

# THE Melbourne Anglican

JUNE 2024, No 636

## ‘There is always a plan for your life’: Ngaire’s story

Ngaire Elwood has had two second chances at life. She’s now helping others have the same, through her work in cord blood stem cell research. Looking back, Associate Professor Elwood can see God’s guiding hand throughout her life.

**Story – P20-21.**



**P5**

Farewell to familiar face at Ridley College



**P8**

QLD less safe under youth justice laws

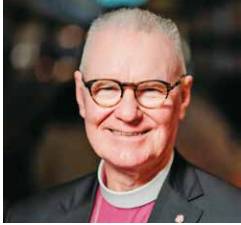


**P18-19**

Fighting for truth ... on YouTube

Picture: Elspeth Kernebone





# Pray for the Yoorrook Justice Commission's work

## ■ Archbishop Philip Freier

**The Yoorrook Justice Commission was established by the Victorian Government with details published in the Victoria Government Gazette on 14 May 2021.**

It is an important commission with the powers of a Royal Commission. Yoorrook has wide terms of reference that include enquiring into "Historical Systemic Injustice ...since the start of Colonisation" along with "Ongoing Systemic Injustice" in a range of areas including youth and criminal justice, child protection, health and welfare. Suffice it to say that the scope of the Commission's responsibilities is quite broad.

The Anglican, Uniting and Catholic churches in Victoria were recently requested to prepare responses to a range of questions from the Commission in preparation for their participation in a panel discussion that met with the Commissioners on 1 May. Among the concerns of the Commission was the question of land being gifted to churches in the colonial period of Victoria as "Crown Grants". The Commission was also interested in the churches' history and involvement with missions to Aboriginal people during that same period.

It is certainly the case that the history of colonisation has been repeatedly told from the perspective of the colonists and not from that of the First Nations people whom the colonists inevitably and systematically drove from their land and traditional life. The colonial enterprise inexorably expanded to cover the whole of what is now Victoria, as it did over different periods in other parts of Australia. There were certainly members of the Church of England who denounced the injustice of what was happening, as there must surely been among its members those who were perpetrators of that injustice. Being an intergenerational community that has a strong value of presence in community inevitably means that we have an intertwined history with all that has gone before us in our state.

Great atrocities were committed against First Peoples in this period of frontier expansion and to the extent that remain ignorant about it, we compound the consequences of that injustice in our own day. Bishop Richard Treloar and Bishop Genieve Blackwell participated in the 1 May panel on behalf of the Anglican Province of Victoria, and I am grateful for their sensitive and courageous witness to this painful history. In

his opening statement to the Commission, the Bishop of Gippsland lamented that, "the colonial history includes atrocities committed against First Peoples and that some of those involved in the heinous, but no longer unspeakable, acts, are likely to have identified with the Church of England". He went on to say that the Church has "been complicit in, and has benefitted from, the dispossession and other harms caused by Victoria's colonisation, legitimated in part by the theologically repugnant (and now repudiated) 'doctrine of discovery', and its outworking in the morally bankrupt ideology of *terra nullius*."

I commend the work of the Yoorrook Commission to your attention and your prayers. The Commission is carrying our important work to better understand the past and to recommend policies to the state government for a better, and reconciled, future. While I suspect that it is not receiving the press coverage that it deserves, there is much information on its website including on the panel discussion already referred to.

### Vacant Appointments as of 22 May 2024:

St Alfred, Blackburn North (from September 2024); St Agnes, Black Rock; Christ Church, Brunswick; St Michael, North Carlton; St John, Camberwell; St Philip, Collingwood; Redemption Church, Craigieburn; Parish of Gisborne; St Albans, Hamlyn Heights; St Oswald, Glen Iris; St Thomas, Langwarrin; with St Peter, Pearcedale; St Mary, North Melbourne [from October]; St Thomas, Moone Ponds [from mid-August]; Parish of Mornington-Mt Martha; Ormond Anglican Parish; St Aidan, Parkdale; Pascoe Vale-Oak Park; Mullum Mullum, Ringwood; St Luke, Vermont; St John, Wantirna South; St Thomas, Winchelsea

### Appointments:

**ADDLEY, The Revd Roxanne**, appointed Vicar (from Priest-in-Charge), Holy Trinity Lara with Christ Church Little River, effective 16 June 2024

**ARNOLD-MOORE, The Revd Colleen Michelle**, appointed Area Dean, Area Deanery of Monash-Kingston, effective 22 May 2024

**MCDONALD, The Revd Mark**, appointed Area Dean, Area Deanery of Camberwell, effective 6 May 2024

### Resignations:

**BENNETT, The Revd Vanessa**, Vicar, St Thomas, Moonee Ponds and Archdeacon, Archdeaconry of Essendon, to take up Position as Assistant Bishop, Diocese of Canberra Goulburn, effective 15 July 2024

**MILLARD, The Revd Joshua Tyler**, Parish Minister, St Thomas, Burwood 25 June 2024

### Retirements:

**JOUSTRA, The Revd Jan Tjeerd**, St Mary, North Melbourne, effective 13 October 2024

### May 2024 Clergy Moves Apologies – Corrections to:

**BISWAS, The Revd Argho**, appointed Vicar (from Priest-in-Charge), Holy Trinity, Hampton Park, effective 1 June 2024



## Clergy Moves

## THE Melbourne Anglican



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Bishop Genieve Blackwell and Bishop Richard Treloar testify at the hearing.

Picture: Yoorrook Justice Commission

# ‘We want to be part of the solution’

■ Penny Mulvey

**Walking into the room which has hosted hearings of the Yoorrook Justice Commission for the past two-and-a-half years, the weightiness of its purpose was palpable.**

Constituted by the Governor of Victoria in 2021, the Yoorrook Royal Commission has been making enquiries into “historical systemic injustice perpetrated by State and Non-State entities against First Peoples since the start of colonisation”.

This is heavy work. The five commissioners carry an enormous load as they read submissions, both personal and corporate, hear stories, question witnesses and model Truth Telling.

Wednesday 1 May was the last day of the Land, Sky and Waters hearings. Representatives of the Anglican Province of Victoria, the Uniting Church, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania and the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne appeared as witnesses.

The Anglican Church was represented by Melbourne’s Bishop Genieve Blackwell and Bishop of Gippsland Richard Treloar.

In his opening statement, Bishop Treloar spoke on behalf of the dioceses of Melbourne, Bendigo, Wangaratta and Gippsland. His first words were of repentance for the terrible legacy that the Anglican Church has wrought on First Nations people.

Bishop Treloar described the Commission as a further step towards a hopeful future, as we address the unhealed wound in our

church and in our nation.

Quickly, the discussion turned to a key issue that has led to the disempowerment of native peoples worldwide: the Catholic Church’s Doctrine of Discovery, which significantly influenced Australia’s colonial past. The Church representatives acknowledged that churches were complicit in the illegitimate colonisation.

In response, Commissioner Anthony North KC asked churches what ideas they had of what could be done. Each church was then invited to speak about its own history in how colonisation unfolded in Victoria.

Bishop Treloar spoke of the rise of mission societies and their influence in the colonies in eastern Australia. He described the paradox of the Church of England Mission to Aborigines providing protection while co-operating with government policies that were causing cultural genocide. He acknowledged that deep seated racism had a devastating impact on the Aboriginal population both physically and spiritually.

Bishop Treloar acknowledged the paternal environment, the ignorance of any pre-existing spirituality, and the assumptions of cultural superiority behind the “protectionist desire to Christianise” reflected in Select Committee Reports from both Britain and the new colony in Victoria.

Bishop Treloar said the Anglican Church was repenting of the past, seeking to move forward in a respectful partnership. He said moving Aboriginal peoples onto reserves

and missions was an act of dispossession, resulting in intergenerational trauma.

Counsel assisting turned the panel discussion more directly to the issue of land, of stolen land and of reparation.

All three churches accepted the disparity of land ownership between churches and First Nations people. None had current policies regarding land repatriation. The Anglican representatives agreed that the church had knowingly taken land from Aboriginal people. Again, Mr Lovett challenged the Church witnesses asking them how the admission of stolen lands sat with their Christian beliefs. There was no easy answer to that question, although speaking on behalf of the Gippsland diocese, Bishop Treloar reiterated his opening apologies to First Nations peoples who were traumatised and dispossessed.

Bishop Blackwell also acknowledged the continuing willingness of First Nations people to engage with the Church, what she described as “an incredible sign of grace”.

Both bishops made clear that the Anglican Church in Victoria wanted to be part of a society-wide solution, and looked forward to the outcomes of the Commission.

“I feel privileged to be part of truth-telling,” Bishop Blackwell said. “It is painful but important to sit with and moving forward is costly.”

“As Christian Churches, we have been complicit in injustice, but we want to be part of the solution.”



# Victorians need support to stay afloat

■ Jenan Taylor

**People with mental health conditions and those who need public housing will suffer without better Victorian government support for services, frontline workers have warned.**

Christian outreach workers are supporting increasing numbers of people in need, many referred by overwhelmed community sector organisations, including mental health services.

They said greater government investment in mental health services and public housing could relieve the deep stress many people faced.

It comes after the 2024 State Budget revealed delays to planned mental health and wellbeing programs, and short-term funding for many interventions, including housing services.

Boroondara Community Outreach said growing living pressures were leading to worsening mental health conditions among many people, and this put ever more pressure on support systems.

Coordinator the Reverend Natalie Dixon-Monu said many who turned to

the ministry for mental health support were being shunted from clinical provider to provider because of long waitlists.

Ms Dixon-Monu said this increased the risk that some people with severe mental health conditions would suicide because they were unable to get the level of help they needed.

She said being unable to give people proper attention was a constant problem for many dedicated community mental health organisations because they were funded only for the short term.

Ms Dixon-Monu said fixing the funding issue and making Victoria's clinical mental health services bulk-billed would make them more accessible for low-income earners.

Crossway LifeCare, East Burwood said increasing public housing was vital because many people who were referred to its financial aid ministry were desperately searching for ways to afford accommodation.

Coordinator Edmund Chin said many were single women who had fled domestic violence and were experiencing

rent stress because of high costs of private housing rent.

Mr Chin said many had applied for public and social housing but the lack of these meant that many were having to wait about two years.

He said the stress this caused was a major issue for most, given many were managing family expenses and bills by themselves for the first time.

Ms Dixon-Monu said during a cost-of-living crisis people's mental health declined even more, and now there was a perfect storm.

"Sadly, it will mean that domestic violence will increase because that's what happens for many people when there is financial stress," she said.

The Victorian government has been approached for comment.

If you or someone you know needs more assistance, please try Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636.

For domestic violence support, please call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732).

In an emergency please phone triple zero (000) to reach ambulance services or police.

**'If the program had arrived much earlier, I would not have lost my kids.' – Antonio**

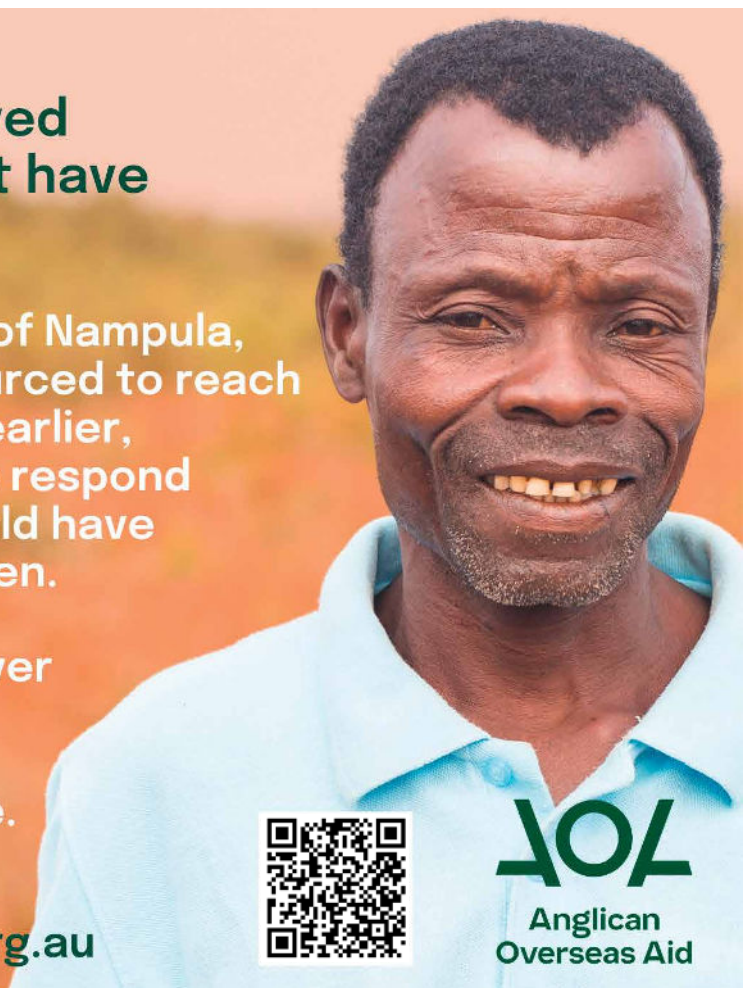
**If only the Anglican Diocese of Nampula, Mozambique had been resourced to reach Antonio's community much earlier, he would have known how to respond to child malnutrition. He would have known how to help his children.**

**Don't delay. Please help deliver vital medical information and prevent tragedy for families living in Mozambique.**

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## LIBRARY HOURS

Semester 1 2024

26 February – 11 June



Monday – Friday  
8.30 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.



LEON  
MORRIS  
LIBRARY

Ruth Weatherlake is retiring after serving for 32 years as the Ridley College librarian.

Picture: supplied

## Ruth celebrates final return at Ridley

■ Hannah Felsbourg

**Ridley College librarian Ruth Weatherlake has recently retired after 32 years of service.**

In her decades at Ridley, Ms Weatherlake has witnessed – and supported – many changes at the college.

She considers it an honour to have contributed to preparing students for Christian life and ministry in her role as librarian.

Ms Weatherlake took on the role shortly after graduating from Ridley College herself.

She said she valued her everyday interac-

tions with the Ridley community, particularly the satisfaction of helping students and faculty find the precise resources they need.

When Ms Weatherlake took on the role in 1992, she was the sole librarian managing the library with a card catalogue system.

A couple of years later she assisted in transitioning to an automated library system and the team has grown to have three librarian positions.

She feels privileged to have played a role to help equip students and others for Christian life and their future ministries.

She shared that a small way she helped make students feel welcome was to encourage them to bring coffee and other drinks into the library which made it a more hospitable place to study.

In retirement, Ms Weatherlake plans to continue her active involvement in her church, spend time with friends and family including her granddaughter, and explore volunteer opportunities.

She deeply values the connections she made at Ridley and hopes to maintain these relationships into the future.

## Communion network wants Anglican schools to flourish

■ Jenan Taylor

**A new global network hopes to revive the beating heart of the Anglican Church in schools.**

Through this, organisers want to create flourishing Anglican communities across the world.

They said the Anglican Communion Schools Network aimed to enable principals, chaplains and governors to pray, collaborate and share various ideas and challenges with each other.

Australian representative the Reverend Peter Laurence said the network would encourage schools to better promote the principles and values of Anglicanism, including worship and inclusion, among their school students.

Mr Laurence said it was important to

create such links because Anglican schools were the beating heart of the global Church, yet were largely disconnected until now.

Chaplains of the Anglican Schools Network in Victoria chair the Reverend Andrew Stewart said the schools helped the Church engage with youth.

Mr Stewart said a world-wide collaborative network would help many educators navigate challenges.

He said this was valuable particularly as many no longer attended churches.

Mr Stewart said lots of students in Anglican schools were Christians but only a small percentage were Anglican.

He said this presented a series of challenges, such as how to proclaim Anglicanism to such a diverse audience.

He said he anticipated the connections might also facilitate exchange programs

for teachers and students, to enhance their understanding of other cultures and places.

ACSN United States representative the Reverend David Madison said relationships were central to the Anglican Communion and the network would make the Communion more tangible for Episcopal educators.

Dr Madison said it would also enable students to better relate to the Communion and help them realise they were part of something much bigger than their school campuses.

"From a school leadership perspective, we are all facing many similar challenges that will benefit from collective wisdom. There is strength in realizing that we aren't alone and that educators across the globe are also working to respond in a way that best serves young people," he said.



# Prevention powerhouses need fuel

■ Jenan Taylor

**Women will be safer if grassroots organisations, including churches, are better funded to tackle men's violence, advocates say.**

Twenty-eight women had been killed by violence in Australia in 2024 by 28 April according to Counting Dead Women Australia.

The killings sparked protests calling for cultural change to end men's violence in cities and towns across Australia.

Anglican advocates said finding solutions would take time, and the nation needed to consider investing in and resourcing a range of approaches.

It comes as the federal government announced more than \$900 million to stamp out gender-based violence on National Domestic Violence Day.

Anglican Families and Culture Commission national program manager the Reverend Tracy Lauersen said the government's legislative approach took aim at dismantling structures that underpinned men's violence, including online misogyny.

Ms Lauersen said churches' capacity for gender violence solutions needed to be strengthened through better funding because they could spark significant cultural shifts at community level.

She said churches would make a difference in the struggle because they focussed on relational actions, including

encouraging better connections, attitudes and behaviour towards others.

Ms Lauersen said faith organisations were also important because of their wide reach, with about 900,000 people attending church every weekend.

"They're diverse, they're geographically widespread, and they're intergenerational," Ms Lauersen said. "There are very few places [outside churches] where you might see grandpa, dad and son represented. This makes churches, and other faith settings, powerhouses for cultural change and healing."

Melbourne diocese Prevention of Violence Against Women program manager Kerryn Lewis said cultural change had always been the program's focus.

She said the program was building an evidence base of what worked to share with other actors, alongside equipping church members to confront violence.

Ms Lewis said despite this PVAW and other faith sector interventions had yet to receive the same funding and resource levels as some secular programs.

A 2020 Australian National University report found that faith-based organisations received limited funding in the domestic violence solutions space because secular stakeholders questioned their credibility.

The paper said some of this stemmed from stakeholders' reservations about the

rigour of faith organisations' methods because their work was undocumented and therefore unevaluated.

Abuse survivor and retired cleric the Reverend Willy Maddock said she wanted to see the Church support women's safety through a range of actions including ministering to children.

Ms Maddock said more attention and care needed to be paid to children who were involved in domestic violence situations to prevent them becoming victims or perpetrators too.

She said the Church also needed to avoid preaching theology that made it hard for women to leave abusive relationships or reinforced perpetrators' convictions of rights over their partners.

Ms Lauersen said Anglican leaders were committed to preventing and responding to violence but there was much work to be done by everyone.

"We really need each member of our clergy who has access to a pulpit to actually be opening up these conversations, so that people in churches know that they are a place where they can go and where they'll be heard and believed and helped," Ms Lauersen said.

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If you or anyone you know needs help, please call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732).

In an emergency please phone triple zero (000) to reach ambulance services or police.



Panel members at the Faith Communities and Preventing Violence Against Women Round Table Event.  
Picture: Pauline Langmead/MAF



Family violence survivor Lisa Forde has called for more education for school students about relationships.

Picture: supplied

# We must spark change young: Survivor

■ Jenan Taylor

**School children need better education to protect women from men's violence in future relationships, an Anglican anti-gender violence advocate says.**

Advocates say education has power to counter negative influence from other areas of students' lives.

It comes after Yarra Valley Grammar expelled two students for their part in an online spreadsheet that ranked female classmates, and subjected other students to further disciplinary action.

Parishioner and domestic violence survivor Lisa Forde has called for a stronger focus on relationship education.

Ms Forde said there was little education in schools around the dynamics of healthy relationships, including what a good relationship looked like, and this needed to change.

She said what students were taught about relationships could counter the negative relationships they might be exposed to outside school, including in their family setting.

Ms Forde said this was the case for boys and for girls who often took what they learned from their own upbringing to under-

stand and model their future relationships.

For instance, she said she went into her first marriage believing that being in an abusive environment was normal, and that an abusive partner was a normal partner.

Ms Forde said she observed from her children's schooling that what was being taught was insufficient.

She said one child was learning about interpersonal relationships, but the focus was on consent rather than lifelong relationships or romantic partnerships.

"They need to be taught to consider what a relationship is and how it should work," Ms Forde said. "There's a lot of variation in that, but relationships are the most important things in our lives and no one learns that. There's nothing in schools about that."

Monash University researchers recently wrote in *The Conversation* that federal government funding to prevent youths' exposure to online misogyny, overlooked the role of school education for tackling men's violence. The researchers called for series of national measures in schools, including making respectful relationships education mandatory, to change how women are seen and treated.

Psychologist and St Mark's National Theological Centre lecturer Kylie Maddox

Pidgeon said better prevention of violence was as simple as systemic change wherever gender inequality was present.

Ms Maddox-Pidgeon said religious organisations and the judiciary were among the institutions that failed to address the drivers of violence against women, and reinforced them instead.

These included continuing to stereotype masculine and feminine constructions, and limiting women's independence.

She said religious institutions had a particular role in reducing these drivers, but instead many continued to promote them through patriarchal staff and leadership structures.

Retired cleric and abuse survivor Willy Maddock said it was the Church's role to help people recognise domestic violence, and call it out.

"There are always opportunities to preach a message which reminds people that the Scriptures say nobody has the right to abuse another person, including within a marriage," Ms Maddock said.

If you or anyone you know needs help, please call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732).

In an emergency please phone triple zero (000) to reach ambulance services or police.



# ‘Their safety matters’: Warning children’s rights at risk in Queensland

■ Jenan Taylor

**Queenslanders are unlikely to be safer under a new state government plan to increase its ability to detain youths in custody, faith leaders say.**

Christian organisation Common Grace and Brisbane’s Archbishop Jeremy Greaves fear Queensland’s plan will lead to more youths reoffending and becoming entrenched in the criminal system instead.

The government wants to redraft a United Nations child rights convention principle that stipulates that detention for children should be a last resort.

The redraft will read: “A child should be detained in custody, where necessary, including to ensure community safety, where other non-custodial measures of prevention and intervention would not be sufficient, and for no longer than necessary to meet the purpose of detention.”

Common Grace said under the proposal more children would be detained in overcrowded adult watch houses as there were no watch houses for young people.

Indigenous justice coordinator Bianca Manning said ultimately the community would be less safe because the children who were members of the community themselves, were less safe.

Ms Manning said children as young as 10 would be placed next to adults in cells designed for short-term stays for weeks, perhaps months.

She said whatever trauma the youths



Picture: iStock

already carried would be compounded there.

Ms Manning said detainees were more likely to be Indigenous children because they were disproportionately represented in the justice system.

She said they had high rates of mental health and intellectual disability issues often stemming from domestic violence and child protection system experiences, and the effects of colonisation.

Ms Manning said it was important to not diminish the experiences of crime victims, but the Queensland government’s actions went against trauma science and contravened children’s rights.

“These kids are an important part of the community. Their safety matters, their rehabilitation matters and their healing matters,” Ms Manning said.

Bishop Greaves said if the amendment became law it would add to the intergenerational trauma of the Stolen Generations and further alienate Indigenous children from their families.

The archbishop said it would also set back any gains in Reconciliation efforts in Queensland.

He said if the Queensland government and opposition genuinely wanted to make communities safer, they needed to address why youth offended in the first place.

“Their response should be to prioritise diverting children from the criminal justice system because the evidence shows that the younger children are when they first engage the justice system, the more likely they will be to reoffend,” Bishop Greaves said.

He said he wanted to see the government and opposition pursue evidence-based youth justice reform programs.

Bishop Greaves said some programs had impressive results, and featured Indigenous leaders and communities designing and managing responses to youth crime within their communities.

He said these included addressing school non-attendance through increased resourcing and support aimed at keeping children engaged at school to prevent problems before they emerged.

Queensland Premier Steven Miles said in a statement that while prevention and intervention were essential, there were cases where detention was necessary for community safety.



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Picture: iStock

# More struggling as living costs spiral

■ Jenan Taylor

**Once financially secure Australians are facing worse mental health and domestic violence as housing and living costs spiral, Christian emergency relief organisations say.**

Anglicare Victoria, Follow Bless Collective and Cockatoo No Interest Loans Scheme are reporting increasing numbers of clients, many of them accessing relief services for the first time.

They say the rising insecurity is contributing to some of the deteriorating mental health and domestic violence many clients are experiencing.

It comes as social justice organisations criticised the 2024 federal budget cost of living measures for being unable to seriously tackle poverty and housing insecurity.

Under the budget eligible renters will get an additional 10 per cent in rental assistance, but fewer than 5000 people will get a JobSeeker boost.

Mission Australia and the Australian Council of Social Services want the government to invest more significantly in affordable housing and raise income support payments to ease the high levels of disadvantage many people were experiencing.

Anglicare Victoria said about 40 per cent of its emergency program clients were new, and many were employed.

Dioceses and parish partnerships program manager Chris de Paiva said a safety net in the form of better Centrelink

allowances might help stop people from sliding into further disadvantage and better absorb rising inflation and living costs.

Mr de Paiva said the most increases in the emergency relief clients were those from new housing areas in Melbourne's growth suburbs. Many were also single women aged over 50 who were experiencing domestic violence.

Mr de Paiva said clients often had to choose between eating and paying bills, because they were in debt by thousands of dollars.

Follow Bless Collective in Pakenham said there was a large uptick in middle income people and families approaching the food and material aid service.

Manager and Baptist pastor Luke Williams said many were embarrassed about having to turn to emergency relief services for the first time.

Mr Williams said staff made a point of giving them emotional support and reassuring them that they weren't alone in feeling the pinch of living pressures.

He said the costs of living were a major driver of their disadvantage, and people's pay packets had not increased to match the higher food, grocery, insurance and fuel costs.

Mr Williams said any disposable income they might have was gone because they were trying to make ends meet and pay bills.

Cockatoo-based financial aid ministry NILS said its staff was snowed under by the many new applications for loans.

Manager Sue Barbieri said people were coming from all over the south eastern area, and some were so desperate they asked for money for food and medicinal items.

"One person came asking for a \$48 loan to tide her over until she got paid. She needed it for treatment for an autoimmune disease," Ms Barbieri said. "We don't do loans for \$48. The situations some people are finding themselves in are really tough."

Mission Australia said in a statement the federal government's refusal to increase JobSeeker and adequately increase and review rental assistance, would tip more people into poverty and homelessness.

Executive Ben Carblis urged the federal government to substantially increase rent assistance and lift income support payments to keep people out of poverty and help people in rental stress avoid homelessness.

Social Services Minister Amanda Rishworth said the Albanese government wanted to reduce disadvantage and believed in a strong and sustainable social net.

She said combined with indexation, the rent assistance increases meant rates of rent assistance would have increased by more than 40 per cent since Labor came into government. Ms Rishworth said the JobSeeker changes meant those with barriers to employment who had limited or no capacity to work but did not qualify for disability support would receive an extra \$54.90 each fortnight.



# Help vulnerable children like Maria build a new future!

***Maria fled to Uganda to escape the war in South Sudan, running from the shooting with her parents and siblings.***

She says she was one of the lucky ones who made it out with her life. Her friend did not.

"We were the same age," the 15-year-old says softly. "When she was trying to move... war was there. She died in that war."

There was no war in the Ugandan refugee settlements. But Maria and her family faced a new enemy there – hunger.

A second meal per day was a luxury. There were many days when she ate nothing at all.

Despite her hunger, Maria did her best to concentrate in class. She knew that education held the key to building a new future.

"In South Sudan, I didn't go to school. I was not knowing anything," she says. "But when I came here, they taught me how to speak English and how to write."

With the help of friends like you, Maria became one of thousands of hungry refugee children to receive a hot, nutritious meal each day at her school through Feed The Hungry – a global organisation committed to fighting hunger and helping the most vulnerable to live a full life.

**And your generous, tax-deductible support through Feed The Hungry can help more children like Maria receive the nutritious food they need to thrive.**

A hot, nutritious meal at school changes everything for Maria. She explains the difference between hunger and a hot meal in her life, saying:

"When I feel hungry, I feel like I don't talk to anyone because... I have no energy. But when I eat... I will be telling the teacher the answers because I'm very strong now!"

**Just \$6 feeds a child like Maria for a whole month at school. More than a meal, you're providing a future!**



# TAKE AWAY HUNGER DAY 22 AUGUST

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LeSEA Global

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A St Dunstan's fete visitor enjoys the fun.

Picture: supplied

## Fete fun at St Dunstan's

■ Maxine Farrar

**St Dunstan's had been preparing for the first Saturday in May for some time. It is an annual event.**

We had the stalls organised, cakes baked, preserves preserved, crafters crafted, the animal farm and our Kindergarten was providing the children's activities. We were ready to go.

The day dawned, chilly, but "May the fourth" was truly with us.

We had requested donations of non-perishable foods and toiletries to

support our local wellbeing agency, Camcare. Visitors responded wholeheartedly.

David Cooke, Camcare senior manager, was thrilled to take away 20 bags of donations. Boroondara Mayor, Councillor Lisa Hollingsworth, a great supporter of St Dunstan's, also popped in to see us and have a chat with the community.

We had such a good day. A great success for community, collaboration, conversation and connection. The force was definitely with us!



David Byrne with the organ.

Picture: supplied

## Grand addition to St John's

■ Alicia White

**St John's Camberwell will celebrate the long-awaited installation of a splendid new chancel pipe organ with a recital by virtuoso Thomas Heywood.**

The program includes works by JS Bach, Chopin, Dubois, Guilman, Schubert, Sullivan & Swann.

The instrument is a unique addition to Australasia's heritage of over 2500 pipe organs. It is one of the largest and most versatile musical instruments in suburban Melbourne.

St John's organist David Byrne said the congregation was excited to have such a stunning instrument for use in liturgy, concerts, teaching and accompaniment.

"This is the culmination of many years of planning and commitment by dedicated people who love fine music," he said. "This recital is a wonderful occasion to welcome this grand addition to the cultural life of Melbourne."

The recital is on Saturday 8 June at 6pm. More information at: [trybooking.com/events/landing/1223806](http://trybooking.com/events/landing/1223806).

## Hopes car charger will cut pollution, bring visitors

■ Jenan Taylor

**A West Gippsland church hopes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage eco-conscious tourists to its town through its new electric vehicle charging outlet.**

Yarragon Uniting Church's slow electric vehicle charger is part of a network of public outlets the Baw Baw Shire Council has created across the region recently.

The slow charger is helping the church to increase accessibility to public EV charging stations and encourage electric car drivers to spend time in the area.

Parishioner Peter Kingwill said the church aimed to increase its zero climate impact goals and support the town as a destination for eco-conscious tourists.

Mr Kingwill said church members believed in doing as little harm as possible to the environment and that it was important to lead by example.

He said this outlook had led to close relationships with community sustainability groups that helped the church upgrade its premises for better energy efficiency.

Mr Kingwill said the church realised it could use its excess energy supply from

efficiency upgrades such as a solar power system to help EV drivers top up.

Baw Baw Sustainability Network said the church site was ideal for the EV project because of its visibility and ability to supply the necessary energy.

Former network president Malcom McKelvie said it was great for Yarragon to have a slow destination charger, and great for reducing emissions.

Dr McKelvie said it gave people confidence they could find more places to charge their cars and ultimately would encourage more people to drive EVs.



# Hopes high for wisdom on church unity

■ Jenan Taylor

**Australian Christian leaders hope to discuss church unity amid a fractured global community with the World Council of Churches general secretary.**

The Reverend Professor Dr Jerry Pillay will visit Australia as a guest of the National Council of Churches in Australia when it marks the 30th anniversary of its formation in June.

The NCCA said it hoped Dr Pillay would shed new insights about ecumenism including deep consideration of what church unity meant today amid fragmented communities and growing conflict.

General secretary Elizabeth Stone said council members could also expect to consider what faith communities might look like in future.

Ms Stone said it was important churches questioned the opportunities and challenges



WCC general secretary Dr Jerry Pillay.

Picture: Albin Hillert/WCC

they faced if they were going to serve a humanity which had become very divided.

She said the NCCA would also take the opportunity during the forum to lament what has happened in Australian churches in the last 30 years.

This included their responses to child sexual

abuse and reconciliation with Indigenous communities.

Ms Stone said she believed Dr Pillay would have insights on truth and reconciliation issues and the church, given his South African background, and that nation's experience with them.

Leaders of Christian Churches South Australia

Lutheran representative Andrew Brook said it was a good opportunity to gain the wisdom of a leader from a different context.

Bishop Brook said Australian churches would benefit from someone who had a lifelong commitment to bringing churches together for the sake of common witness and service in the world.

"We need to sit and listen with humility. We tend to think as Western Christians we have all the answers but there are many questions facing us we don't have easy answers to," Bishop Brook said.

Dr Pillay will be key speaker at the NCCA national forum, and present at state ecumenical gatherings in South Australia, Victoria and NSW.

Dr Pillay will present at public events on 22, 24 and 25 June. More information is available at: [bit.ly/4bJBGup](https://bit.ly/4bJBGup).







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# Where do we go after Yoorrook?

Picture: iStock

■ Peter Sherlock

**On 1 May 2024 the Yoorrook Justice Commission, as part of truth-telling about injustices against First Peoples in Victoria since colonisation, summoned five representatives of the Christian churches. This included Anglicans Bishop Richard Treloar and Bishop Genieve Blackwell, notably just two days after the Premier of Victoria's appearance.**

This was an extraordinary moment: the first time the Victorian churches have been publicly held to account by First Peoples for our role in colonialism and the benefits we continue to enjoy.

All Melbourne Anglicans should read our submissions to Yoorrook and the transcript of the session. These highlight the lack of cultural competency, cultural safety, truth telling, or restitution throughout our church.

The Yoorrook hearing might be summed up in two comments. Bishop Treloar acknowledged the “terrible legacy” of colonialism and the problem of trying to “preach the gospel on stolen land”. Meanwhile Commissioner North described the “shattering silence” from all the churches on the question of redress.

While Melbourne Anglicans have made many statements about Aboriginal people, few actions have followed – a notable exception being the gift of \$1 million to the General Synod for Indigenous ministry.

Yet we can take great encouragement from the Yoorrook Justice Commission. The

commissioners saw us as spiritual leaders, as people who claim to understand that at heart all matters are theological. How might we live up this ideal?

“Yoo-rrook” is a Wemba Wemba word meaning “truth”. The first step for us whitefella Anglicans is to seek truth, by asking three questions.

Is this stolen land? We have said so in the past through our synod.

Do we agree that this is a spiritual matter? If so, it goes to the core of our faith in the God of Jesus Christ, the one who judges justly.

What are we going to do about this? When we acknowledge country we say that we “pay our respects to elders”, but where is that respect evident?

Yoorrook will complete its work in 2025. I've already heard suggestions that we should delay action until we have their report and recommendations.

This is not good enough.

For a start, I agree with trawlwoolway theologian and Anglican priest Garry Deverell, writing for the ABC, that “repentance is not only about naming the truth of one's misdeeds ... it is about doing all you can realistically do to undo the harms and heal the wounds that you have inflicted upon another”.

This is now also a matter of public credibility.

Victoria Police has not waited. In response to Yoorrook they have committed to some

79 actions by 2026, including an apology, cultural awareness training, how children are treated by the justice system, and prevention of Aboriginal deaths in police custody.

A Canadian gold mining company, Agnico Eagle, has entered into an agreement with the Djaara corporation in relation to wealth sharing at the Fosterville Gold Mine on Dja Dja Wurrung country.

What are we going to do about this?

Surely the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne could agree on an immediate, initial response to the Commission's work, including:

- A full response from Archbishop in Council to the 2018 Statement of the Aboriginal Council of the Anglican Province of Victoria.
- Setting aside a portion of proceeds from the sale of church property for Indigenous redress.
- Creating a cultural awareness program to ensure every Anglican congregation is a safe and hospitable place for First Nations peoples.
- An annual round table conversation between whitefellas and blackfellas to yarn about where we are, what we have learned about our responsibilities, and what our next steps should be.

Peter Sherlock is a lay member of Archbishop in Council and Emeritus Professor at the University of Divinity. Yoorrook Justice Commission transcripts are available at: [bit.ly/Yoorrook](https://bit.ly/Yoorrook).

# Praying the daily office together is vital

■ Dorothy A Lee

One of the features of the Anglican tradition is its strong commitment to daily prayer within the life of the church. *The Book of Common Prayer*, as it developed in the 16th century, provided Christians with an order for Daily Morning Prayer and Daily Evening Prayer throughout the year. These “offices” (that is, orders of service) were intended to be said in community in the local church: not alone, but with others. The very title makes this intention clear; it is *common* prayer, prayer for everyone, and not just the clergy.

So why this Anglican emphasis on praying together daily with the whole Christian community? The practice goes back to the New Testament and the gathering together of Christians as often as possible to pray, praise and give thanks together, and to intercede for the needy. Ephesians speaks of Christians being filled with the Spirit: “as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to one another, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (5:18-20).

The early church developed a rhythm and pattern of daily prayer based on the earliest New Testament communities which continued into the Middle Ages. It became particularly a feature of monastic communities who prayed eight times throughout the 24-hour day. Their community life indeed was shaped primarily around prayer, along with common daily labour and the ministry of hospitality. The office as it developed was built around the Psalms and the reading of Scripture, as well as thanksgiving and intercession.

Anglicanism reshaped this tradition to become more focused on the local

parish: a form of prayer that would fit into the pattern of lay people’s lives, at the beginning and end of each working day. Once again, as with the medieval church, it was patterned around the Psalms which played centre stage.

**“Praying together empowers and inspires us, nourishing us when we’re depleted and worn down by the daily struggles of living.”**

With the sense of a rediscovery of biblical faith, Anglican reformers wanted ordinary Christians to know their Bibles and included significant daily readings from the Old and New Testaments in the lectionary cycle. The ideal was that the whole Bible be heard in three years — a significant achievement, given that most people in that context were illiterate. The daily offices were the way the ordinary people heard and knew the Bible, really for the first time. The use of the lectionary ensured that the whole of Scripture was read in an orderly cycle.

The Lord’s Prayer was included in the BCP office because it is by definition a communal prayer (*Our Father*) and a daily prayer (give us *today* our daily bread). The office also incorporated special prayers and canticles, songs of praise from the Bible or the tradition, the most important of these being the *Benedictus* (Song of Zechariah) in morning prayer and the *Magnificat* (Song of Mary) in the evening. The morning and evening office in BCP was unchanging from

day to day, so that people could say it by heart and allow it to seep down into their innermost being.

In our *Prayer Book for Australia* we now have a modern-language version of BCP’s original morning and evening prayer service and a more varied series of offices for each day of the week, morning and evening. We also have a short office for the end of the day (Compline). These, like all the traditional Christian offices, are based around the Psalms and a cycle of Bible readings for each day, including the Lord’s Prayer. It includes the opportunity for open prayer relevant to the specific context.

Praying together the daily office is vital for the health of our church as we move into the future. It offers us a way to gather in community outside the Sunday services, and it gives a structure to our prayer that is grounded on theological principles that derive from Scripture, not on personal whim or feeling. We don’t pray only when and as we feel. Prayer is a duty as well as a delight. We’re called to give thanks, to praise, to intercede, and we do this best in company with others, whether we feel like it or not. Saying the daily office together opens us to the gift of God’s presence and can renew us when we feel low and disheartened or disinclined to pray.

COVID has admittedly struck a blow to our gathering together in the church. Now is the time to revive this ancient and biblical practice. At their ordination, all Anglican clergy commit to saying morning and evening prayer each day. Even if the clergy are sometimes on their own or with only one or two others, people know this public worship is ongoing, available when they can come. They know that they are being upheld daily in prayer before God.

Worship lies at the heart of our life as disciples of Jesus Christ and worship

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# for our church's health



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belongs primarily in community, in communion with one another. Such prayer forms the basis for our God-given work in the world: service, mission and evangelism. Praying together empowers and inspires us, nourishing us when we're depleted and worn down by the daily struggles of living.

Much has been rightly said about the need for renewal in our church and the reviving of church leaders, so often wearied by the increasing demands of ministry. Praying the daily office together offers us the chance to allow God's word to renew

***“Praying the daily office together offers us the chance to allow God's word to renew and revive us, clergy and laity.”***

and revive us, clergy and laity. It reminds us that our ministry is not primarily our own but rather that of Christ whose mercy for us

and for the world never fails.

Let us recommit ourselves as a church – across the spectrum of theological and liturgical viewpoints – to pray together each day in our place of ministry, putting our hope on the Lord who draws us into life and refreshes us before sending us out on the mission of the Triune God.

The Reverend Professor Dorothy A. Lee AM FAHA is Stewart Research Professor of New Testament at Trinity College Theological School and associate priest at St Paul's Cathedral.

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# We can help each other find sustainable

Christians face stress, and work stress, just as any other person. In this article for ISCAST (Christianity and Science in Conversation), experienced Christian psychologist Dr Grant Bickerton opens up our understanding of stress and how to deal with its potentially damaging effects.

## What is stress? The good, the bad, and symptomologically ugly!

When you enter the word “stress” into a Google image search, predictable cartoons of frantic people clutching their frazzled hair, eyes bulging, and perspiration dripping from the brow emerge. However, stress is a normal part of life for all people – and that includes Christians!

Psychologically speaking, stress is a natural protective response of the body to a perceived threat, loss or challenge. Stress involves a set of biochemical and physiological changes that affect our perception, emotions, behaviour, and physical functioning, all directed towards preparing the body to meet the situation (the “stressor”) at hand. It is a normal response to keep things in balance by gearing us up for action to meet the challenge or threat, designed to be followed by a period of recovery where the energies expended are then replenished.

Stress is not damaging to everyone at all times. Stress that comes from fresh challenges, change, and exciting opportunities helps us to marshal our energies and stimulate creativity, improve performance, and yield personal benefits such as satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment. But stress is only “good” if it is short-lived, and working in harmony with phases of subsequent effective relaxation and rest. All stress takes a toll physically and emotionally, regardless of whether it has been precipitated by a positive challenge or a negative threat or loss. When one is deprived of, or neglects to create, an opportunity to recover and replenish personal resources spent, the outcome is stress overload. There are scriptural examples that describe this. Many of our esteemed biblical characters experienced symptoms of stress overload: Moses’ leading the Israelites, Job’s hardships, David’s psalms, Elijah’s despair, Jeremiah’s laments, Paul’s pressures of ministry, and of course, the Lord Jesus himself in Gethsemane and on the cross. Both Old and New Testaments illustrate that stress, and even encountering periods of being overloaded by it, does happen to people who are part of God’s story. However, to my knowledge, I cannot think of one example where

these characters were rebuked by God for experiencing such distress. But neither is it a state in which God calls people to stay for long, and without any chance of recovery. (See table below).

Where stress overload is a chronic state experienced within an occupational context, a health impairment process is initiated whose end product is known as “burnout”. Burnout is commonly defined as a constellation of three symptoms:

- 1) Feeling emotionally exhausted – “All my energy has been spent and I just can’t give any more.”
- 2) Increasing depersonalisation or cynicism about the work one is seeking to accomplish – “Ministry would be great if it wasn’t for the parishioners!”
- 3) Low personal accomplishment – “I’m not having any real impact here anyway!”

## Don’t ignore the petrol light!

The first step towards managing stress is to understand its warning function. Symptoms

***“Stress and burnout symptoms are important warnings, signalling to us to recognise a problem and act sooner rather than later.”***

of stress act like the low petrol indicator in your car: a light will come on when you are running low to alert you that you need to alter your current course (at least temporarily) and refuel so that you can finish the larger journey. If you ignore the petrol light, you may be able to push on just that little bit further ... but such a strategy may result in finding yourself stranded in a very inconvenient place, facing a long walk before being somewhere you can resume the journey – if at all.

Thus, stress and burnout symptoms are important warnings, signalling to us to recognise a problem and act sooner rather than later. The eventual consequences of burnout if we ignore the “petrol light” continuously are far reaching, and involve physical, emotional, relational, spiritual, and vocational aspects of life.

**Physical** symptoms can include illnesses and fatigue of various sorts. A pattern of increasing absenteeism from work is a common consequence. For some of us, our body tells us we are impaired by occupational stress before we are fully conscious of it.

**Emotional** consequences can include a feeling that one cannot handle even the work activities that one would normally take in one’s stride. For people experiencing burnout, regular activities become major hurdles.

**Relational** consequences can extend beyond the workplace to touch family and friends. Lowered self-esteem and negative attitudes, coupled with cynicism and frustration rub off in angry and negative interactions with others. At the very time we need support and perspective, the burnout process will often alienate us from our significant others.

**Spiritually**, those with burnout tend to question their calling, the nature and

## Symptoms of stress overload – what to look for

Stress overload occurs when a person’s physical, personal, and social resources are overtaxed and exceeded without opportunity for recovery and replenishment through rest. It gives rise to a characteristic set of symptoms:

- Negative emotional states seem to be more frequent and result in exaggerated responses to small stressors, weepiness, losing one’s temper easily, or increased withdrawal. These states include depression, irritability, resentment and an inability to look at the bright side.
- Deteriorating relationships with friends and colleagues. As a survival response, chronic stress constricts our attention such that we prioritise energy to self-preservation that would otherwise be invested in maintaining and developing healthy relationships.
- Increased susceptibility to infection and illness, and among some, other physical manifestations such as headache, chest pain, backache, and indigestion.



# rhythms of work



Picture: iStock

sometimes even the existence of God. Stress can often precipitate spiritual struggles that threaten core aspects of a person's personal identity, for instance, feeling that God has abandoned me, anger at God, religious doubts.

**Vocational** consequences of burnout include increased role turnover and premature leaving of the person's profession.

Fortunately, there are clear practical and spiritual tools to help us through stress and continue our life journey.

## Tips for managing occupational stress

**1. Do something about it.** Most causes of work-related burnout are situational stressors. There can be a tendency to feel "this problem is just too big, I'm helpless, there's nothing I can do." A key tip is to create a sense of personal urgency and do something. Talk to a supervisor, mentor or wise friend and seek their support so that together you can generate changes to alter the feeling of helplessness.

**2. Interdependence with God in coping with stress.** It is important to target and act directly on the source of the stress in collaboration with God. Paul says, "to this end I labour, struggling with all His energy that so powerfully works within me" (Colossians 1:29). Those who collaborate with God in their struggles, rather than simply working

***"Take responsibility to find sustainable rhythms of work and life that allow for the natural stress and recovery process to function."***

at it ourselves or deferring all responsibility away, have much better health outcomes.

**3. Change expectations from abstract to concrete.** Overly high ideals need to be replaced with more short-term goals. Developing a series of meaningful goals that move toward the cherished ideal creates clearer markers of accomplishment. It can be helpful to have a detailed and holistic job description and personal development plan with measurable goals that can be reviewed or adjusted annually.

**4. Take regular breaks.** Learn to completely detach from work. Try to make sure this happens *daily*. Find places that can be genuine havens of rest that are positive and rewarding in themselves. For the Christian, this can include our quiet time with God.

**5. Exercise and Diet.** Make sure you get eight hours of sleep a night. People who

are physically fit manage stress better, and consequentially are in a healthier position to help others.

**6. Know yourself.** Know your strengths, weaknesses, and what God has for you to do. This informs you of when to say "no," when to act to develop skills and abilities, when to get help from others, and even when to change jobs.

## Conclusion

In this brief article I have sought to give a simple overview of what is the stress response and how it has a normal and protective function for us all. However, when its warning signs are not heeded, it causes stress overload, which in the organisational context, is referred to as burnout. We can aid one another in recognising our low "petrol lights", repent from denying the limitations of our God-given physical and psychological humanity, and take responsibility to find sustainable rhythms of work and life that allow for the natural stress and recovery process to function.

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Dr Grant Bickerton is a registered psychologist, with more than 25 years' experience working in full-time Christian ministry with Power to Change. Dr Bickerton's academic research focus has been exploring the organisational, psychological, and spiritual factors that promote vitality and well-being in vocational Christian ministry.



# Why this Melbourne Christian is fighting

■ **Elsbeth Kernebone**

**A chocolate balloon dog, a 2000-year-old Pompeii honey cake, the world's smallest dessert, a magic chocolate lava cake.**

**You might not associate these with a fight for truth.**

But on YouTube, a dedicated baker is fighting misinformation rife across the channel's cooking and craft videos.

She's a big name in YouTube's cooking world, with 4.95 million subscribers.

And, she's a Christian living in Melbourne.

But, did you misread? We're relaxing on YouTube watching baking videos. Why is a fight for truth involved?

How to Cook That started as a website for Ann Reardon to share her elaborate recipes, often requested by family and friends. YouTube was just a storage site for large files for her then. A "YouTuber" didn't exist, certainly not as a profession.

But, it's turned into Mrs Reardon's job. And her channel has become a platform to fight misinformation and disinformation perpetuated in some baking and craft "hacks".

Many of these videos are produced by extremely popular channels, churning out content. Some are incorrect, but at worst will leave you with a mess and food waste.

But some videos suggest "hacks" that can be deadly.

In one debunking Mrs Reardon exposes the risks of "fractal woodburning" – a YouTube trend that saw people turn a microwave transformer into a wood-burning tool, exposing themselves to an 2000 volt electric current, enough to kill instantly.

At the time Mrs Reardon made her video at least 34 people had died in America in fractal woodburning accidents.

## Trust and truth

Mrs Reardon believes her faith has shaped the values of truthfulness and care for others which drive her work. It's also helped her retain perspective in the high stress environment of YouTube content creation, serving a constantly changing algorithm.

It's striking how calm Mrs Reardon's videos are, in the loud, high-energy world of YouTube.

The set design is colourful, almost childlike, with block colours, and big biscuit-style bubble lettered How to Cook That background.

Mrs Reardon's language is simple, her tone is measured, and her voice is soft.

In fact, until I asked, I wasn't sure what age her main audience was. It's material that could be enjoyed by a 10-year-old as much as a 30-year-old.

But with her level, simple tone, Mrs Reardon walks viewers through methods to assess the reliability of claims. In many videos she sets out to test a claim with an experiment, controls for variables, and looks at the results. Or she walks viewers through the research and principles which will help them understand whether a hack is likely to work.

***"I think we've moved from everybody trusted everything, to now everybody distrusts everything. How do I know who to trust is more the issue?"***

**Ann Reardon**

For instance, in response to a video from channel Five Minute Crafts claiming that if you wrap a watermelon in concrete, you can keep it fresh in the cupboard for three months, Mrs Reardon does just that.

And, she puts a control – an unwrapped watermelon – in the cupboard with it, as well as one in the fridge. Does it work? A later video reveals Mrs Reardon's husband Dave – a frequent character – opening each. You can guess the rest.

The claims Mrs Reardon tests are often sent by fans, who've seen a clip and wondered whether it will work.

It's a move away from the channel's original purpose: a vessel to share baking "how tos". But with the increasing monetisation of YouTube content Mrs Reardon saw misinformation and disinformation proliferate, and was driven to respond.

Big companies could produce content at a speed which the algorithm loved – which couldn't be matched by smaller scale creators.

The videos were attractive, but the content was unreliable.

Mrs Reardon posted videos explaining what was happening, and why the algorithm promoted content like this. And, she started receiving videos in return.

People went from asking "Have you seen this?" to "Will this work?"

"It went from people being unsure why anyone would put something fake up, to then understanding that, and then being totally confused about what they could trust and couldn't trust," Mrs Reardon said.

"Not knowing: 'Does this work, doesn't this work. Is this fake, isn't this fake'.

"I think we've moved from everybody trusted everything, to now everybody distrusts everything. How do I know who to trust is more the issue?"

Mrs Reardon believes the key to building trust with an audience is always telling the truth. In her videos, she walks viewers through her testing process, to help them see what actually happens when you try some of the dubious hacks.

Often Mrs Reardon will identify how a hack has been faked by its creators, breaking down the possible camera and editing tricks that make it look real.

## Baking success

The channel's ascent to popularity began the week Instagram launched video. By coincidence, Mrs Reardon had just released a video of the "Instagram dessert", a normal-looking cake which, when cut, revealed an Instagram logo on every slice. It was picked up by news sites to use with their stories, and the channel grew from there.

It's easy to see what attracted viewers to the channel, then baking-focused.

Mrs Reardon's creations are spectacular. In her 500 plus videos, she makes everything from a Minecraft cake village; to dollhouse-sized doughnuts, wedding cake and apple pie; or a 3D Winnie The Pooh Cake; and balloon sugar bowls.

(Mrs Reardon's complex sweet treats date in part from her time as a youth worker. With a very low budget for the ministry, she would make events special by cooking as though they were at a restaurant).

Her cake rescues document her taking cake fails posted on the internet, recreating the failed cake, and then bringing it together in an alternative format. Her advice is practical, achievable and kind. As a viewer, it's satisfying watching a mess form into a tidy cake.

Or her 200-year-old recipe videos take viewers through recreation of historic desserts, with historic ingredients and techniques, and document her family's reactions. Trifle made with gelatin derived from the juice of roasted chickens\*, is "very strange" and "not very pleasant".



# fake baking hacks

Medieval doughnuts are “delicious”.

## Why does it matter?

Now it's obvious why a deadly “craft hack” like fractal woodburning needs debunking. But what of the smaller scale hacks that just won't work? Why does it matter if, for instance, people proceed with their lives thinking beating icecream and icing sugar should produce “icecream frosting”?

Again, it comes back to care for her viewers – seeing them as people whose time, money and ingredients are as valuable as hers. And, Mrs Reardon believes that uncorrected, the fake hacks can affect children's confidence and nutrition over their lifetime.

“I always had people commenting on some of the recipes we debunked saying ‘I tried that recipe.’ And it'll be kids saying they tried that recipe, it failed, and now their parents have told them they can't cook any more,” Mrs Reardon said.

“That makes a difference to kids' lives. If they're trying things and then failing at it, and then now they're not allowed to cook. That's completely different to if their childhood memories are and things are working, and they're getting praised by people in the family going, ‘That's yummy, you did really well.’”

Where Mrs Reardon's calm and method stand out on YouTube, her faith also helps her gain perspective on the high-stress world of YouTubing. There's the criticism that comes with being a public figure – often in the comments section. And there's the uncertainty of success. It's not like a normal job, with a regular income, and a regular manager.

Even now, the introduction of YouTube shorts is having a huge effect on the platform. Where once YouTube pushed content creators for longer, high quality content, it's flipped the strategy to push for TikTok-like videos. This puts creators under a huge amount of stress.

Whereas for Mrs Reardon, yes it's her job, but it's not that big a deal.

“You're basically working for a robot algorithm which changes its mind every second about what it wants, doesn't tell you what it wants, and will pay you according to whether you meet what it wants or not,” Mrs Reardon said.

“You also, as with anybody with a public-facing job, cop comments and criticism from all over the world.

“On that personal level, having that relationship with God, knowing there's more to life than your work, there's more to life than your money, there's more to life than what other people say about you. I don't know how people cope with that level of stress without that.”

---

\*The chicken juices are a substitute for the traditional, but unavailable, cows feet.



Ann Reardon is a popular YouTuber on her channel *How to Cook That*.

Picture: supplied

# Ngaire is using her own second chance to

■ Jenan Taylor

During the darkest of the long months that Ngaire Elwood, then aged 15, fought bone cancer, she thought often about what Jesus might want her to do.

That God made things happen for a purpose, was at the heart of the Christian faith the teenager had been raised with.

This belief sustained her during the hair loss, leg amputation, and brutal chemotherapy that accompanied her struggle, and she never questioned why she was struck with cancer.

Instead, she watched the doctors treat the other young patients in the ward around her, absorbing their efforts to help a young girl sick with leukaemia.

Dr Elwood still remembers their urgent discussions about a new drug imported from overseas. She recalls the hope as they administered it to the girl. But she recalls the girl was incurable.

"It was their whole attitude of not giving up and wanting to find new ways of helping all these children, that stuck in my mind," she said. "And I decided, yeah, I want to find better cures for cancer."

*"God is shaping and providing things and you just have to have faith that things are going to work out if you allow yourself to be open to Him."*

Ngaire Elwood

Forty-four years later, Dr Elwood has shone at finding ways to help others survive the disease.

Her Christian belief played a large role in her aim for excellence, she said.

Associate Professor Elwood is head of the Bone Marrow Donor Institute Cord Blood Bank at the Royal Children's Hospital, and a leading researcher of cord blood stem cells at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

She and her team at the BMDI Cord Blood Bank collect, process and store donated cord blood, deep freezing it in liquid nitrogen.

Cord blood is all the blood than can be derived from the umbilical cord and placenta

after the birth of a baby. It is a rich source of blood stem cells similar to what is found in bone marrow.

Because of these similarities, it can be used in place of bone marrow during transplants to treat leukaemia.

Cord blood worked like a mini factory to help produce healthy cells that could replace the leukaemia cells, which could then cure the patient, Dr Elwood said.

Information is placed on the international bone marrow donor registry, and the blood is made available for patients who might need stem cell treatment.

In February the team celebrated as they watched the 600th unit of cord blood being wheeled away in its icy cradle to be shipped to a patient somewhere around the globe.




Amid party poppers and streamers, Dr Elwood took camera snaps of the moment. Knowing those units would give someone hope was deeply satisfying for her.

But making a difference to people's lives, Dr Elwood said, has warranted a range of contributions, big and small.

She is particularly excited about using cord blood stem cells to make other potential medical breakthroughs.

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## RECTOR

### Lakes Entrance and Metung

We seek a Rector to continue to grow our Parish, which is currently well served by a Locum Priest, Honorary Deacon, two Lay Readers and a supportive Parish Council.

The Parish Profile is available from the Parish Secretary: [lakesmetung@gmail.com](mailto:lakesmetung@gmail.com). Further information is available from Bishop Richard Treloar: [bishop@gippslandanglicans.org.au](mailto:bishop@gippslandanglicans.org.au)



# save others



*Dr Ngairé Elwood has been searching for ways to help people survive cancer.*

*Picture: Elspeth Kernebone*

In recent years Dr Elwood and her team have also been exploring how they might be used for heart and brain repair.

One trial she's involved with is investigating whether cord blood cells could help very young babies born with heart abnormalities.

Dr Elwood has also been heavily involved in accreditation efforts to make sure banked cord blood meets rigorous quality standards, to ensure it is safe and effective for patients.

This work, which she does voluntarily, includes inspecting cord blood banks and writing standards for cell therapies in Australia and overseas.

Dr Elwood's many paid and voluntary endeavours were recognised earlier this year when she was made a Member of the Order of Australia AM for her significant service to medicine, particularly through stem cell research.

Her efforts outside the medical sphere have also been noted by her fellow Gisborne parish members.

At the Church of the Resurrection Macedon, which Dr Elwood calls her spiritual home, she has been a committed council and prayer team member.

Warden Heidi Dixon said she was also

involved with Exploring Faith Matters ministry, helping to communicate Christian faith in an easy-to-understand way.

She sees Dr Elwood as someone who, above all else, cares deeply for people who struggle.

Despite travelling frequently for work, she made considered efforts to be available as a prayer team member when needed.

"She feels the pressure of time, but she's also mindful about the blessing of time, because she has been given a second chance," Ms Dixon said.

Dr Elwood might well say she's been given two second chances.

In 2013 she was diagnosed with breast cancer and faced radical surgery and more chemotherapy. It put her out of action for a year and a half.

All she could do was sit in her lounge room and on her front porch and watch the daffodils in her garden come and go with the passing seasons.

It gave her the time to look back on her life and see all the ways God had been with her all along.

Dr Elwood realised that once she decided on her path, the doors that led to her career opened.

Despite missing a chunk of her critical schooling because of the bone cancer, her teachers at Sunshine High School took her under their wing, and she finished high school very well.

After that, there was a Rotary Foundation graduate scholarship which allowed her to study her master's degree in a research lab in London.

Then came a role, seemingly at random, exploring leukaemia genes and blood cell development at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute. A recommendation from her supervisor there helped her obtain a government scholarship to pursue her PhD.

It was like a metamorphosis, she said, when it dawned on her that time was indeed precious, but that what mattered more was faith.

"You can think you're on track and things get upended, and everything seems a mess. When that happens you just have to sit with it and regain your strength because it's all completely out of your control," she said.

"God is shaping and providing things and you just have to have faith that things are going to work out if you allow yourself to be open to Him. There is always a plan for your life."

■ **Amy White**

Amy White is the Lay Training Officer for the Diocese of Blackburn, United Kingdom.

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# Real teen questions, clear answers

■ Amy Brown

Mike McGarry. *Discover: Questioning Your Way to Faith*. New Growth Press: 2023.

**Am I a real Christian if I have doubts and questions about my faith? How do I know I'm a Christian? Can I trust the Bible? And most recently: Why did Jesus have to die like that? It was so brutal!**

These are real questions teenagers today are asking and Mike McGarry's book *Discover: Questioning Your Way to Faith* helps teenagers approach them in a faith-building way to strengthen their relationship with Jesus.

McGarry begins with questions about our doctrinal foundations like "What is the Gospel?", "Can I trust and understand the Bible?" and "What is the Trinity?" before moving on to topical questions like "Should Christians be tolerant?", "What does the Bible teach about sex/dating/LGBTQ+?", and "How should Christians think about mental health struggles?" While you could read different chapters depending on your question, as you get to the later chapters, you can see how much the earlier content builds up a

robust answer for these pastorally sensitive questions our young people are exploring today.

The bite-sized chapters are littered with illustrations, biblical references, and stories about McGarry's experience working in youth ministry. McGarry offers clear, straight-to-the-point, holds-no-punches explanations for big questions. This means the reader doesn't feel like he's wasting their time but that he is taking their question seriously, and valuing their search for answers and clarity.

Along the way, McGarry highlights alternate point of views and even highlights some "traps" youth leaders or other adults might fall into as they try and offer explanations to these questions. For example, the trap of neglecting the "cost" of following Jesus, throwing out the promises of salvation while neglecting the truths of repentance, obedience to God and persecution for faith.

As he tackles each question, building on the foundations of our faith, McGarry aims to help the reader see why what they believe matters. He aims to explore their questions and give time to do this, resting on the safety net of their trust in Jesus: that faith as small

as a mustard seed is enough. At the end of each chapter, he includes "Digging Deeper" questions for further reflection, journaling or discussion, making this book a useful resource not just for the individual, but also for small group discussions.

I would recommend this book for anyone working with young people, or even if you're not working with young people – the clarity and brevity is useful for a lot of questions you'd get in your ministry practice! I would gift this to teenagers or young adults from age 15+ for individual use. For younger teens, I would want a safe adult to read this with them and tackle the digging deeper discussion with them. Youth ministers could use this as a guide for a "big questions" term (or two), or it would even be great to use as Bible study material for small groups.

Overall, this book encourages the reader to keep trusting Jesus while exploring faithfully their big questions, embracing the prayer "I believe; help my unbelief." (Mark 9:24).

The Reverend Amy Brown is associate/generations minister at Mount Eliza Anglican Church.

## The future of Anglican Healthcare Chaplaincy is in your hands



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# Honest look at a Christian in politics

■ Jon K Newton

*Scott Morrison. Plans for Your Good: A Prime Minister's Testimony of God's Faithfulness. Nashville: Thomas Nelson US, 2024.*

**I only slightly knew Scott Morrison when we both attended the same church in Sydney's south, when he was a new backbencher.**

I was there for his big speech as Prime Minister to our denomination's conference in 2021. But I also remember the "miracle" election in 2019. It seemed to me that Scott was enjoying every moment of the campaign, interacting with ordinary voters who knew almost nothing about him, not hiding his Pentecostal Christian faith, and taking advantage of his opponent's mistakes. It was a different story in 2022; by then his opponents had successfully damaged his credibility, especially with women. People will debate all those events of 2018-2022 for a while to come, as they should.

But readers should not expect this book to add a lot to such debates. It doesn't fit neatly into the usual categories. It's not really an autobiography, though it does contain snapshots of the author's life. It's not really a political memoir, though the author does tell stories from his time in politics. There are no "hatchet jobs" on his political rivals. The author only occasionally defends himself against his critics or boasts of his achievements. It's subtitled a "testimony," which gets closer. Perhaps it's most like an extended sermon series, full of Bible stories as well as stories from the author's life, illustrations from all sorts of places, and spiritual truths and advice. Many questions you might like to have asked are not answered, as earlier reviewers have pointed out. Some controversial events are passed over briefly or ignored. The intended audience seems to be evangelicals, especially American evangelicals, judging from the way Australian customs and practices are explained and the reluctance to use the word "Pentecostal".

Nonetheless this is a valuable book. It's full of interesting stories, relevant applications of the biblical material discussed, and insights into the authors' life, and with a powerful spiritual message for readers. The section headings give a clue to the topic of each section, expressed as questions: Who am I? How should I live? and What should I hope for? Each chapter also is headed with a question, for example, "Why do you worry?" begins chapter six, which is a message



Scott Morrison.

***"Our duty is to align with God, not to conscript Him to our own causes and ambitions."***

Scott Morrison

on anxiety. It starts with an episode from the movie *Bridge of Spies*, continues with the author's experience leading Australia through the COVID-19 pandemic, retells his teenage brush with a peer's suicide, speaks of his government's response on mental health, proceeds to biblical stories related to anxiety, explains Paul's "steps to peace" (Phil 4:6-7) with a further illustration from Scott's meetings with Queen Elizabeth II and finishes with the story of an outback painting! Other chapters follow a similar structure. Throughout the book, while no doubt trying to leave a positive picture of his time as Prime Minister, the author's primary stated goal is to testify to God's faithfulness and to invite the reader into a life journey with Jesus Christ.

Even though this is not an autobiography, you will learn quite a lot about Scott Morrison from this book. He grew up in a Christian environment, gave his life to Jesus as a Christian camp (aged 12), found his life partner in church and has apparently never strayed from the Christian path, though he admits to making lots of mistakes, some of which are identified in this book. He is a very happily married man: his love and admiration for his wife Jen shines through as a major theme. The story of her infertility and the birth of two miracle babies is one of the most moving chapters. He is an active

believer who engages in prayer, Bible study, and local church life. He was a leader of an interparty prayer group in Australia's parliament, he had a group of Christian pastors praying for him during his political career, and he prayed about every decision he had to make as Prime Minister. He also has a balanced view of God and politics, not claiming God's imprimatur on his decisions and accepting God's will even when he lost the 2022 election. As he says, "our duty is to align with God, not to conscript Him to our own causes and ambitions".

His comments on some political opponents, especially Labor prime ministers Julia Gillard and Kevin Rudd, are gracious. He shows genuine gratitude for the people who supported and advised him. He portrays himself as someone willing to make hard decisions even at cost to his own popularity and expresses pride for key achievements such as managing the COVID-19 crisis, standing up to China, and creating the AUKUS alliance. He presents as a man with strong convictions, but not an ideologue, and committed to respectful disagreements. As he says, "our task and even expectation in such a complex world is not necessarily to agree, but to disagree better. This is not something our Western political environment is doing very well...".

There are some fresh stories that surprised me. Morrison reveals how his doctor prescribed antidepressants when he was going through the COVID-19 crisis. He reveals the names of some world leaders who became close friends, even mentors: Mike Pence (Trump's vice-president), Shinzo Abe (Prime Minister of Japan), and James Marape of Papua New Guinea. He tells his side of how the AUKUS alliance was struck and how Australia pulled out of a huge submarine deal with France, rebutting President Macron's version of this saga strongly but graciously.

This book won't fill in all the details of Morrison's time as Prime Minister, answer all the critics or make everyone like him. But for Christian readers, it raises good questions about how we handle life challenges and how Christians can participate in the political process. And for all readers there is an honest look at a Christian navigating the challenges of politics and a challenge to follow Christ.

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Dr Jon K Newton is Associate Professor of Biblical Studies and Pentecostalism at Alphacrucis University College Melbourne.