

National • Friday 24 May 2024 • By Michelle McDonald

## Archbishop Jeremy echoes urgent call for 1.5 degree climate threshold after Torres Strait visit



**"Torres Strait Eight" Traditional Owner Yessie Mosby showing Archbishop Jeremy Greaves the impacts of climate change, including the shrinking shoreline and where the ancestral resting places were previously located before being washed away, at his family's property on Masig on Saturday 11 May 2024**

Archbishop Jeremy has echoed the urgent call of Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners to limit global average surface warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures following his recent visit to Poruma and Masig Islands.

The Most Reverend Jeremy Greaves, whose seven-day Torres Strait Islands tour ended last week, said that he was struck by the enormity and complexity of climate change's impacts on low-lying islands.

"While sandbags and seawalls protect villages and communities, these are only a temporary fix," Archbishop Jeremy said.

"It is also a 'fix' that has other impacts — a seawall that protects a village also prevents turtles from nesting and a boat ramp substantial enough to withstand the higher tides causes the movement of sand so that it covers seagrass and impacts dugong habitats.

"There is a sense of urgency that we miss 'down south' — along one Masig coastline three metres of beach have been lost in the last couple of years.

"People's deep connection and sense of belonging to their land means they can't conceive of leaving.

“Local people hold much wisdom about the tides, seas and changes to the seasons and say that this wisdom is often not taken into account when ‘solutions’ are developed and implemented.

“They feel forgotten by the rest of Australia and by government and ask that funding of amelioration projects involves greater consultation and that federal MPs visit.

“They see government money being spent in Kiribati and Tuvalu and, while not arguing about the urgency and necessity of supporting these island nations, they say they are not getting the same level of support from their government.

“After witnessing the complexity of the impacts first-hand, I echo the call for further commitments to reducing the burning of fossil fuels to limit warming to 1.5 degrees in line with the Paris Agreement, which Australia is party to.”

Torres Strait Island Regional Council Councillor Francis Pearson showed Archbishop Jeremy Greaves around Poruma, along with his (midwife) spouse Josie Greaves, senior Saibai elder Aunty Dr Rose Elu and Anglican Church Southern Queensland justice unit coordinator Peter Branjerdporn.



**Archbishop Jeremy Greaves, Cr Francis Pearson, Aunty Dr Rose Elu and Josie Greaves on Poruma on Thursday 9 May 2024**

The Brisbane-based visitors witnessed the hightide lapping the edges of Poruma’s town and the alarming levels of land erosion, as well as the ways committed locals are actively reducing their environmental footprint.

These measures include installing solar panels, keeping the very few vehicles well maintained, implementing a community containers collection program at the school and keeping the ocean rubbish free.

On Masig the visitors met with the Reverend Ned Mosby from St John the Evangelist Anglican Church, newly elected councillor Ted Mosby and climate advocate Yessie Mosby.

Yessie Mosby was one of the "[Torres Strait Islander Eight](#)" who made legal history after a 2022 United Nations Human Rights Committee landmark decision that found the Australian Government is violating its human rights obligations to them through climate change inaction.

Mr Mosby said that he invites other mainland leaders to follow the Archbishop's example and visit the Torres Strait's low-lying islands.

"Watching Archbishop Jeremy jump out of one of the Torres Strait Island's smallest planes with Josie, Aunty Rose and Peter gave me hope and inspired me to fight more," Mr Mosby said.

"I have Anglican family members — my grandmother was part of the Mothers Union and Father Ned Mosby is my *athe*, my grandfather's younger brother.

"We've sent a lot of invitations to the federal government to visit our island and our invitations have been declined; however, the Archbishop made it his own business to come and stay on Masig and witness and face what we live every day.

"And he came with such humbleness, sitting with us and eating with us — I hold a deep respect for a person who will come and share a meal.

"Protecting our islands is about protecting the people, and the flora and fauna, including the marine life, land animals, insects, plant life, birds and so on.

"We need Australians to support the '[Our Islands Our Home](#)' campaign and to contact their federal elected representatives calling them to keep warming to less than 1.5 degrees by keeping fossil fuels where they belong — in the ground — and by harnessing clean energy.

"We invite Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen and Environment and Water Minister Tanya Plibersek to come and visit our islands, as Archbishop Jeremy did, and listen to us and witness the impacts of climate change."

Aunty Dr Rose is part of the seminal class action, led by Uncles Pabai Pabai and Paul Kabai, arguing that the Commonwealth owes a duty of care to Torres Strait Islander peoples to take reasonable steps to protect them from the harms caused by climate change.

Aunty Dr Rose assisted the legal team who argued that the court should require the Commonwealth to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to the 1.5-degree threshold.

The final hearings and closing arguments for the landmark case were held in Cairns the Friday before the Archbishop's Wednesday 8 May arrival.

Aunty Dr Rose said that she was shocked by the level of shoreline erosion she witnessed during her visit.

"It's been ages since I've been to Poruma and Masig, and it was distressing looking at how the islands have shrunk, where the shorelines have eroded, and how ancestral resting places have been washed away," Aunty Dr Rose said.

"I observed in my spiritual and cultural way the Archbishop and Josie listening deeply and engaging in conversation with people and seeing them walking on the beach connecting with the ocean and the land.

"People were uplifted by his visit — I had a beautiful message from a senior elder from Masig that the Archbishop's visit was a blessing for the island, and that his presence and walks on the shores strengthened the island.

"And, one of the aunties on Poruma made a beautiful remark about Josie saying that spending time sharing a meal with Josie is something they will never forget because of her humility and strength."

Midwife Josie Greaves said that her understanding of the connection that Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land and sea was deepened during her visit.

"I've worked with and lived with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and consider myself as someone striving to be an ally," Josie said.

"I had some understanding of the difference of connection to Country for First Nations peoples, but visiting Masig changed that somewhat for me.

"Meeting Yessie and listening to the stories of his island home that reach back many generations — 'before time' — changed my understanding of First Nations peoples' connection to their Country.

"He could point to coconut and oak trees, which have been uprooted and are now lying on the beach, that only a year ago his kids were playing under.

"Most confronting was the desecration of his ancestors' resting places by climate change's impacts.

"This was the moment that made me realise that his connection to home was strong in a way I could never really feel for any of the 24 homes I've lived in.

"This connection is what keeps him there, why he won't leave or move without a fight, why he can't leave.

"Yessie also shared with us the practice of burying the placentas of the baby boys born to families who live on Masig.

"Women must leave the island to birth their babies, travelling to Thursday Island, but return with their baby to Masig, burying the placenta and planting a coconut tree on top.

"As the coconut tree grows and bears fruit this signals a time for ceremony for the boy the placenta belonged to.

"As a midwife I am aware of the significance of the placenta — the work it does to support the growing baby — and I have some understanding that for First Nations people it is important, especially if

birthing on Country is not available to them, as they can bring the placenta back to connect the child to Country.

"Yessie was unable to tell me if there is a similar practice for the female babies as this is not his knowledge to know or share."

During his visit, Archbishop Jeremy also visited Waiben (Thursday Island) where he presided over a Sunday service and confirmed a parishioner at All Souls' and St Bartholomew's Anglican Church and met with the Reverend Ben Paton, parish councillors, Mothers Union members and Melanesian Brothers who are living on Thursday Island.

On Waiben the Archbishop spoke with Aunty Jen Enosa in a Radio 4MW interview about what he learnt from Traditional Owners.

He also met with Torres Strait Regional Authority Ranger Mentor Uncle Don Whap who said that climate change is causing extra stress for local young people who already face enough challenges.

The Archbishop's 8 to 14 May tour was funded with the assistance of an Anglican Board of Mission grant in support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mission.

**Editor's note: Please visit the [Our Islands Our Home website](#) to find out how you can help Yessie, Aunty Dr Rose and other Torres Strait Islander friends.**

**Resources & Research • Thursday 6 June 2024 • By Diana Wong**

## How to start your own parish Music Corner for kids



"Recently, as Music Corner has continued to grow, we have moved out of the corner of the kids' area (from which we derived our ministry's name), and into the music space within the church auditorium, along with its microphones, drum kits and extra equipment," says Diana Wong from Resource Church St Bart's, Toowoomba

The Mission Statement of the Music Corner at St Bart's, Toowoomba is "To help younger people engage in music ministry.

The Vision Statement of the Music Corner at St Bart's, Toowoomba is "To raise up passionate, confident and competent musicians, who are equipped for leading music in church."

Some of my clearest early memories of church involve the songs I sung as a child, and music is such a fun and effective way to let God's word "dwell richly" in us. Therefore, as I started my internship at St Bart's in 2023, I was excited that one of my areas of focus was to foster the growth of generational diversity in the music team — to get young people involved!

To help me do this, "Music Corner" was started, and has gradually grown over the past year. Music Corner is a safe space for kids to come and sing-play worship songs together, just to "jam" and have some fun.

We started doing this weekly for about 30 minutes after the church service, cycling through a very small repertoire of about five to seven songs. Attendance could be pretty sporadic initially, but I would sit in the corner of the kids' area, and tinkle away on the keyboard. This would often be enough to draw some kids in for a sing-along with a bit of morning tea in hand.

As we continued each week, I was able to identify kids who were ready to take the next step, and I invited them to help lead singing during Kids' Church.

Recently, as Music Corner has continued to grow, we have moved out of the corner of the kids' area (from which we derived our ministry's name), and into the music space within the church auditorium, along with its microphones, drum kits and extra equipment to get used to. A few youths have started serving with the church band as singers.

One of the greatest benefits of Music Corner is that it is a fun and relaxed space to nurture young people who love Jesus and music. And all it takes to start is at least one musician who is willing to invest in the next generation.

### **Top 10 Tips to get your own Music Corner started:**

1. Keep it simple by repeating a small repertoire of songs — this will help kids who can't read yet to learn the words.
2. Be realistic in your expectations so children want to come back. The goal is for this to be fun. You are not seeking to give private music lessons here.
3. Choose songs that are suitable for all-age worship. City Alight's album [\*Simple Songs For Young and Old\*](#) has some great options.
4. As numbers have grown, other musicians have very kindly stepped up to help mentor a group, such as the keys players and the guitarists. So build up your team this way.
5. Keep sessions to 20 to 30 minutes. It's hard to keep their concentration beyond this.
6. All you need to start is a single instrument, a voice, and a corner to play in. We started with a keyboard only, but it depends on what you or others at your church play. For example, they can bring their own guitar. You might also need copies of music or lyrics and music stands. Microphones, sound systems, drum kits and projectors for lyrics are great, but not essential.
7. We promote our Music Corner by simply inviting kids to join at the end of Kids' Church. You can also promote Music Corner in the church newsletters and on social media channels.

8. As your repertoire grows, notify parents/caregivers via email what songs you will play through that week (generally, two to three) in case some would like to practise beforehand.
9. Identify kids who are ready to take the next step and invite them to help lead singing during Kids' Church.
10. Enjoy yourself! As much is "caught" as it is "taught", and if you love singing praise to God, this can be infectious!

**Films & TV • Thursday 6 June 2024 • By Dr Peter Kline**

## **Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga**



**"Miller's Mad Max world is a striking achievement of immersive sound and cinematography, and Furiosa repeats the visceral impact of this world without abatement," says Dr Peter Kline from St Francis College**

*Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga* is the latest installment of George Miller's *Mad Max* series, a collection of action films set in a post-apocalyptic and dystopian Australia. The *Mad Max* world is a wasteland of war, competition over dwindling resources, and survival through brutality and revenge.

*Furiosa* is a prequel to Miller's 2015 *Mad Max: Fury Road*. In *Fury Road*, we were introduced to Furiosa as she attempts to emancipate herself and five other women forced to work as sex slaves of Immortan Joe, the warlord who controls the Citadel, the only remaining source of fresh water in the parched wasteland. Furiosa's aim is to return with the women to the Green Place, a land of abundance ruled by women that is her childhood home.

*Furiosa* begins with the young Furiosa in the Green Place and tells the story of how she became a slave and finally a lieutenant of Immortan Joe in the Citadel. Captured by a biker gang and put under the possession of the warlord Dementus, Furiosa is thrust brutally and rapidly into the wasteland beyond paradise. She is initially rescued by her mother, but when her mother is captured, Furiosa is forced to watch her crucifixion. As part of a bargain between Dementus and Immortan Joe, Furiosa is transferred to the Citadel in order to become a sex slave. Disguising herself as a teenage boy who

cannot speak, Furiosa works her way up in the Citadel as she plots her escape and her revenge against Dementus.

The best performance in the film is by Chris Hemsworth, who plays Dementus with a mix of sentimentality, brutality, and over-extended ambition. Furiosa is played compellingly as child by Ayla Browne who strikingly resembles Anya Taylor-Joy who plays her with equal pathos as a young adult. The only glaring fault with Taylor-Joy's performance is her unexplained American accent that is implausible and distracts from the Australian setting of the film.

Miller's *Mad Max* world is a striking achievement of immersive sound and cinematography, and *Furiosa* repeats the visceral impact of this world without abatement. The roar of engines, the burnt palette of the desert, and the constant clash of metal make the viewing experience a bombardment. Go see it on the big screen.

In one of the climactic scenes late in the film, we get a moment of filmic self-reflexivity that sums up the ambitions not only of *Furiosa*, but of the whole *Mad Max* series. After explaining to Furiosa that he, too, underwent the horrific childhood trauma of being taken away from loved ones who were then killed, leaving him with an insatiable drive for revenge, Dementus asks, "The question is: do you have it in you to make it epic?" Grief and the quest for revenge as the fuel for epic narration is as old as the ancient Greek epics. Miller certainly has it in him to give this perennial theme an Australian face in an age of political crisis and climate collapse. *Furiosa* takes us into a world where grief and loss are without the consolations of transcendence and therefore a world in which human passion, for better and for worse, is played out with exigent and unremitting force.

Does *Furiosa* rise to the level of *Fury Road*? Not quite, but it is not a fatal shortcoming to fall short of one of the best action films of all time. It is a worthy prequel that happily takes us right up to the beginning of *Fury Road*, setting the stage for the masterpiece.

***Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*, rated MA15+ and directed by George Miller, is currently showing in cinemas.**

**Editor's note: Interested in learning more about mystical theology? Dr Peter Kline is teaching CT2002 Mystical Theology in Semester 2 2024. Please contact Linda Burridge at [lburridge@ministryeducation.org.au](mailto:lburridge@ministryeducation.org.au) for more information or visit the [St Francis College website](#).**



## What is happening to Christian and Muslim Palestinians in Gaza and how can we help them?



**"The Australian Government only reinstated life-saving emergency UNRWA funding after strong community pressure. And, community pressure helped with Australia's backing of Palestine's bid for full United Nations membership at a United Nations general assembly vote late last week," says Australian emergency doctor Ahmad Abou-Sweid, as the Anglican Church Southern Queensland's Justice Unit calls for readers to contact their elected representatives asking for the suspension of military exports to Israel and implement appropriate sanctions**

**Please be aware that this reflection may be distressing for some readers.**

I am a Muslim Palestinian doctor who was born outside of my homeland to the first generation of the diaspora of the Palestinian people.

My parents were raised in refugee camps in Lebanon. I was born in the United Arab Emirates, moving to Canada at the age of six, along with my family.

Even as a child I understood what it was to be a refugee — to be displaced. I recall vividly one night when I was only nine years old asking my family what it meant for a country to be free, enquiring "Is Palestine free?" That night my family explained to me what freedom meant, and why my people and my homeland are not free. While the stories and history my family shared with me that night brought about feelings of sadness, anger and confusion, they also instilled in me a sense of resilience, pride and attachment to my homeland.

My full name is Ahmad Yaseen Abdullah Fayoor Qasim Abdullah Abou-Sweid. In my name are the names of my forefathers who lived peacefully as shopkeepers and farmers for generations in the towns of Hittin and Lubyia in Palestine's far north.

In the establishment of the state of Israel, our villages were ethnically cleansed through fear, violence and countless massacres, at the hands of armed Zionist forces as part of the ongoing Nakba that commenced in 1948. "[Al Nakba](#)" means "the catastrophe" in Arabic and refers to the mass murder, dispossession and displacement of thousands of Palestinians. Between 1947 and 1949, 750,000 Christian and Muslim Palestinians from a population of 1.9 million fled seeking safety. Seventy-eight per cent of historic Palestine was seized. For us Palestinians the Nakba continues — we continue to be oppressed, persecuted and dispossessed by Israel to this day. The anniversary of the Nakba is commemorated on 15 May, including by the [United Nations](#).

Over the last seven months you may have heard from people far more eloquent and knowledgeable than myself speak or write about the ongoing brutality inflicted upon Palestinian people in Gaza — speakers and writers from all walks of life and faiths denouncing these attacks on humanity.

You may have heard about the more than 34,000 civilians murdered by the so-called Israeli Defense Forces in the last seven months alone. More than 14,000 of these are children, with [UNICEF](#) describing Gaza as a "graveyard for thousands of children". Those who have survived now endure famine. Israel's illegal 17-year blockade on Gaza has extended to the deliberate blockading of food aid into Gaza and the targeting of aid workers, with the death of World Central Kitchen aid workers, including Australian Lalzawmi "Zomi" Frankcom, last month. More than 200 aid workers have been killed in Gaza since October.

You may have heard about the places of worship being targeted — many are some of the world's oldest mosques and churches. While some media may portray this as an assault on Muslims, our Christian brothers and sisters are suffering just the same, with hundreds of Christians sheltering in remnants of churches in northern Gaza, surviving on leaves and grass. Israeli missiles and infantry do not distinguish between peoples' faiths.

You may have heard about the 1.5 million displaced Palestinian Christian and Muslim civilians forced into a small sliver of land in Rafah, a city usually inhabited by around 250,000 people, since October. At the time of writing, [360,000 of these people](#) have subsequently fled Rafah as Israel defies the United Nations, and even its closest ally the United States, intensifying its missile attacks and continuing to threaten a full-scale ground assault. They have fled to an area of coastline already so overwhelmed by other displaced Palestinians that diseases are spreading due to lack of sanitation.

You may have heard the United Nations chief Martin Griffiths in February [describe](#) Gaza as "the worst humanitarian crisis" he's seen in his five-decade career "because people can't escape — they are blocked in."

You may have heard that United Nations Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, who has investigated what has been happening in Gaza since October, [recently report](#) that "There are reasonable grounds to believe that the threshold indicating the commission of the crime of genocide...has been met."

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights also released a [statement](#) in February describing "credible allegations of egregious human rights violations", including allegations against Israeli forces that "...include extrajudicial killing of Palestinian women and children", "arbitrary detention of hundreds of Palestinian women and girls", "degrading treatment", "rape and sexual violence".

You may also have heard that the United Nations Security Council recently [adopted](#) a resolution, by a vote of 14 in favour to none against (with one abstention — by the United States), “demanding an immediate ceasefire for the month of Ramadan.” The resolution was also adopted during Lent when pious Christians of the Holy Land were also fasting. Israel blatantly ignored this ceasefire resolution and continues to bomb Gaza indiscriminately.

You may have heard the stories of brutality and targeting of innocent Palestinian children in Gaza by Israeli forces, like Hind Rajab a beautiful six-year-old girl who was murdered crying for help from a car under Israeli fire surrounded by her murdered family members.

You may have heard the story of heroism of the paramedics, Yusuf Al-Zeino and Ahmed Al-Madhou, who were targeted in the ambulance trying to save her. They were later found dead in their burned-out ambulance, just metres from the bullet-ridden car where the bodies of Hind and her family were discovered.

You may have heard about the doctors who are putting their lives on the line, like Dr Amira Al Assouli, who bravely ran crouching from Israeli snipers to save a patient while volunteering at Nasser Hospital. Or about the [siege](#) on al-Shifa hospital, with evidence emerging of the mass execution of staff and civilians. Mass graves have been found at both hospitals, most recently at Nasser Hospital where 283 bodies were found (including of “older people, women and wounded”), some “tied with their hands...tied and stripped of their clothes,” as reported by the [United Nations](#).

As a doctor, it is amazing to see how efficiently resources are mobilised here in Australia when an unwell or injured child comes into our emergency departments. Medications, specialists, ambulances and even helicopter retrievals are all easily accessible. But no resources are accessible to Palestinian children in Gaza — hospitals have been intentionally destroyed and humanitarian medical aid intentionally blocked.

Children in Gaza are being left to die hungry and in pain. Why? Because Israel and its allies deem it acceptable since these children were born Palestinian. As a Palestinian and as a doctor my heart breaks every day I am unable to stop this from happening to my people.

But what have we heard from most of our elected leaders? In February this year alone, [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) data shows that Australia directly exported over \$1.5 million in “arms and ammunition” to Israel. In the same month, it was reported that the Australian Government [awarded](#) Israeli weapons company Elbit Systems a \$917 million defence contract.

Therefore Australia’s Prime Minister politely calling for a ceasefire this far along is not enough — it will not stop the massacre of the more than one million Palestinians still sheltering in Rafah if Israel launches a ground assault there.

The Australian Government should immediately cease military exports with Israel and implement sanctions on Israel, as it would any other genocidal state. In her recent [report](#), titled “Anatomy of a Genocide”, United Nations Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, “urges member states to enforce the prohibition of genocide in accordance with their non-derogable obligations” and to “[i]mmediately implement an arms embargo on Israel...as well as other economic and political measures necessary to ensure an immediate and lasting ceasefire and to restore respect for international law, including sanctions.”

The Australian Government only reinstated life-saving emergency UNRWA funding after strong community pressure. And, community pressure helped with Australia's backing of Palestine's bid for full United Nations membership at a United Nations general assembly vote late last week.

As a man of faith and as a doctor, I ask readers to remember all who have died since October in this war, especially the children and women, whose deaths I grieve.

I especially ask people of all faiths to remember the Palestinians of Gaza in their prayers as a ground invasion of Rafah is imminent.

Due to the ongoing Nakba, including the illegal Israeli settlements, many of my generation, the children of the displaced, are being denied the [right to return](#) to the homes of our parents and grandparents. However, this denial will not stifle our love for our homeland. Through my father's hands I have felt the rich soil. Through my grandmother's eyes I have seen the beautiful ancestral fields of olive trees.

In our hearts we Palestinians keep the memories of our ancestors alive.

**ACSQ Justice Unit note: Here are three things you can do to help the Palestinian people in Gaza:**

1. **Join in a ceasefire prayer vigil co-hosted by the Anglican Church Southern Queensland. Fifty recognised faith leaders led the second "Praying for Gaza" inter-faith vigil, which was held on Saturday 27 April. The next inter-faith prayer vigil will be held at 3pm on Sunday 9 June 2024 in the Brisbane CBD. See [ACSQ Facebook](#) and the *anglican focus Events page* for more information.**
2. **Contact your [elected representatives](#) asking that military exports to Israel be suspended at the very least (noting that Canada, Belgium, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands, as well as the Japanese company Itochu Corporation, made this common sense decision months ago) and to implement appropriate sanctions, in line with the [Genocide Convention](#), which calls for member state signatories to actively "prevent genocide".**
3. **The Anglican-run Arab Ahli hospital in Gaza was hit in October by Israeli strikes — if you are able, please donate to the [Anglican Board of Mission AID Gaza hospital emergency appeal](#).**

## “Holding my mala (hand), Nguma would guide me”



**"When I look back to those moments of teaching in the rainforest with Nguma, he was teaching me the value of connecting, stopping to listen to see, and establishing a relationship to something greater than myself — for me that is God," (WestMAC teacher and MaMu woman Phyllis Marsh**

When I was a child, *Nguma* (Father) took me for walks deep into the rainforest. It was here in the place of nature that I connected to the wonder, transcending my being, learning to *ngamba-l* (listen) to *bura-l* (see).

Holding my *mala* (hand), *Nguma* would guide me, showing me and teaching me. He gave me knowledge about the trees, the land, the animals and how I am a part of their world. He told me this is our way, a way you learn today that will give back to you tomorrow.

He placed his hand on his *wumbu* (head), saying “what comes in here”, then moving his hand to his *rulgu* (heart), adding, “comes out here”. I remember looking at him with such awe. My *nguma*, with his *mala* holding mine, guiding me as we walked, teaching me on Country, giving me new sight, and transcending my view.

As a *balgari* (grown woman), *Ngumu* has passed, and while I prepare for the [Provincial Clergy Conference](#) in August, I reflect on the wisdom *Ngumu* shared with me. When I look to Country, I listen with *manga* (ears) to *bura-l* (see), finding wisdom in the *yugu* (trees), hearing the song and stories of the land, from the *maraba* (birds). I learnt from *Nguma* that this is the role of all of us — *ngamba-l* to *bura-l* — and what it creates is a deep connection that resonates joy within your *rulgu*. In this way you are transcending to connect to something bigger than self.

My *nguma* shared with me how to heal and how to create a common purpose with each other to share joy from being on Country to connect. On Yugara Country at West Moreton Anglican College (WestMAC) that is *Wirrinyah Dandiiri*.

Our designed *Dandiiri* approach is as a college together — we listen to see and transcend to connect, and, in this way, we heal together. This is “Our Way” — *Wirrinyah Dandiiri*.

At WestMAC we speak in wonder of an ancient way, allowing us to deepen connections to the history of a spiritual culture that we continue to learn from. This place of wonder, where we speak of ancient wisdom, allows us to speak to our own Anglican faith and who we are as spiritual beings. This is the practice of *Wirrinyah Dandiiri*, reconnecting ourselves to our spiritual growth so that we walk in faith — to listen to see.

It’s about coming back together to build a personal relationship with God, each other and ourselves. This is the important modern work that schools are positioned to do, as our young people are learning. Guiding our young people, creating opportunities for them to transcend and create deep connections to a spiritual life that are deeply connected to God, truly is a worthy common purpose.

When I look back to those moments of teaching in the rainforest with *Nguma*, he was teaching me the value of connecting, stopping to listen to see, and establishing a relationship to something greater than myself — for me that is God. Through this practice, I am creating joy in my heart, which I share with others. Through *Nguma’s* teaching I have learnt that no matter what trials I face, I can always find joy in my heart through my connection with God, as written in scripture:

“My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you.” ([James 1.2-5](#))

**Editor’s note: Hear more from Phyllis Marsh in person at the Provincial Clergy Conference 2024 when she will speak on the theme *Wirrinyah Dandiiri* (“Coming back Together”). Gather with clergy from across our Province on the Gold Coast between Monday 19 to Thursday 22 August for the Provincial Clergy Conference 2024, which has the theme “Common Purpose, Shared Joy”. Participants will reflect on what it might mean to be the Church together in this season and how and where we might know joy as we journey together. There will be a variety of workshops and plenty of worship and fellowship. Visit the [conference website](#) for more information. Registrations close Wednesday 26 June 2024.**

## Q&A with Churchie student, St John's Cathedral chorister and water polo champion, Thomas Holdt



The St John's Cathedral choristers outside the Cathedral with Archbishop Jeremy Greaves on Easter Day in 2024, with Thomas Holdt far left

### How long have you been involved in the Anglican Church and in what roles?

I joined St John the Baptist Anglican Church in Bulimba upon arriving in Australia from South Africa in 2014. In 2021 I became a chorister at St John's Cathedral. I am also a student at Churchie.

### What do these roles involve?

As a chorister, we rehearse four times during the week and alternate singing between one and two Sunday services fortnightly. During Easter and Christmas these rehearsals and services increase significantly. During rehearsals we practise the music for the service while learning about the music and the composers.

### What projects or activities have you been working on in your chorister role?

After our very busy Easter schedule we prepared for the Ascension Day mass, which took place on Thursday 9 May 2024.

## **What do you like most about being a chorister?**

I really enjoy the repertoire that we sing during special services. I also enjoy it when we record pieces, including the Langlais mass and the Rheinberger that we often sing. Running around with my friends is also a weekly highlight.

## **What would you say to other boys thinking about being a chorister?**

Being a chorister requires time and dedication to the programme. However, if this dedication is given, you will be amazed at how your singing and musical knowledge grow throughout your journey as a chorister. It is a very unique opportunity in Australia. There are not many Cathedrals running a programme like this.

## **What has been one of the highlights of your time in your chorister role so far?**

Going on a chorister tour to Sydney was definitely one of my highlights being a chorister. We sang in many churches and stayed with the choristers of St Andrew's Cathedral. Swimming at Manly was great because it was freezing water and we were all joking around before a serious Evensong.

## **What do you love most about being a Churchie student?**

Churchie is an amazing school in so many ways for so many different people. I really like being part of the GPS tennis, water polo and basketball teams and playing against other schools. There is a massive lively music department and I get to play my trombone in one of the bands. There are many opportunities to get involved in service to the community through different projects set up in your Houses. In class we also have so many interesting and fun subjects. I have really enjoyed HPE this term as well as Drama, Science and Design and Technology. It feels great to be a part of Churchie and I am very thankful for the opportunity.

## **How does your Christian faith inspire you and shape your outlook, life choices and character?**

My Christian faith makes me grateful for everything I see around me, including nature and humankind. To be able to give thanks to my Creator and having someone to look to for help are extremely mentally soothing in my life.

## **What is your favourite scripture and why?**

I know most of the Bible through the pieces and hymns that I sing. My favourite is The Magnificat (Mary's Song of Praise), which is based on [Luke 1.46-55](#), because it is all about being grateful and rejoicing to God.

## **What person of faith inspires you the most and why?**

C.S. Lewis. He wrote such a great series of books and brought the Christ's crucifixion and resurrection to life through a fictional novel that millions of people have read — *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.



## **Why is it important for school students to commemorate National Reconciliation Week annually?**

Reconciliation is important because we need to acknowledge the mistakes made in the past so that we can make sure that they don't happen again. It's a time to say sorry and to plan for a better future. School children are the future so they need to be an active part of Reconciliation.

## **What is the bravest or kindest gesture you have ever received or witnessed?**

When I ran cross country, I felt really sick and a group of my friends held back and ran the race and finished the race with me. That really helped me over the line!

## **What is the best piece of advice you have ever received and who gave you this advice?**

"Be aware". My mum gave this piece of advice to me. If we put more effort into being aware of the people and the world around us, there would be a lot less hurtfulness, a lot less destruction and a lot more gratefulness.

## **What do you do in your free time to recharge and relax?**

I play table tennis, basketball and tennis with my dad. I also enjoy family board games.

## **Where do you do your best thinking?**

On the couch at home. It's comfortable and relaxing!

## **What is your earliest memory?**

I remember digging in my parents' garden in South Africa. I thought that I was being helpful!

## **If you are having a bad day, what do you do to cheer yourself up?**

I play sport to get my mind off of things.

## **What is your secret skill?**

Building cubby-houses with my sister.

## **What do you enjoy doing when you are not rehearsing for the choir?**

I am passionate about water polo, basketball and tennis. My water polo team won the Water Polo Queensland State Titles. I am the goal keeper. I also play my trombone in a band at school and keep busy with school work. I really enjoy beach days, hiking and being with my family.

## **What's your unanswerable question — the question you are always asking yourself?**

What colours do I see that others can't see? I am colour blind and we get told that we "can't" see certain colours, but I wonder what colours I can see that other people can't see. My colour-blind brother and I don't even see the same colours.

**Editor's note: If you would like to find out more about joining the St John's Cathedral Choristers, please contact Dr Graeme Morton via [gmorton@stjohnscathedral.com.au](mailto:gmorton@stjohnscathedral.com.au).**

**The Baru Beat • Thursday 6 June 2024 • By The Rev'd Ross Ellwood**

## **Country clergy compassion and commitment**



**"Courtney was ordained a deacon in December. I met her for the first time in February just before her commissioning and have been struck by her spiritual maturity, Godliness and compassion since. Courtney's empathy and her way of reaching out to parishioners and wider communities members, regardless of their religious background, are inspiring," says The Rev'd Ross Ellwood**

I have been a part of our Diocesan community since January last year, after moving from regional Tasmania. I have been serving in ordained ministry since 2002 — in Ballina in northern NSW and then in Buckland and Glenorchy parishes in Tasmania.

In my Anglican Church Southern Queensland role as a retired priest I support Bush Ministry Fund supported clergy in our Western Region, especially The Rev'd Courtney Smith in The Parish of Allora-Clifton and The Rev'd Rick Gummow at The Parish of Drayton.

Courtney was ordained a deacon in December. I met her for the first time in February just before her commissioning and have been struck by her spiritual maturity, Godliness and compassion since. Courtney's empathy and her way of reaching out to parishioners and wider communities members, regardless of their religious background, are inspiring.

She makes the Bible message relevant in today's context by presenting the Gospel in a life-giving and accessible way. As her "training supervisor", I was at the first funeral that Courtney conducted. She did three funerals in a fortnight soon after her commissioning. The funerals were held for quintessential "country" families. After one of these funerals, a parishioner approached Courtney in tears sharing with her how moved he was by her ministry, particularly how she had reached out so lovingly to the bereaved family. He approached her again after a Sunday service more recently, thanking her for her compassion and dedication. Such unsolicited responses are very telling.

Courtney ministers to people who face unique challenges. Many of her parishioners are current or retired farmers and graziers. Sorghum, various legumes and barley are just some of the crops grown by her parishioners and wider community members that feed fellow Australians. We all know that farmers and graziers do it tough in inclement weather and mounting debt, which is a key reason why the Bush Ministry Fund is so vital.

As a retired priest who is licensed through The Parish of Drayton, I also assist The Rev'd Rick Gummow when needed. I preside over a monthly service at All Saints', Cambooya and support Rick when he takes leave. When Rick needed to take leave to receive treatment for cancer last year, I was struck by the genuine concern expressed by his parishioners — not so much because they missed his ministry, which they did, but because they were so worried about him.

Rick is beloved for a reason. He has an innate ability to touch people's hearts with Christ's love. He is a wonderful listener and is often observed taking time with his congregation members to just *be* with them. I especially witness him taking this time after services to yarn over a cuppa or on the church's doorstep, as well as at parish functions.

I encourage *anglican focus* readers to donate or [bequeath](#) to the Bush Ministry Fund. The Bush Ministry Fund solely funds rural ministry in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland, and it is the only fund that financially supports rural ministry in our Diocese. By supporting the Bush Ministry Fund we are directly supporting our Diocese's priests as they minister to parishioners and outreach to wider communities where they serve.

**Editor's note: The Bush Ministry Fund money boxes are a fun and easy way for individuals, families, parishes and schools to donate to bush ministry in our Diocese. Order your BMF money box today by emailing Helen Briffa in the Western Region office via [helen.briffa@anglicanchurchsq.org.au](mailto:helen.briffa@anglicanchurchsq.org.au) or by calling 07 4639 1875.**

## Helping Anglicare care for youth experiencing homelessness at tax time



**"Recent data shows that nearly a quarter of Australians experiencing homelessness are aged between 12 and 24. As the number of young people in Queensland facing homelessness rises, there simply isn't enough accommodation to keep them off the streets"**

Leo\* began sleeping rough at just 14 years old. He came from a "good" family with everything a child should have. But, he was battling an inner turmoil that caused a rift between him and his family, and was destroying his life.

When Leo first came to Anglicare, he was still just a child, alone on the streets, scared and needing help.

Recent data shows that nearly a quarter of Australians experiencing homelessness are aged between 12 and 24. As the number of young people in Queensland facing homelessness rises, there simply is not enough accommodation to keep them off the streets.

Adequate housing is a fundamental human right. Quality housing is proven to have positive psychological and psychosocial impacts as well as enhancing independence and self-agency.

Anglicare believes that every young person deserves to come home to a positive living environment where they know they are cared for and where they feel safe and supported. That is why they have committed to building a \$13 million specialist youth homelessness service in Beenleigh that aims to address the escalating housing crisis.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Chief Executive Officer Sue Cooke, said that the 30-unit accommodation project in Beenleigh is designed to support young people aged 16-25, who are either experiencing homelessness, or at significant risk of experiencing homelessness.

“Anglicare Southern Queensland is committed to doing all that we can to help alleviate the housing crisis. We are pleased to commit to this significant project, that will support both the immediate need and the long-term success for vulnerable young people, like Leo,” Mrs Cooke said.

In addition to accommodation, residents will also receive a suite of wrap-around support services to help improve life skills and increase independence, while providing the care and connections these young people need, through a case-planned process.

We know that with stable housing and the right support network, young people can positively change their life trajectory by securing employment, education and long-term housing.

“At Anglicare, we’re here to help those at risk to find a home, but we can’t do it alone,” Mrs Cooke said.

Anglicare Southern Queensland is seeking tax-deductible donations from the community this tax time. Your kindness now can give young people, like Leo, a safe place to stay and help them to rebuild their lives.

\* Name has been changed to protect privacy. Image is representative only.

**Editor’s note: To donate to Anglicare’s \$13 million specialist youth homelessness service in Beenleigh this tax time, visit the [Anglicare Southern Queensland website](#).**

**Justice & Advocacy • Friday 24 May 2024 • By The Rev’d Canon Bruce Boase**

## Now more than ever



**"The stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need to be listened to with open hearts. Now more than ever, the learning of our history, the genuine and truthful history, is essential," (The Rev'd Canon Bruce Boase)**

The theme for this year's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is "Now More Than Ever". This theme reminds us that we must all continue working together to ensure equity and justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as part of our ongoing journey towards Reconciliation.

I know that I am not alone when I say that last year's Referendum outcome was beyond disappointing — it was profoundly distressing. The Referendum was a chance to fix a glaring omission in our nation's 122-year-old birth certificate — the Constitution — by recognising those who have been caring for the lands now known as Australia for tens of thousands of years. It was also an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to have a pragmatic say in matters that impact their communities, such as in health, education and employment.

I would like to acknowledge all those who supported the "Yes" vote, including those who educated themselves by actively seeking out accurate sources of information, assisted with campaigning, shared positively on their social media channels, engaged in constructive conversations, attended events and volunteered on polling booths, among many other activities.

Your efforts mean a lot to me and other elders because we will not see Constitutional recognition of our people during our lifetimes. This is why we feel a sense of urgency and why this year's NRW theme is so salient.

The [timeline](#) in this *anglican focus* reflection, which was written by The Ven. Geoff Hoyte, The Rev'd Rick Gummow and The Rev'd Michael Stalley, shows that our Diocese has been actively supporting Reconciliation at least since the 1960s.

Since that time, we have come a long way; however, much more needs to be done.

The stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need to be listened to with open hearts. Now more than ever, the learning of our history, the genuine and truthful history, is essential.

The importance of gaining a greater appreciation of the cultures of First Nations peoples is also essential for our collective wellbeing.

We need to listen to and reflect upon the stories of the ancient ones that have been passed down over generations to those living in the present.

Christ has called us to this. Now more than ever we need to listen to His call to be compassionate, just and loving, so we can walk authentic Christian journeys towards Reconciliation.

As the [Reconciliation Australia website](#) explains, "We need connection. We need respect. We need action. And we need change."

Whilst this is easy to write and say there are many who are yet to understand this. We, as the Anglican Church Southern Queensland, need to live this call — both for Reconciliation in our earthly lives and for the assurance of sharing Christ now and in eternity.

During my Reconciliation journey, I can proudly say that the Anglican Church Southern Queensland has been supportive. I especially see this in the development and implementation of our Diocese's Reconciliation Action Plans.

I do pray for this support to continue. May we all grow together in Christ — in His unity and in His love.

**Editor's note:** This year's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) [theme](#) is "Now more than ever". Visit the [Reconciliation Australia website](#) for [posters and resources](#) and to [register](#) your NRW events. Keep an eye on the *anglican focus* "[Events](#)" page for forthcoming Anglican Church Southern Queensland NRW events, including an event hosted by the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group on Monday 27 May 2024 from 1pm in the Darnell Room.

Reflections • Thursday 6 June 2024 • By The Rev'd Charlie Lacey

## Tough Questions: What is the Unforgivable Sin?



**"The person who fears that they may have committed the 'unforgivable sin' almost certainly has not," says The Rev'd Charlie Lacey**

All three synoptic gospels record Jesus saying that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Many Christians question what Jesus meant by this, and some fear that they may have inadvertently, or even deliberately, committed the "unforgivable sin". This is pastorally significant, since everyone who has put their faith in Jesus ought to be confident of their forgiven status.

In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, Jesus speaks about blaspheming the Holy Spirit immediately after the Pharisees accuse him of using demonic power to cast out demons.

[Matthew 12.31-32:](#)

*And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.*

Given the context, it could be inferred that to blaspheme the Holy Spirit is to attribute the Holy Spirit's work to demonic forces. However, such a distortion of the truth is more likely symptomatic of a sinful mindset, whereby a person wilfully and routinely opposes the work of the Holy Spirit.

There is a sense in which we all oppose the work of the Holy Spirit because that is essentially what sin is. However, to blaspheme the Holy Spirit is to oppose him so thoroughly and determinedly, that one is no longer able to repent and believe. It is to harden one's heart to such a great extent that repentance is no longer possible. Therefore, to blaspheme the Holy Spirit is unforgivable, not because the Lord chooses not to forgive it, but because the offender refuses to repent and be forgiven.

The person who fears that they may have committed the "unforgivable sin" almost certainly has not. Even some of the hard-hearted Pharisees eventually gave their lives to Christ, most notably the Apostle Paul. Their willingness to repent demonstrates beyond doubt that they had not committed the unforgivable sin. By contrast, those who heard the Gospel from Christ himself, witnessed his miracles, and saw the Spirit's power at work in the church, yet remained resolutely opposed to the truth until their death, were guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit today will reject and oppose any evidence that points to the truth of the Gospel and will remain entrenched in their unbelief until the end of their days.

Therefore, the unforgivable sin is not so much a specific category of sin, rather an irrevocable spiritual state of being.

To the person who truly repents forgiveness is available, no matter how heinous the sins of their past. As it 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." In short, no sin is unforgivable for the person who is willing to repent.

**First published on the [St Andrew's, Springfield website](#) on 29 April 2024.**



## "In politics the tail often wags the dog"



"Having been through four countries in the past month, with longer stays in two, several things have struck me as I return home," The Very Rev'd Dr Peter Catt (pictured with son Josh in Canada in May 2024)

### **Brisbane International Airport**

Flight to Dubai now boarding at Gate 67

رحلة إلى دبي الآن على متن البوابة 67

### **Dubai International Airport**

رحلة إلى بولونيا الآن على متن الطائرة

Welcome to..

Il volo a Bologna sta imbarcandosi

The flight to Bologna is now boarding

الرحلة إلى بولونيا على متن الطائرة الآن

### **Bologna International Airport**

Benvenuti...

Welcome to..

Il volo a Londra sta imbarcandosi...

The flight to London is boarding...

### **Heathrow International Airport**

Welcome to..

Benvenuti a Londra...

Bienvenue à..

The flight to Vancouver is boarding....

le vol vers Vancouver est en cours d'embarquement...

### **Vancouver International Airport**

Welcome...

Bienvenue à..

The flight to Los Angeles is boarding....

le vol vers Los Angeles est en cours d'embarquement...

### **Los Angeles International Airport**

The flight to Brisbane is now boarding....

le vol vers Brisbane est en cours d'embarquement

El vuelo a Brisbane está abordando...

### **Brisbane International Airport**

Welcome to Brisbane, your bags will be available on Carousel 7

Having been through four countries in the past month, with longer stays in two, several things have struck me as I return home.

Firstly, Australian drivers are way more aggressive than those I encountered in Italy and Canada. The difference is so stark that I am examining very closely my own driving style.

Canadians are incredibly gracious drivers. Even those who drive the most ridiculously large utes stop on a dime to let people cross the road — even in places where there is no pedestrian crossing.

Italian traffic looks to be incredibly chaotic. It in fact operates under two very important rules that are obeyed to the letter:

1. Go as fast as you can.
2. Do not hit anybody.

Despite appearances Italian drivers are not aggressive. Unlike Canada where the car stops long before you are near the pedestrian crossing, in Italy one has to step bravely into the flow of traffic to get the traffic to stop. If one does not take the step into the roadway, you will be waiting at the edge of the road forever. If, however, you do step into the roadway, the traffic will immediately stop. Every time. Refer to rule 2.

Within a few hours of being home I was reminded of the Australian tendency to sneak around corners to beat people crossing with the lights, and twice on the first day home I saw and heard cars accelerating when approaching pedestrians crossing a road in a place without lights.

The second thing I have noticed since being home is what I am not hearing.

The public spaces in the UAE, Italy, the UK, Canada and the USA — from airports and public transport, to the soundtracks on electronic billboards — were awash with the sounds of different languages. Most information is conveyed in at least two languages — in LA, at least three.

Australia's public spaces are almost universally monolingual. Even our airports.

This monoculture contrasts with our reality.

My first official duty on my return was to attend the annual Lord Mayor's Prayer Breakfast.

The proceedings began with the National Anthem led by the choir of Brisbane State High. The choir was made up of a kaleidoscope of faces from different ethnic and language groups. The keynote address was given by the CEO of Multicultural Australia who reminded us that 70 per cent of Australians were either born overseas or have a parent who was. Her address was a celebration of our reality, our diversity and the richness that comes from our melting-pot existence.

Listening to the keynote address led me to identify the third thing that I have noticed since returning home, the dissonance between who we say we are and what our political discourse reveals about us.

At the Lord Mayor's Prayer Breakfast we sang a dissonant note as we launched with gusto into verse two of the National Anthem:

*... for those who come from across the seas we have boundless plains to share..*

The National Anthem and keynote address' description of our reality stand in direct contrast to what the current political stoushes about immigrants and the talk, once more, of reducing their numbers say about us.

It is a well-used and successfully used trope in Australian political discourse to blame immigrants — the Chinese, the Germans, the Italians, the list goes on — for the ills that beset our nation.

In the current iteration, immigrants are being blamed for the housing crisis. And yet there is no mention of the contribution to that crisis made by the investor owners of the 25 per cent of apartments in the Brisbane CBD that are being deliberately kept empty because the tax regime allows them to make money that way and favours investors over owners.

The ABC analyst, Laura Tingle, got herself into hot water this past week by describing Australia as a "racist country". Our monolingual public spaces and political discourse suggest that there are likely to

be some societal-structural issues that at least make this appear to be the truth. It also reveals the heart of those to whom the political class wish to speak and to activate. In politics the tail often wags the dog.

As well as using choirs with multicultural faces and celebrating the work of organisations like Multicultural Australia one more thing I have noticed that is moving us in the opposite direction to that unmasked by the political discourse is that advertising industry's use multi-racial faces and accents. That industry has begun reflecting back to us who we really are.

One of the hallmarks of our life at St John's is that we seek to be inclusive and to celebrate diversity. One of the things I rejoice in is the changing nature of the demographic of the Cathedral community. Like the choir of Brisbane State High our congregations are slowly but surely coming to reflect the diversity of the Australian population and of the population who live in the vicinity of the Cathedral in particular. The wider Diocese, particularly through the gift of our First Nations, Sudanese and Korean friends, is also being enriched by the diversity of humanity that "Call Australia Home".

**First published in the Cathedral Precinct eNews on 3 June 2024.**

**International • Thursday 6 June 2024 • By World Council of Churches**

## **WCC denounces Russian missile attack on Kharkiv, Ukraine**



**Bridge destroyed by the Russian invasion in Irpin, Kyiv region, Ukraine, August 2022 (Photo: Ivars Kupcis/WCC)**

World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay, denounced the Russian missile strike on a hardware store in Kharkiv, Ukraine.

The strike resulted in at least 14 deaths and 40 people wounded.

“The World Council of Churches denounces all such attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure which have become a hallmark of Russia’s illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine,” said Pillay.

“Russia is providing a terrible example in its regular violation of some of the most fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, an example being followed in a tragically increasing number of contexts, including in Gaza and Sudan.”

Pillay also expressed the hope that there will be accountability for all such violations, and justice for the victims of these crimes.

“We pray for the strength and resilience of the people of Ukraine in the face of Russia’s aggression, and urge the Russian leadership to turn back from this mutually destructive course,” he said.

“We call for an immediate ceasefire and dialogue to end this invasion and for a peaceful future in Ukraine and Russia.”

[Read the full comment by the WCC general secretary](#)

First published on the [World Council of Churches website](#) on 28 May 2024.