

Children and teenagers with disabilities, and their families, look rightly to Churches and Christian community groups for acceptance and belonging. At the same time, leaders and those in ministry areas are seeking help to ensure their activities and programs cater for all.

This workshop assists churches and community groups to engage practically with this vital area of Christian community and church life and ministry.

Topics that will be covered

Inclusion Toolkit, Challenging Behaviour, Helping Kids Include Kids Supporting Parents and Siblings, Autism Spectrum Disorder

We recommend you book in advance. To book a place or for more information contact Luke 14 Regional Coordinator

Reverend Andrea de Vaal Horciu

Email info@embracingministries.org Mobile: 0404 256 714

AMUA Mary Sumner Diocesan Day Canberra & Goulburn Diocese



St Alban's Anglican Church, Woden - 10.30 am

34 Chappel Street, Lyons ACT

Wednesday, 11th August, 2021

Celebrant & Preacher—Rev'd Gavin Krebs



Following the Communion Service, Morning Tea will be served in the Hall and Mrs Anne Downing will speak to us of her journey as a Mothers' Union member, with her reflections, commencing as a young child.

Rsvp: Mrs Dorothy Mackenzie mackenzied0804@gmail.com (Secretary)

Joan Eberle - jeb71451@bigpond.net.au (Diocesan President)