

Statement from Archbishop Jeremy Greaves regarding the findings of the independent Makin review and Archbishop Justin Welby's resignation



"The victim-survivors, as always, must be the focus of our concerns. Victim-survivors must always be the priority of the whole Church," (Archbishop Jeremy Greaves)

I am shocked and saddened to hear about the extent of the brutal sexual, physical, psychological and spiritual abuse perpetrated by the late John Smyth QC in at least two continents over decades, as outlined in the independent review by Keith Makin into the Church of England's response to disclosures about John Smyth.

The failure of numerous leaders from the Church of England and other institutions to intervene to stop Smyth's crimes is also shocking and points to an appalling failure of safeguarding children and vulnerable young adults, as well as the need for substantial cultural change.

The findings and recommendations of Keith Makin's independent review remind all Churches that effective safeguarding is critical and that cultural change is imperative.

While Archbishop Welby's resignation is necessary and appropriate, safeguarding is not the responsibility of a single leader — safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everyone.

The victim-survivors, as always, must be the focus of our concerns. Victim-survivors must always be the priority of the whole Church.

As the Makin review explains, “all practice and processes” must “remain focussed on the child or vulnerable adult who has been harmed.”

I remain committed to continuing the implementation of operational and cultural changes in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland to keep all people safe, especially those who are most vulnerable.

Any “covering up” of abuse will not be tolerated.

The Most Reverend Jeremy Greaves KCSJ
Archbishop of Brisbane

Editor’s note (updated on 15/11/2024): Links to support services and how to make a report

Make a report

If you need to report a crime, contact your local police on 131 444 or call Crimestoppers on 1800 333 000.

In an emergency, call 000.

If you suspect a child or young person is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect, you can contact your relevant state or territory child protection agency.

Report online child abuse material

To report online child sexual abuse, including child sexual abuse material, please contact the [Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation](#) using the “Report Abuse” button.

You can also report illegal and harmful online content, and online abuse, to the [eSafety Commissioner](#).

Support services

Bravehearts (support for child sexual abuse survivors) on 1800 272 831

Blue Knot Foundation on 1300 657 380

Survivors & Mates Support Network (SAMSN) on 1800 472 676

1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732

Kids Helpline (for children and young people aged between 5–25) on 1800 55 1800

For more information and links to support, visit:

<https://www.childsafety.gov.au>

You can also make reports and obtain support from the Office of Safe Ministry on 1800 242 544 or e-mail safeministry@anglicanchurchsq.org.au

Tough Questions: Should Christians serve in the military?



There are two common ways to answer this question. The first is to establish whether war can ever be morally justified, and the second is to consider how soldiers are viewed in the New Testament.

All Christians ought to agree that war is evil and highlights the extent of human sin and brokenness. Notwithstanding, there are two main schools of thought within Christianity regarding the legitimacy of going to war, namely pacifism and just war theory. Pacifists reject the use of violence under any circumstances. Proponents of just war theory contend that war may be justified when specific criteria are met.

A biblical case can be made for both positions. For example, in the later part of Romans 12, Paul exhorts his audience not to repay anyone evil for evil and to treat our enemies with compassion. Furthermore, Romans 12.19 says: "Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord." If nothing else, Romans 12 says a lot about how we should treat people on a personal level, and some would extend this to a nation's foreign policy. However, in Romans 13, Paul goes on to emphasise a government's role in administering justice, "But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer."

War is evil, however, because of the fallenness of our world, there may be circumstances that necessitate the use of force in order to prevent an even greater evil. As Remembrance Day approaches, it seems apt to cite the Second World War. Nazi Germany was busy invading sovereign nations without provocation and murdering Jews, gypsies, homosexuals and the disabled on an industrial scale. To make no attempt to prevent this would be cowardly and evil. As Bonhoeffer famously said, "Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."

Bonhoeffer also provides the following helpful analogy.

“If I sit next to a madman as he drives a car into a group of innocent bystanders, I can’t, as a Christian, simply wait for the catastrophe, then comfort the wounded and bury the dead. I must try to wrestle the steering wheel out of the hands of the driver.”

Whilst nations are sometimes too quick to resort to armed conflict, it would seem that war can be a legitimate and morally justified response to evil. Sadly, there are times when no amount of diplomacy or sanctions will prevail.

If war can be morally justified, it follows that it is not morally wrong to join the military. This premise seems to be supported by the New Testament.

When a group of soldiers asked John the Baptist “What should we do?”, he replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely — be content with your pay.” There was no suggestion from John that the soldiers should renounce their profession. On the contrary, if they were to go on receiving pay, they would have to remain in their profession.

Three of the gospels tell the story of a Roman Centurion who was praised more highly by Jesus than almost anyone else. Jesus did not say to him, “Go and be a soldier no more”, but “Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.”

Moreover, the very first Gentile convert to Christianity was a Roman Centurion by the name of Cornelius. This was, of course, no accident. God specifically sent Peter to preach the gospel to Cornelius’ entire household.

The New Testament does not call into question the moral integrity of Christians who serve in the military; however, those who serve have a responsibility to do so in a way that bears witness to the values of God’s kingdom. Australia’s adherence to the international rules and conventions of war makes this task somewhat easier.

However, it should be noted that, even in the most disciplined of military units, illegal and/or immoral actions do sometimes still occur. Therefore, Christians can and should be a restraining influence to ensure that our military maintains the highest possible ethical standards. From this perspective, one could make a case for having as many Christians in the military as possible.

What is a Just War?

Six conditions must be satisfied for a war to be considered “just”:

- The war must be for a just cause.
- The war must be lawfully declared by a lawful authority.
- The intention behind the war must be good.
- All other ways of resolving the problem should have been tried first.
- There must be a reasonable chance of success.
- The means used must be in proportion to the end that the war seeks to achieve.

How should a Just War be fought?

A war that starts as a Just War may stop being a Just War if the means used to wage it are inappropriate.

- Innocent people and non-combatants should not be harmed.
- Only appropriate force should be used (this applies to both the sort of force, and how much force is used).
- Internationally agreed conventions regulating war must be obeyed

First published on the [St Andrew's, Springfield website](#) in November 2024.

Reflections • Saturday 23 November 2024 • By The Very Rev'd Dr Peter Catt

"No wonder the writer of the Gospel according to John talks of the truth setting us free"



"Over the course of two hours those who wished, quietly told us personal stories of life under The Act. Without exception they thanked us for listening and most talked of the positive effect of being listened to," says The Very Rev'd Dr Peter Catt (Peter Catt is pictured back, far right, with Aboriginal elders and leaders and The Most Rev'd Dr Mark Coleridge outside the Cherbourg Ration Shed Museum on Monday 18 November 2024 following the community "hearings")

"Truth never damages a cause that is just"
Mahatma Gandhi

I think victim impact statements are one of the most important changes made to the criminal justice system in recent times. In most Australian jurisdictions they have only been part of the process since the late 1980s or 1990s.

One of the benefits of victim impact statements is that they allow people who were not needed in a criminal trial, but were affected by the criminal act, to tell the story of how they were affected. So, for example, the parent of a murdered child can talk of their devastation even though they were not a witness to the murder. Victim impact statements also allow a direct victim, say of a rape, to talk about the lasting effects of the rape once the court has dealt with the evidence; a process that until then has focused on seeking to establish and test the facts. Victim impact statements ensure that the full story

is appreciated and that people who were not given a voice in the trial are heard. They are important truth-telling and healing tools.

In more recent times there have been moves to add restorative justice practices to the mix of tools available to the courts for dealing with the perpetrators of criminal acts. An important part of any such process is bringing the perpetrator and survivor face to face so that for the perpetrator can hear first-hand about effects that their actions have had on the survivors. In many cases hearing such home truths transforms the life of the perpetrator. The encounter helps them change their ways in ways that more punitive methods do not. This is because the survivor is uniquely humanised for the perpetrator.

Many survivors speak of how healing and empowering they find the experience of being able to tell their story in a restorative justice session. They talk of the significance of having the truth of their lived experience honoured and validated by having the person who caused them injury listening to them, hearing them and believing them.

Those who contributed to the work of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up by Nelson Mandela and chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in post-apartheid South Africa also speak of the healing to be found in being able to tell their story and have that story honoured as true.

On Monday I spent the morning with several hundred others at the Cherbourg Ration Shed Museum listening to a number of people tell their stories about what it was like to live under the *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1897*. The Act ensured that the lives of Aboriginal people were tightly controlled and disrupted the lives of many families.

Monday's event at Cherbourg had originally been organised as part of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry commissioned by the previous Queensland Government and cancelled by the current one.

Given that the Inquiry had lined up 20 elders to tell their stories, the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council decided to host the event so that those who had gone through the emotional process of preparing for the hearing could be honoured.

It was a huge and humbling privilege to be part of the process. Over the course of two hours those who wished, quietly told us personal stories of life under *The Act*. Without exception they thanked us for listening and most talked of the positive effect of being listened to.

The session ended with a shared meal and the deepening of relationships through time spent together.

The world shifted a little as we took this tiny step towards healing through truth-telling.

No wonder the writer of the Gospel according to John talks of the truth setting us free.

Editor's note: If you are in immediate danger, phone Triple Zero (000) or go to the emergency department at [your local hospital](#).

If you have recently experienced sexual assault, rape or sexual violence, get yourself to a safe place as soon as possible and:

- **phone the police and/or ambulance on Triple Zero (000)**

- go to the emergency department at [your local hospital](#)
- phone the [Sexual Assault Helpline](#) on 1800 010 120 (7.30am to 11.30pm, 7 days a week).

Please visit the [Queensland Government website](#) for more information.

Features • Thursday 14 November 2024 • By The Rev'd Dr Miryam Clough

“When such abuse comes to light, often it is the woman who is blamed”



The Rev'd Dr Miryam Clough will be speaking at the “Lead Like a Woman: Movement for the Ordination of Women Conference” in Brisbane in November 2024

Australia’s Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse highlighted devastating levels of child abuse in Church-run institutions.

Whanaketia — *Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light*, the [final report](#) of New Zealand’s Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, released in July this year, produced similarly shocking findings.

Alongside evidence of the use of torture in state mental health facilities, one of the more alarming revelations from the New Zealand Commission of Inquiry is that the incidence of sexual abuse was greater in faith-based institutions than in state care. We are right to be horrified by the incidence of child sexual abuse in our Churches.

Less commonly understood, however, is that experts working in this field, including Dr Gerardine Robinson who gave evidence at Australia’s Royal Commission, [assert](#) that most victims of sexual abuse by clergy are adult women. When such abuse comes to light, often it is the woman who is blamed.

As Catholic theologian Dr Roćio Figueroa [highlights](#), “[c]hurches often try to portray violence against women as if it were a consensual act, and even worse as a ‘romantic relationship’.” Figueroa, who has undertaken significant research on the abuse of nuns by church leaders, highlights the structural inequality in the Church and notes that in any pastoral relationship there is an implicit imbalance of power. Clergy have often taken advantage of this power imbalance to coerce women into sexual contact.

One of the witnesses at New Zealand’s Royal Commission was The Rev’d Louise Deans — she was instrumental in exposing the abuse of multiple women by a senior clergyman with responsibility for training ordinands, Canon Rob McCullough, following a conference of ordained Anglican women in 1989 that had highlighted the problem of sexual harassment by male clergy. As Deans noted, a priest interviewed at the time that this abuse became public had been “so upset by harassment from male clergy during her training,” she had considered abandoning her vocation altogether (*Whistleblower*, 2001, Tandem Press: 57).

Other women have abandoned their vocations — and the Church — often taking their families with them. The Wilberforce Foundation’s 2018 report *Faith and Belief in New Zealand* [found](#) that Church-based abuse, along with gender inequality and poor attitudes towards unmarried mothers and members of the LGBTQI+ community, are among the greatest obstacles to Christianity.

Other survivors of abuse by clergy have spent large periods of time away from the Church, often to the detriment of their vocations and careers. New Zealand’s Royal Commission of Inquiry noted the constraints on women’s leadership in the Church as a contributory factor in abuse. There are relatively few women in senior roles in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, bullying is sadly common, and where women have experienced harassment and abuse, progression within the Church is all the more difficult. Those who speak out may be met with ambivalence or downright hostility.

For many women abused by clergy, the fight for accountability from the Church has proved too costly. Some have moved abroad and even changed their names. Survivors and their advocates have been forced out of their roles in ministry and Church leadership while abusers have been protected. Some have felt that their training or ministry roles have become untenable when their complaints of harassment or abuse have been disregarded. Often the process of reporting abuse is badly handled and retraumatising. The spiritual abuse that accompanies any act of abuse by clergy may leave women questioning their faith and the validity of their vocations to ministry.

The short- and long-term impacts on women’s physical, psychological and spiritual wellbeing cannot be underestimated. Several women described the impact of abuse by those in Church leadership on their lives and vocations in my book *Vocation and Violence: The Church and #MeToo*, which also examines factors that continue to enable abuse in the Church.

Women survivors are at the forefront of highlighting and addressing abuse by clergy. Their efforts come at a cost. However, when abuse disclosures are met with empathy and constructive action, healing can take place — for the Church, as well as for those directly affected.

An excellent resource, *Accompanying Survivors of Sexual Harm: A Toolkit for Churches* has been developed by a team of theologians and practitioners in New Zealand to support churches to respond to abuse disclosures. Free copies are downloadable on the [ResearchGate website](#).

Editor's note: The Rev'd Dr Miryam Clough will be speaking at the "[Lead Like a Woman: Movement for the Ordination of Women Conference 2024](#)", which will be held in Brisbane between Thursday 28 November and Saturday 30 November. Register [online](#) by 5pm Friday 15 November for catering purposes.

Justice & Advocacy • Sunday 24 November 2024 • By The Rev'd Dr Ann Solari

Our Ministry with those sleeping rough at St John's Cathedral



The Rev'd Dr Ann Solari putting out mats, blankets and pillows for rough sleepers at St John's Cathedral in November 2024

For more than a decade we have been welcoming people, who are having to sleep rough, to stay overnight in parts of the Cathedral Precinct. Being in a place where they are allowed to be means that they are not continually woken up by police and security guards and being made to move on. This gives them more control over their lives and a better chance of a good night's sleep. It has also given us the ability to work with them to make the program work for both the Cathedral staff and those sleeping here.

Initially we thought that all we needed to do was to let people sleep onsite in areas that were safe for them — for those using the Cathedral during the day and the two households living in the precinct. It quickly became obvious though that we were going to need to provide storage for bedding because if we didn't, we were going to have an ongoing issue with bedding and personal property being stored under our verandas, in our gardens and anywhere else bags could be hidden. Letting people leave blankets on the chair room veranda worked for a while, but led to ongoing issues with there not being enough blankets to go around. The obvious solution was for us to collect blankets, sheets, pillows, mats and doonas and for us to keep them clean and store them during the day, putting them out at night to be used and washing them as needed. As a community we have been so good at collecting bedding that we now have a shed full of bedding — we never run out and we never need to worry

about people walking off with blankets. In fact, we now provide bedding for those sleeping in the park over the road, as well as for those sleeping in our precinct.

Over the years we have talked with those sleeping onsite and increased what we collect to include toiletries and snack food, which we put out each night with the bedding. Our model seemed to be working well and the problems we did have with bad behaviour and litter became easy to manage.

Before COVID-19 arrived, we were welcoming 20 to 30 sleepers most nights. Once the “lockdowns” started those sleeping rough were housed in hostels, motels and hotels for free. It meant that we generally had very few people sleeping onsite. This, of course, changed as we started to live with COVID-19 rather than control it and the numbers returned to the previous level.

Just before Christmass 2022, we suddenly realised that nearly all the food vans that supply hot evening meals, to those who are unable to access a hot meal, were not coming out from before Christmass until after New Year, or even longer. Some were not coming out for several weeks due to a lack of volunteers. We quickly realised that if we didn't provide food some of those who sleep at the Cathedral were not going to get an evening meal. The first night we made sandwiches, which was very popular but unsustainable — we just didn't have enough time and energy to make sandwiches for 20 or more adults to replace an evening meal. After discussing the issues, we decided to open up the St Martin's House kitchen and let the sleepers make their own sandwiches and snacks. We put the snacks we had on a trolley — beans, spaghetti, noodles, canned fish and muesli bars. We invited them to make hot drinks using our kettle, cups, and spoons; to make toast using our toaster, plates and knives; to heat up snacks in the microwave; and, to use our toilet. And, it worked. Over the next week we learnt how to make large batches of pasta and rice dishes that they could help themselves to. And we learnt that they loved Milo, home-made cakes and used a lot of milk!

Initially we had only planned to do this for a month until all the vans were back in circulation, but after about 10 days, we received a thank you card — thanking us for what we were doing — and one of them personally expressed how great it was to be treated as a “person”.

We realised that up until that point we had been letting homeless people sleep on our property — we had been doing things for them, but not really treating them as part of our community. By opening up our kitchen and inviting them to share our resources, help themselves to food they want, plate it up themselves, and use the amount of salt, pepper and sauce that they wanted, made a significant difference, not just to them, but to us.

In some ways it is still “us and them”, but we now talk as friends, we listen to each other and remember, and we ask each other how we are and get the truth. We have let these people into our lives, and it has made a difference to us all. They have become part of our community.

And it has made a difference to us all — we open the kitchen whenever we can, we work together to make the program work and behaviour in our small area of the city has improved. We now have tea, coffee and toast available in the Cathedral for everyone nearly every day. Life is better for all of us.

It has made me wonder how often do we look at what we are doing and think how we could make it better, and how often are we brave enough to try?

First published in *The Eagle*, the magazine of St John's Cathedral. [Download](#) your copy today.

How is your social connection faring with Queensland's cheap public transport?



"Anglicare Southern Queensland is currently inviting community members to do a short survey to help capture the impact of the Queensland Government's 50-cent public transport fare initiative on people's experiences of social connection and loneliness," says Sarah Marris from Anglicare Southern Queensland's Mission, Research and Advocacy team

I know of a World War II veteran who caught the bus every morning from his Greenslopes home to the local mall. He passed away about five years ago in his 90s. He was unable to drive and was on a pension, so the Council bus was the only affordable transport for him. He used to initiate conversation with other passengers — some of these folk became friends with him, remembering him on Anzac Day, his birthday and at Christmas. His morning routine involved going to the supermarket, newsagency and the library. The library staff got to know him so well, that if they didn't see him over a few consecutive mornings, they would call to check in on him. He had no family members living in Queensland and most of his peers were too frail to travel or had passed on.

We recognise the many benefits of public transport use, including reduced traffic congestion, increased sustainability and cost-of-living relief.

A recent [Queensland Government report](#) shows that affordable public transport also plays a critical role in fostering social connections, in turn reducing loneliness within our communities. Public transport is a vital link to hobbies and social activities, family gatherings and places of worship, as well as to education, employment and volunteering pursuits.

It allows people to participate in community events, visit friends and family, gather with congregation members, and access essential services, thereby reducing social isolation and creating a more inclusive and connected society.

[Anglicare Southern Queensland](#) has a long-standing interest in social connection as a way of supporting client wellbeing.

In addition to the many initiatives and projects supporting social connection that are embedded as a core part of our service delivery, Anglicare Southern Queensland has provided a number of submissions to [Queensland Government](#) inquiries demonstrating the positive impact social connection has on wellbeing, and the role of cheap public transport as an enabler of this.

Anglicare Southern Queensland is currently inviting community members to do [a short survey](#) to help capture the impact of the Queensland Government's 50-cent public transport fare initiative on people's experiences of social connection and loneliness.

Survey completers have expressed heartfelt gratitude in their responses to date, with people explaining how cheaper fares are enabling them to participate in more family outings, as well as connect on a more regular basis with friends, such as for boardgame nights, and attend community group gatherings and activities.

Our aim, through this survey, is to provide greater insight into the wellbeing benefits of this 50-cent fare initiative, and to demonstrate the social value of cheap fares, additional to the reducing of traffic congestion, supporting environmental sustainability and easing cost-of-living pressures.

If you are a user of public transport, we invite you to share your thoughts with us in this very [brief Anglicare survey](#).

It is Anglicare Southern Queensland's hope that this survey's data will inform future discussions about the 50-cent fare initiative and the ways we can help ensure communities are better connected socially through equitable access to public transport.

Editor's note: For more information, please [email](#) Sarah Marris from Anglicare Southern Queensland's Mission, Research and Advocacy team.

“I try to put God at the centre of my life”: says Australian emergency medicine physician who recently volunteered in Gaza



Australian emergency medicine physician Mohammed Mustafa on a medical mission to Gaza in June 2024

Please be aware that this reflection contains graphic and very distressing content.

I will always remember my first day volunteering in the Gaza hospital emergency department.

I walked into the ED and suddenly found myself in charge because I was the most senior doctor. The hospital was being run by medical students after doctors had either been killed, abducted or injured.

It was chaotic — hundreds of people had filled the emergency department following a mass casualty event caused by a drone strike.

The bodies of 10 children wrapped in blankets were brought in by their parents and other family members.

I recall the first blanket I opened — the body inside the blanket was of a child with their head missing.

I just froze in shock for about 15 seconds.

One of the most common questions people ask me is how I prepared myself for the one-month medical aid mission to Gaza in June this year.

I explain that I sought God's blessing in prayer and that I sought my parents' blessing in conversation.

In Islam, parents have a strong influence on you into adulthood. When I told my parents, my mum was really upset at first. After she thought about it, she called me back and said that: “Life and death is not in the hands of Israelis — it’s in the hands of God. I am not going to hold you back from helping people in Gaza.”

I sought God’s blessing and dealt with the “What if?” scenarios through prayer. I knew that I needed to accept that death was very possible in Gaza. I wrote my will, cleaned my rented unit and gave a friend my car keys before I left — just in case. Because I wasn’t scared of death, I think I was more effective and focussed on my work in Gaza. In emergency medicine, particularly in mass casualty events, you need to be able to take charge, even when drones are striking and bombs are going off in the background. So, I made peace with it.

I try to put God at the centre of my life. In Islam, we are taught from a young age that: “Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart (Hadith 34).”

So, being compelled to volunteer in Gaza as an emergency department physician was about making a change with my hands. I decided that with my hands, coupled with my skills, I could help alleviate the oppression I was seeing on my screens at home in Australia.

Since returning from Gaza, I have been making the change with my mouth — by speaking on radio and television about what I witnessed and at fundraisers and other community events.

I have also been making the change through my heart via prayer. My faith was strengthened on the medical mission, especially by witnessing the faith of Palestinians who say *Alhamdulillah*, which means “Praise be to God”, in the most tragic situations. Even in the most heartbreaking moments when a child dies, they thank God for the gift of their child’s life and for the time they had with their child, trusting in God’s higher purpose. The Palestinian people I met in Gaza have a level of faith and trust in God that I can only dream of.

Palestinians see themselves as Palestinian first. I saw Christian and Muslim Palestinians working together in the hospital grounds, eating from the same plates and sleeping in the same rooms. I would only know the difference if I saw a Palestinian wearing a cross or if I saw a Palestinian praying. They see themselves as Palestinian first — as inhabitants of the land.

The faith of the Palestinian people shone though in their resilience and dedication to each other.

Every day I saw young nursing students — 19- and 20-year-old women — comforting injured and dying children in their arms. For many of these students this is their one job, day in and day out. When one crying or screaming child dies, they then pick up another. The only thing they can do in a mass casualty event is to pick up a child or baby and sit on the hospital floor, cradling and comforting them. Some of the children and babies they hold are severely disfigured from injuries, starving or burnt. I think a lot about these brave young nursing students and how difficult and traumatising that must be, especially when they are hungry and tired and grieving the deaths of their own family members.

Most of the patients I cared for in Gaza were babies and children. In the 24 hours prior to writing this, the United Nations described Gaza as “a graveyard” for children — 17,400 children have been killed in Gaza since October last year. Thousands more are dead under rubble. Hundreds of thousands more are injured and starving. More children have died in Gaza than in all of the world’s wars, conflicts and invasions in the last four and a half years combined.

Throughout each day I had to decide which child I attended to and which child I had to let bleed out on the hospital floor. I find myself looking back and wondering whether I should have helped one child instead of another.

I had to perform procedures on children without anaesthetic or pain killers, including putting in chest drains — tubes — to re-inflate lungs that collapsed after being crushed by rubble or wounded by gunshot. The excruciating pain is the same as being stabbed deep into the chest.

I had to peel the burnt and broken skin off a newborn baby. I had to perform procedures on children to reduce fractures caused by buildings that collapsed on them during carpet bombing. I pulled out shrapnel from children's bodies. I prepped children, who had limbs blown off, for theatre by stopping the bleeding and strapping the remaining limb with a tourniquet.

Chillingly, I saw a lot of children who were killed or wounded by a single gunshot to the head. Children are being deliberately targeted by Israeli snipers in the genocide.

I also witnessed incredible courage among young children. A nine-year-old boy has learnt to insert cannulas, so he bravely goes out with the paramedics, even while bombs are going off, to put cannulas in. He brought patients to me in the emergency department. It was chaotic in the emergency department, and he can't go to school, so this is what he does to care for his people.

Another child shared with me about how he had to run for his life after seeing his heavily pregnant mother run over by an Israeli tank.

There is no sanitation or cleaning products — no antiseptic, no gauze for wound cleaning and no medical-grade skin cleanser. I saw maggots growing in the wounds of Palestinian children.

There was one thermometer and one blood pressure monitor in the hospital's whole emergency department.

There were no dressings for burns — children with severe burns to 60 per cent of their body cannot have their wounds dressed properly.

There is no way of checking blood sugar levels because there is no glucometer and no blood glucose test strips. Diabetic patients are going into life-threatening diabetic ketoacidosis, and their symptoms cannot be managed properly.

I took eight bags of previously approved medical supplies with me from Australia — however, the day before we departed, this approval was revoked and so I could not bring them in. We were very limited in what we could take into Gaza. Other than clothing, shoes and the like, we could only take three kilograms of food for personal consumption.

There also aren't enough doctors — more than 300 healthcare workers have been unlawfully detained and more than 595 have been killed, with the names of an additional 420 healthcare workers pending.

One of the Palestinian healthcare workers I worked with has shrapnel stuck in his hip. His family has been killed. During a procedure I asked him to assist by picking something up, but he was unable to bend over because of the shrapnel. Despite his injury and mourning the killing of his family, he does 24-hour shifts. Palestinian healthcare workers like him work for 24 hours and then go home for a rest

amidst bombing to a tent. It's hard to coordinate rosters when staff are dying as they are travelling to and from the hospital. I never knew at the end of my shift if I was going to see them again.

Despite the desperate need for doctors and nurses, it was a long and difficult process for me to get into Gaza. Israel limits the number of medical aid workers who can enter Gaza. Israel also bans doctors with Palestinian parents or grandparents from applying. This is very disheartening for Australian Palestinian doctors and other healthcare workers who want to help their people.

Initially we had 23 doctors and nurses who were given the go ahead to join our medical team in Gaza. However, in the end only seven of us were permitted in. Some were turned away at the border by the Israeli authorities and some were refused one day or one week before their scheduled arrival date after being initially approved.

A group of Jordanian doctors left Jordan the day after my team. They were arrested by Israeli authorities because they tried to take in baby formula, which was banned. Hamas aren't babies. We saw young children and babies starving to death unnecessarily. Starvation is being weaponised in this genocide.

I saw emaciated children daily. Children are starving to death because Israel is not letting enough food through. Babies are starving because their starving mothers can't produce milk. I saw many children and babies die in the emergency department due to starvation.

As well as drone strikes and bombings, Israeli soldiers are also doing controlled demolitions, including of paediatric hospitals. This is another way babies and children are being targeted.

After I returned home to Australia, it took many weeks before I could hold a child again. The first time I met my nephew, I couldn't pick him up because of the number of dead Palestinian children I held and the number of children's limbs I had picked up in the hospital.

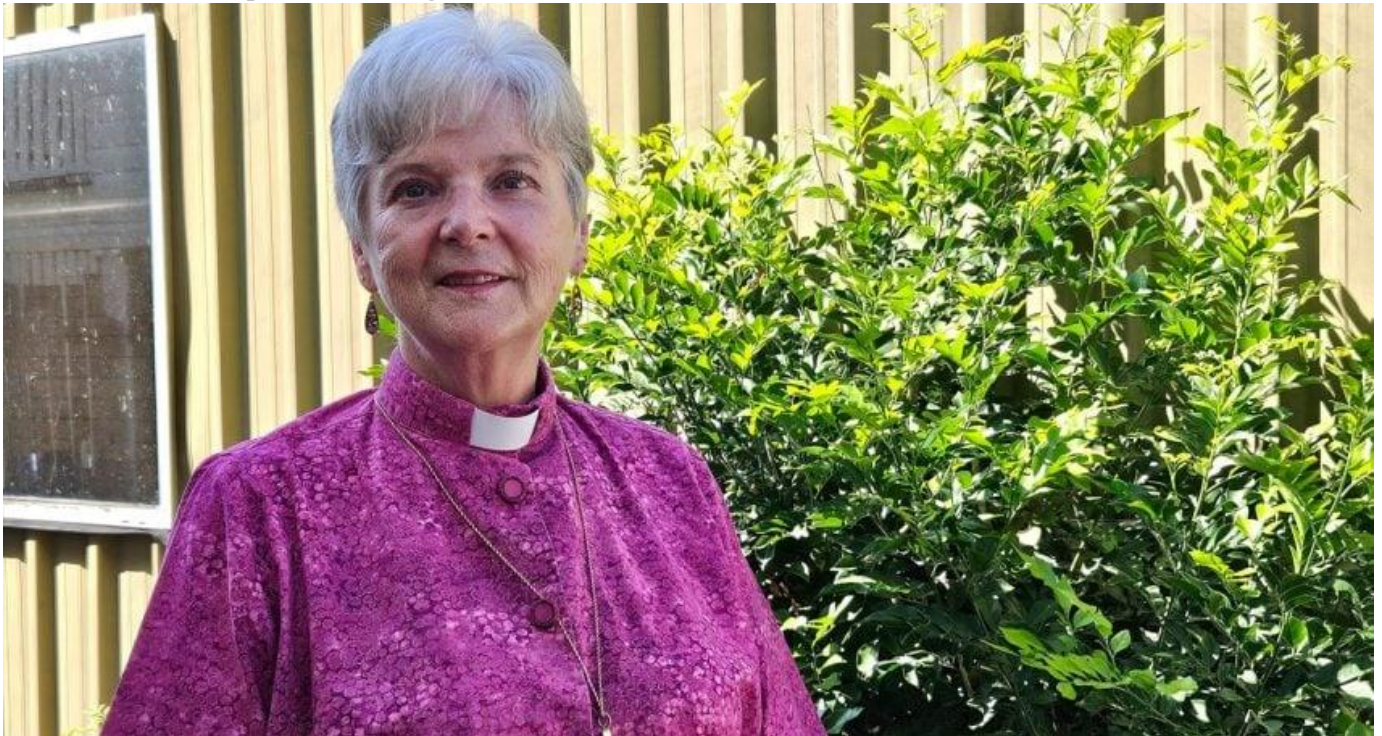
If there is one thing I want readers to take away it is that this is a humanitarian crisis that transcends religion.

I felt guilty leaving Gaza. I miss the Palestinian people. I hope to return soon.

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

1. **Join in a "Gathering to Pray for Gaza and all Palestinians" inter-faith peace prayer vigil, with the theme "Palestine: A Land with a People", between 6.45pm and 7.45pm on Saturday 30 November 2024 in Brisbane Square (at the top of Queen St). See [ACSQ Facebook](#) and the *anglican focus* [Events page](#) for more information. Thank you to the more than 80 recognised inter-faith and multi-cultural leaders who have helped lead "Praying for Gaza" ceasefire prayer vigils in Brisbane since March.**
2. **Contact the [Minister for Foreign Affairs](#), Senator the Hon Penny Wong, calling for her to pressure Israel into letting food and medical aid and aid workers into Gaza, in line with the [International Court of Justice's](#) legally binding orders. And, contact Senator the Hon Penny Wong calling for her to pressure Israel into allowing healthcare workers from Australia (and other countries) of Palestinian descent into Gaza.**
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](#).**

Archbishop Jeremy announces new Director of Formation



The Right Reverend Denise Ferguson is the new Director of Formation, for the Anglican Church Southern Queensland

Dear sisters and brothers,

I am pleased to announce that I have appointed The Right Reverend Denise Ferguson as the new Director of Formation (0.5 FTE) within the Ministry Education Commission (MEC).

Bishop Denise will be well known to many and is returning to the Brisbane Diocese after having been the Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Adelaide for the last five years. Previously Bishop Denise (who is originally from New Zealand) was the Rector of East Redland Parish and Archdeacon of Moreton.

Bishop Denise has a strong interest in theological education and formation for ordained ministry. As part of her duties in the Diocese of Adelaide Bishop Denise chaired the St Barnabas College Council.

The Director of Formation in this Diocese leads the development and delivery of the Ordained Ministry Formation program under the Ministry Education Commission. This role is responsible for managing and facilitating learning intensives and supervised field education, ensuring students meet all requirements, including appropriate theological education, clinical and pastoral education, and any additional requirements from the Archbishop.

This position is a key position within the Diocese leading the development and delivery of the Ordained Ministry Formation program, including:

- Managing the planning, delivery, and evaluation of the Ordained Ministry Formation program;
- Maintaining a relevant and comprehensive curriculum for this program within the St Francis College;
- Sourcing and supporting appropriately qualified and experienced trainers;

- Seeking feedback from participants and presenters to identify opportunities for continuous improvement;
- Reviewing and refreshing the curriculum to reflect best practice in ministry; and
- Overseeing the supervised theological field education programs in collaboration with the Deputy Director of Formation (Clergy Development), including student placements, and training for field education supervisors.

The Director of Formation works with:

- The Executive Director MEC and Principal of St Francis College (The Reverend Dr Ruth Mathieson);
- The Deputy Director of Formation — Clergy Development (The Reverend Ray Clifton);
- The Director of Discernment (The Reverend Michael Stalley), who is responsible for managing and facilitating the Vocation Discernment process from enquiry to ordination; and
- The Vocations Coordinator (The Reverend Christopher Bate), who is responsible for facilitating the Seekers process and promoting vocations to ordained ministry. This role involves encouraging and promoting vocations, facilitating initiatives from the Vocations Task Group, and supporting enquirers through the Seekers Program.

An important part of the Director of Formation's role will be working with The Reverend Michael Stalley and The Reverend Ray Clifton to discern future shapes of formation and training for the clergy we will need in this new season of our life together.

Please pray for Bishop Denise and for all involved in the formation/discernment process, including all candidates, supervising priests, examining chaplains, staff of St Francis College, and assistant bishops. May God bless us and equip us for our various ministries in the service of Christ.

The Most Reverend Jeremy Greaves KCSJ
Archbishop of Brisbane

Lee



Kate Winslet as war correspondent Lee Miller in a film directed by award-winning Ellen Kuras

Lee, steered by award-winning Ellen Kuras in her feature debut as a director, is a biographical drama shining a spotlight on Lee Miller, a woman whose complex legacy as a fashion model, war correspondent and photographer has been overshadowed by history. Starring Kate Winslet in the titular role, the film attempts to unpack Miller's extraordinary and often contradictory journey, blending war, art and personal trauma. The result is deeply compelling, built around the stellar gifts of Winslet to enable the portrayal of a complicated icon whose story demands to be told.

Focusing on the period of Miller's life during and after World War II, the film depicts her transformative role as one of the first women war photographers. Her backstory as a glamour model is noted as we are dropped into gatherings with her glamorous friends, including Pablo Picasso, photographer Man Ray and poet Paul Éluard. But this is not *that* story.

Instead, director Kuras is more interested in Miller's defiance against societal expectations as a combat photographer. Wisely, too, the film does not shy from painting Miller's life as a whirlwind of contradictions, both personally and professionally. There is glamour and grit, beauty and brutality. The film's framing device as an interview conducted later in life serves this purpose well, holding surprises right into the film's closing moments. Miller was no saint and the hagiographic impulses often at work in other biopics are thankfully avoided here.

Kate Winslet gives a towering performance as Miller, capturing both the outer strength and inner fragility of the character. Winslet is known for her ability to slip into diverse roles. Her turn in 2021's riveting TV series *Mare of Easttown* springs to mind as a template for the flawed hero on show here. She embodies Lee's steely determination, her fierce independence, and the emotional turmoil that stems from her experiences as a woman in an unforgiving era. A marvellous intensity shines as Miller

wrestles with the trauma of her wartime experiences and her complicated personal relationships with men, such as renowned artist Roland Penrose (played by Alexander Skarsgård).

One of the most powerful aspects of *Lee* is its exploration of Miller's photography. The film pays tribute to her work capturing the horrors of war with an unflinching eye, especially as she documents the liberation of Nazi concentration camps. The scenes in which Miller navigates the ruined chaos of Europe in the closing moments of the war are visceral and gut-wrenching. Kuras is adept at balancing contrasts and there are obvious metaphors at work here between Miller's character and the scenes she captures. The film offers a glimpse into the way Miller's artistry emerged from the darkness she witnessed, emphasising her role as both witness and active participant in documenting history.

Whilst some biopics become little more than disjointed show reels of "important" moments, Kuras has provided a laser focus on Miller herself. Some might suggest this leaves other characters less than fully developed. Instead, I rather think the film shows how people like Miller's work partner Davy Scherman (Andy Samberg in a rare serious role) trailed in the wake of a larger-than-life remarkable woman.

Visually, *Lee* is a stunning film, capturing the 1940s and 1950s era with rich detail. The production design and costuming enhance the authenticity of the film's setting without ever feeling like an indulgence. Kuras, a noted cinematographer on films like *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, uses her eye for framing and complexity to lush effect.

In the end, *Lee* is a film that pays tribute to an astonishing woman, a photographer who was unafraid to confront the darkest parts of human history through deep investment in her own artistic expression. Winslet's Oscar-deserving performance anchors the film, making *Lee* a poignant exploration of a heroic woman whose contributions to both art and history deserve greater recognition.

***Lee*, Rated M and directed by Ellen Kuras, is currently showing in cinemas.**

Editor's note: Interested in learning more about film, the Arts, and the many intersections with life and faith? Jonathan Sargeant is teaching DA2013Z/DA9013Z God and Contemporary Culture: Theology and the Arts in 2025. Please contact Jonathan Sargeant for more information via jonathan.sargeant@anglicanchurchsq.org.au.

Q&A with Brisbane Anglican, Act for Peace CEO and 2019 Queensland Local Hero, Elijah Buol OAM



Elijah Buol OAM accepting his 2019 Queensland Local Hero in the Australian of the Year Awards, which he received for his work in the youth justice system and for assisting young and disadvantaged community members

Where do you currently live and where do you worship?

I live in Brisbane's west, and I worship with community members at The Parishes of Yeronga, Ipswich and Raceview.

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

I was born into the Anglican family. My mother was a lay leader in my village of Biong in Bor, South Sudan. Every weekend people would come to our home and preach and talk about the Bible. Mothers gathered on Tuesday's nights in my home or in the local church to pray. Both my parents died in the Second Civil War. I was six years old when my mum died and in those six years, she raised my four sisters and me emphasising the important of clothing ourselves daily with compassion, care, humility and hope.

What do your roles involve?

I am a believer and go to church and help out when I can. Currently, the main way I serve the Church is through my role as CEO of Act of Peace, which requires a lot of travelling and engagement with Churches around the country. Ashol, my wife, is part of the Yeronga Parish community because she is an Arabic scholar and prefers to worship in Arabic. She has served as a Sunday School teacher and

preacher in Egypt and Sudan. We met while worshipping at St Luke's, Toowoomba in 2006 and our story grew from the church and beyond.

What has been one of the highlights or best memories of your time as an Anglican?

My best memories are when I was a kid. I grew up in Sunday School, where we did a lot of dancing and singing. My childhood memories celebrating Christmas with marches, dancing, eating sweets and sleeping overnight in the church are precious.

What projects or activities are you currently working on?

Act for Peace is the international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia, which the Anglican Church is a member of. Act for Peace partners with local organisations on the ground assisting people displaced by conflicts, wars and disasters. Our primary project at the moment is raising funds through the Christmas Bowl, which has been going for 75 years. I recently met with Archbishop Jeremy Greaves, and he remembered as a little child contributing to the Christmas Bowl in his church. It was wonderful meeting him in St Martin's House to chat about being an Anglican and about Act for Peace and the Christmas Bowl.

This year's Christmas Bowl funds will assist displaced people and refugees who have fled Gaza and Syria to Jordan and people displaced by earthquakes and flooding in Indonesia and by the drought in Zimbabwe. The money helps to provide electricity, food, water, sanitation and health clinics for families. These people are real people with aspirations, dreams and hopes that can be fulfilled.

The money also helps people rebuild their lives with education and training, so they can start their own businesses, especially food businesses and tailoring. This particularly helps women who can work on their businesses from home as they care for their children.

When and how did Christmas Bowl start?

The first Christmas Bowl appeared on the dinner table of an Australian Christian family in 1949. Millions of refugees were suffering after World War II in Europe. As The Rev'd Frank Byatt looked at his sumptuous Christmas dinner, the contrast between the abundance he saw and the needs of these refugees seemed stark to him. As a Christian, he felt that he needed to respond.

So, he called on his congregation to "get a bowl to put on your Christmas dinner table as a Bowl of Remembrance and ask if you can get everybody around the table to make a generous gift so that you can share your good dinner with hungry children in other lands."

That first Christmas Bowl appeal raised £1,808 for refugees. This was a large amount for a congregation at the time. Frank's idea grew, eventually becoming the Christmas Bowl appeal facilitated by Act for Peace today.

What do you like doing most about working for Act for Peace?

Because of my lived experience as a former refugee and being born and raised in a conflict zone, I understand their issues and walk in their shoes. This is what drives my passion for Act for Peace. In my Act for Peace role, every day I strive to help and bring compassion and hope to those who need it.

I was born during a war. It was “normal” for bombs to drop around us and for gunfire to happen around us daily, even as we played. I know what it’s like to live in fear every day. As someone who has experienced being displaced for 10 years, including living seven years in a Ugandan refugee camp, I understand how important hope and a safe place is.

Can you tell us a little about your Christian faith journey?

My mum played a critical role in influencing our faith as a family — she showed my dad and us kids what being faithful to God means. I held onto my Bible as I walked to Uganda from South Sudan as a young child. For most of the time I was in the Ugandan refugee camp, I was the only person who spoke Dinka, so reading my Dinka Bible daily kept me connected to both my language and to God.

How does your Christian faith inspire you and shape your outlook?

Jesus teaches us the value of hope and care. Hope is an anchor that has brought me to where I am today. Hope tells us that better days are to come. By relying on the mercy of those who care and by having hope in God, we feel safe and that we belong.

What are the primary strengths of the Church and what is the best way to make the most of these for the benefit of our communities?

I think that the Church is the strongest when different denominations work together and stand in solidarity through humanity, such as through the National Council of Churches in Australia. Jesus calls us to be part of one global Church and to act with compassion and share the love and care that Jesus modelled for us. This is our greatest strength — what Jesus calls us to and what he has modelled for us.

What is your favourite Bible scripture and why?

[Isaiah 40.31](#): “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”

This verse carried me through a two-month journey from my village to the Uganda border when I was eight years old. I walked with thousands of other children and their families to the border to meet United Nations refugee agency lorries so we could be transported to a refugee camp. We mostly walked at night because we had no shoes, and it was common for the temperature to reach 50 degrees. Even though we were totally exhausted and the skin was coming off our feet, we had to walk so we didn’t get left behind. There was a lot of wild animals, including hyena and lions. But this threat was secondary — the primary threats were not having a safe place, enough food and water, diseases like malaria and worrying about soldiers.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

As I grew up, I was inspired by our Bishop Nathaniel Garang Anyieth. He is retired now. He visited all of the camps for refugees and internally displaced people, bringing spiritual healing and hope. I met him in 1994 as a member of the Sunday School choir in a camp for displaced people in South Sudan. I could tell he was spiritual. He spoke about the power of hope and forgiveness.

Why is it important for Christians to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards Reconciliation?

As an African Australian and a leader, I think it is important for people from the multicultural communities, including the African diaspora, to work towards Reconciliation. As I share my story and journey of healing and hope, I think our healing and belonging will be completed once First Nations peoples are also healed and feel as though they belong through truth-telling and Reconciliation. This year's Christmas Bowl resource includes an Acknowledgement of Country written by Prof Dr Anne Pattel-Gray, who is well known in our Diocese. She writes: "Imaging an Australia that embraces its First Nations peoples and values them, as they are the oldest living culture in the world." I think we all have much to learn from elders and experts like Aunty Anne.

What is the kindest gesture you have ever received?

After I arrived in Australia one of my high school teachers, Dr Annette Rutledge, met with me at 7 o'clock every weekday morning before school started to help me with my English. I am still in touch with her. My kids have met her. *The Courier Mail* interviewed her in 2019 after I became the first immigrant or refugee to be named a Queensland Local Hero.

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

As a curious and bold little boy, my father told me that I had to leave South Sudan for Uganda to be safe. He told me that I had to find a way to "turn the lemon into lemonade". That was the last time I saw him — he died as result of the war soon after I reached Uganda.

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

I play soccer, I run and I listen to Gospel music a lot on Sundays. I love my children and love cheering my kids from the sidelines as they run and play sports on the weekend.

If you could have a billboard with any text on it, what would it say and why?

"Our next destination in life is not determined by the past steps, but by the steps we take today with hope, courage, resilience and determination." Life will always throw things our way — challenges and temptations — and we need to turn these into our strengths.

What book have you given away most as a gift and why?

Bringing Out the Best in People: How to Apply the Astonishing Power of Positive Reinforcement by Aubrey C Daniels. This book shows how important it is for people to have positivity in everything they do so they can overcome challenges. We also need to bring positivity into others' lives — this is partly what being in solidarity with people is about.

When do you do your best thinking?

When I'm reading the Bible and inspirational books.

What's your best childhood memory?

As well as the Church memories, I remember going fishing using a spear in the creek near the house. I hope to visit there again.

What is your karaoke go-to song?

I don't sing karaoke, but I do like singing Tim McGraw's "Be humble and kind" during the afternoon, especially late hours around 6pm.

What is your earliest memory?

Running around my village at around the age of two years. I was so active, my mum had to put a loud bell on my ankle, so she always knew where I was. This was important because it was easy to get lost in the maize fields and the bush. Villagers could always find me easily if needed.

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

I listen to slow, calm music.

What makes you nostalgic and why?

When I was a little boy, my dad would always check my tummy to see if I had eaten enough. If I wanted more food, I would suck my tummy in. Sometimes, he knew I was pretending — it was a game between us, and how we connected. So, when I see young boys with their dads, I think about these moments with my dad.

What is your secret skill?

I have the ability to listen and reflect. My dad was a very tall, cool and collected man — he modelled being calm and never being upset about things you do not have control over.

What day would you like to re-live and why?

The day our first son, Deng, was born. The day I became a father!

If you could only eat one thing for the rest of your life, what would that be?

In the Ugandan refugee camp, we only had one meal a day — maize was given to us in our ration packs, along with dry beans, salt and oil. Let's just say, I am reluctant to eat beans now.

If I could only eat one thing for the rest of my days, I would eat porridge and drink milk. I was brought up drinking fresh milk from our cows, which are very important in my culture.

What item should you throw out, but can't bear to part with?

I came to Australia with very little. An item I can't throw away is my first high school sport award trophy.

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

"When God calls me to leave this world, what impact will I have made?" This is the question I ask myself every day. So let's us share the joy of Christmas with others and take that action through the Christmas Bowl.

Editor's note: Priests and parish councils can register their parish's participation in the Christmas Bowl appeal and access resources and order (optional) envelopes by registering on the [Act for Peace website](#). Individual community members may donate to the Christmas Bowl appeal via the [Act for Peace website](#).

Reflections • Sunday 24 November 2024 • By Margaret Carr

Charleville or bust — Waterloo Wanderers travel 900km to see an old friend



"Waterloo Wanderers" (Left to Right) Annmaree Collins, Kay Blinco, Marg Carr, Marilyn Hockaday and Russell Hockaday (Row 1); Alison Condon, Anne Luthy, Ian Carr, Tony Collins, Susie Ryan and The Rev'd Jim Cosgrove (Row 2); and, Jim Condon, Chris Ryan, Brian Blinco and Jim Luthy (Row 3) in Charleville in 2024

"Sure, pop in anytime!" smiled The Rev'd Jim Cosgrove as he departed westward to Charleville. The Rev'd Jim Cosgrove is a retired Lt Colonel Australian Army chaplain. He was also a member of The Anglican Parish of Waterloo Bay (APWB) for 15 years. Arriving in Birkdale in 2009 with Jeanette, his wife, he was working full time as an Army chaplain. In 2011, he was posted to Afghanistan. Following a final four-year posting to Sydney, they returned to the parish in 2017.

Jim and Jeanette were much loved at APWB and while Jim assisted in parish ministry, they were both members of a Bible study group and of the Tuesday Mainly Music team for five years. Tragically, Jeanette suddenly passed away in 2022 and is dearly missed and loved by all. Fr Jim continued to minister in the parish until 2023 when he decided to heed God's call to assist parishes who had no

clergy and, following consultation with Bishop Cam Venables, he accepted the opportunity to minister at Charleville, Augathella, Cunnamulla, Wyandra and Morven churches in the Maranoa Region. This is typical of Fr Jim — kind, generous and keen to assist when needed. He resides mainly in his caravan in front of the open carport near the rectory.

Being sincerely loved and missed by many, 14 parishioners from Anglican Parish of Waterloo Bay — nicknamed “The Waterloo Wanderers” — headed to Charleville to catch up with their dear friend, The Rev’d Jim, in his new environment. We travelled more than 900km in cars and vans over two days, staying overnight in caravan parks and cabins along the way.

Accommodation for the visitors in the spacious Rectory grounds at Charleville included vans, camper trailers and rectory bedrooms. The rectory, which was once a grand building, needed some TLC, so some cleaning was undertaken to make it more serviceable. The Wanderers also tidied up the gardens and pathways.

A primary focus for our group was assisting Fr Jim with his parish ministry that included his regular Eucharist and singalong at the Waroona Multipurpose Centre, a 45-bed residential aged care home. It was heartening to see him conducting the service, including delivering a beautiful message that “God Loves You” and playing his guitar. The home’s lifestyle coordinator, Eula, devotedly cares for the residents and knows much about the 10 regulars. Each resident was given a felt heart or cross, which was handmade by the group as part of a project initiated by Susie Ryan. Following the service, Fr Jim visited those who could not join us. The morning finished with a fully catered morning tea and an enthusiastic singalong.

Eager to help in any way, the following day the Wanderers enjoyed gardening at Charleville’s Healthy Ageing centre and cooked a barbeque lunch for all the locals who frequent this vibrant community centre. Being a part of this practical interaction between the Church and wider local community showed us that The Rev’d Jim is making a real impact in Charleville.

A special bonus during the visit was accomplished Waterloo Wanderer chef, Jim Luthy, preparing a celebratory dinner for fellow Wanderers Brian and Kay Blinco who were marking “milestone” birthdays. To dine in that imposing dining room in the old rectory was a treat and it held all 15 people with room to spare.

Visiting the tourist and memorial places. Fr Jim accompanied us to the Charleville Cosmos Centre and on a tour of the historical and very elegant Hotel Coronas. We also visited The Secret World War II Army base and the Angellala Bridge Explosion memorial site.

A tour of the second biggest date farm in Australia, owned by the Charleville Lutheran minister, was fascinating. It was equally interesting to find out that the next day, he would be conducting his service at All Saints’ while Fr Jim was at Augathella.

Sunday was our final day, and we travelled to Augathella for a service where we met the small-in-number, but huge-in-enthusiasm, parishioners. The opportunity to attend this service certainly swelled the numbers significantly and added to the joyous singing during the service. A generous country morning tea was supplemented by APWB.

As they say, all good things must come to an end, so after farewells, we headed back to base in time for [Birkdale’s Tuesday Mainly Music](#).

A lasting legacy of the visit is the newly renovated/painted sign, "THE RECTORY", that hangs proudly from the lintel over the rectory's front steps. This project was undertaken by Russell Hockaday who sanded and repainted it. Russell is a man of his word — he said he would repaint the rectory sign in a day, and he did! The painting of the building might just have to wait a little longer.

Local • Thursday 14 November 2024 • By Margaret Humphries

Grant opportunities for youth and children's ministry



Margaret Humphries from GFS — An Anglican Ministry, pictured at St Francis College in November 2024, is inviting parishes, groups and schools to apply for grants

One of the focus areas of GFS — An Anglican Ministry (formally Girls Friendly Society) is to provide financial grants to Anglican Church Southern Queensland parishes, groups and schools for their current (or forthcoming) youth and children's ministry.

There are two grants available.

One grant is for (up to) \$500 to cover resources for parishes, groups and school chaplains and religious education (RE) teachers to use in services, classes and other faith-based children's or youth activities.

The other grant is for (up to) \$1,500 to cover a one-off (special) parish youth or children's ministry activity, such as a camp, programme or concert.

Both grants must be used for activities for children under 18 years. Guidelines and conditions apply.

Resource grants for youth and children's activities

The (up to) \$500 grant is to help pay for resources for parishes, groups and school chaplains and religious education (RE) teachers to use in services, classes and other faith-based children's or youth activities.

Applicable resources may include stationery items; craft and cooking supplies; card and board games; Lego; musical instruments; books; and, musical/drama costumes.

Some examples of how parishes have used this (up to) \$500 resource grant include:

- One regional parish has used the grant to purchase items for waterplay; cooking pancakes for Shrove Tuesday; treasure hunts; "fidget" toys; Christmas drama costumes; kite making; "Building faith brick by brick" Lego activities; and, book prizes.
- One hinterland parish has put the funds towards craft-related items, games and afternoon tea supplies for a Bible activity.
- A metropolitan Brisbane parish has used the grant for "story boxes" (to explore Bible stories); jig-saw puzzles; dress-ups; craft items (for making Christmas tree decorations); and, books.

Parishes, groups and school chaplains / RE teachers may apply annually for the (up to) \$500 grant. Applications are due by 30 November annually.

One-off (special) parish youth or children's ministry activity

The (up to) \$1,500 grants cover a one-off (special) parish youth or children's ministry activity, such as a camp, programme or Christmas carols concert.

Parishes may apply annually for this grant at any time of the year, submitting the application at least three months in advance of the special ministry activity taking place.

Some examples of how parishes have used this (up to) \$1,500 activity grant include:

- One metropolitan Brisbane parish has used the grant for a Messy Advent programme.
- A regional parish uses the grant for annual camps.
- Another regional parish puts the grant towards a "Christmas Carols on the Lawn" community event annually.

Nearly all of the grant applications — for both grants — in recent years have been submitted by Southern and Northern Region people within our Diocese.

So, I encourage people in our Western Region to also apply for these grants.

Editor's note: For more information, including sourcing grant application forms, guidelines and conditions, please contact GFS — An Anglican Ministry's office administrator Margaret Humphries via gfsbrisbane@hotmail.com.

Light another candle to remember (forgotten) Sudan this Advent



"While the Australian Government seems especially focussed on the Pacific, our elected leaders need to understand that they also represent thousands of Australian Sudanese constituents," says The Rev'd Rebecca

Please be aware that this reflection contains graphic and distressing content.

For 19 months a civil war has been happening in Sudan, with more than 24,000 civilians killed, including people known to me and my parishioners.

Many aid workers and advocates have been critical of the United Nations and how slow it has been to respond.

Aid workers say this war has created the world's worst displacement crisis, with many thousands at risk of famine.

The situation in Sudan has worsened considerably this month, yet Sudan remains largely forgotten.

Other than the travel warning on the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website](#), at the time of writing the Australian Government is being silent — this makes me feel frustrated, worthless and heartbroken and as though Sudanese people don't matter.

While the Australian Government seems especially focussed on the Pacific, our elected leaders need to understand that they also represent thousands of Australian Sudanese constituents, and our people are being butchered.

Civilians are being targeted by armed men who enter villages and towns and kill.

Rape is being “weaponised” to exert power and control, to harm and humiliate women and to emasculate men.

Recently a father died by suicide after he was forced to watch his teenage daughters raped and beaten by armed men in his home.

Recently several women from the one family were raped — the women then killed themselves.

I have read online and heard stories that mothers are begging the armed men to rape them rather than their daughters.

Boys are also being targeted. Recently a large group of boys was butchered.

What I share here are just a few stories.

Colonialism planted the seed for all this to happen in Sudan.

It seems to me that the darker the skin of people being harmed, the less many light-skinned people care.

While some parts of the mainstream media make the war about a conflict of people of different faiths, the current problems are rooted in [British colonialism](#).

As I have written before, despite what people may read or hear in the media, the war in Sudan is not about religion. In 2021 when my Anglican priest father was murdered — at a time when the unrest, that led to the current war, started — Muslims and Christians gathered for his funeral. My priest father was beloved by the whole community.

What is happening in Sudan is a humanitarian crisis rooted in colonialism — and I ask all *anglican focus* readers to help in some way.

Justice Unit note: Five things *anglican focus* readers can do to help:

1. **Remember Sudanese people every week in your Sunday service intercessions.**
2. **Attend a Christmas dinner on Saturday 7 December 2024 between 6pm and 8pm in the Christ Church, Yeronga hall. Entry is via raffle ticket purchase, with all funds going to people in Sudan.**
3. **If possible, please take up a collection in your parish/ministry or donate personally for the thousands displaced in Sudan by contacting the treasurer for The Parish of Yeronga, James Stephen via treasurer@anglicanchurchsq.org.au.**
4. **Learn about the history of Sudan from trusted sources, such as [Amnesty International](#), or leaders like The Rev’d Rebecca.**
5. **Contact your [Federal Members of Parliament](#) calling for the Australian Government to scale up humanitarian assistance.**

Editor’s note: If you are in immediate danger, phone Triple Zero (000) or go to the emergency department at [your local hospital](#).

If you have recently experienced sexual assault, rape or sexual violence, get yourself to a safe place as soon as possible and:

- phone the police and/or ambulance on Triple Zero (000)
- go to the emergency department at [your local hospital](#)
- phone the [Sexual Assault Helpline](#) on 1800 010 120 (7.30am to 11.30pm, 7 days a week).

Please visit the [Queensland Government website](#) for more information.

Resources & Research • Sunday 24 November 2024 • By The Rev'd Canon Stephen Daughtry

Be careful what you wish for



"Leaping" by Vanessa Daughtry (from the Anglican Board of Mission devotional, *Caravan: Incarnational Stories set in an Australian Landscape*)

Luke [1.1-25](#) and [39-80](#)

Mary

I didn't know where else to go. After the "visit", I couldn't stay at home. The angel had told me Elizabeth was pregnant, and I thought that — if it was true — then maybe I was as well. The whole family had felt sorry for Elizabeth. She's lovely. But we all knew she couldn't have children.

I took a backpack, and I caught the bus. I told mum I was going, and asked her to tell dad. I wrote to Joseph, explaining as little as I could. The bus dropped me in front of Zec's church, but they told me he wasn't there, so I walked out from the town. The people didn't know me, and they probably assumed I was on a working visa and looking for jobs. When I got to their gate I started to shake. At first, I thought it was exhaustion. 25 kilometres with a backpack is hard work. It wasn't fatigue. It was fear. It was all the fear I'd been carrying in my body being shaken out into the dust. The moment I stepped through the gate it felt as if I had come home, I had stepped into a zone of welcome. A flock of cockatoos whirled raucously above me as I started up the driveway. One of them peeled off and landed in the dust beside me. He hopped from tree to shrub, all the way to the house, keeping his eye

on me. The air was alive with sound and the bush shone in the afternoon sun. I had read Elizabeth's books when I was a child, and I saw that this was where they had been born.

I knocked on their door and started to wonder if the whole trip had been a mistake. Maybe I'd been fantasising? When it opened, I didn't have time to speak before Elizabeth had wrapped me in a hug. I could feel her "bump" and I could feel something moving inside it, pressing against me. It was exciting and terrifying. Her miracle was true. So, maybe, was mine.

Our first meal together was full of tears and laughter. It seems to have set the tone for the whole visit. They were the first people I'd told my story to. I knew they loved God, and stories, and mystery, but I wasn't certain that even they could accept what I had seen and heard. When I explained about the angel, they just looked at one another and laughed/cried some more. Zec went and got a little illustrated book he'd made. I could tell it was his because it was so simple compared to Elizabeth's work. As I turned the pages and read his words I wept so much that they had to take it away from me before I ruined it. It's a very good feeling to know that you're not mad. Or that, if you are, you're not mad and alone.

"Same angel," I said. Zec hugged me. Not mad, and not alone.

Since then, I've been singing. Zec has an old guitar, so I tuned it up and started writing songs. It's what I do when I have time, and I have time. Now. I sing for my son, who I have come to believe in. He is growing within me. I know that now. Elizabeth calms me by just being. She faces her fear down and teaches me to trust the One. Some mornings, I sit with Zec and we pray the light in, in silence. Most days the cockatoo is there. Watching. He is one of us. I try my songs out on him. If he doesn't like a line, he squawks!

I have written a song for myself and my son — and for Joseph, if he will still love us. I wrote to him yesterday and told him the whole story. I told him I'd be home soon. That he need not reply. That I would understand if he could not accept that these things had happened and that everything had changed. I told him that I loved him, but that I would not blame him, if ... he no longer wanted me or the baby.

So, I sing my song. It is a song of hope and defiance and belief. It is for all the people, especially those who, like me, feel as if we must matter. As if we are seen and heard.

*"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
who has looked with grace on my weakness.
Surely, all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is that name.
Mercy is for those who embrace God
from generation to generation.
The strength of God's arm
has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
The powerful are brought down from their thrones,
and the lowly are lifted;
the hungry are filled with good things,
and the rich sent away empty.*

*God has rescued we servant people,
in remembrance of promised mercy,
according to the promise made to our ancestors,
to the Elders and their descendants for ever."*

Our country is occupied and passive. Evil walks among us. So many people have chosen to treat darkness as the natural state of things. If we are quiet, we are allowed to live quietly. Usually. But there is no peace. Justice is unknown.

John and Jesus have names. Elizabeth and I carry within us both light and hope. She is too old, and I am too young, but we have been chosen to believe. Our boys will change this world in ways we cannot understand but dare to dream of. My song will be their lullaby.

I sing it to John as he is born. He comes into the world fiercely and screaming. It is time for me to go home.

Elizabeth

You cannot be prepared to meet flesh of your own flesh. I hold him against me and breathe him in. He suckles at my breast, snuffling and burping and smiling and crying. Zec has been told he will be a great prophet. He's certainly loud enough. But for now, he is mine. Mine and Zec's. He rests in his father's arms, the sight breaking my heart with roaring love, as the phone calls come in, asking what his name is. "John? No-one in the family is called John." Indeed, but that is his name. No, you can't talk to Zec, he can't speak.

In the end, I use my phone to video Zec writing on a large piece of cardboard, "His name is John". I send it to all of them.

Zec comes up behind me and puts his arms around me and the boy. He nestles his head into my neck and whispers, "His name is John." John chooses that moment to vomit all over us.

We are indescribably happy.

Zechariah

My voice is lazy from lack of use. I have no real desire to train it up again. I think that my days of speaking to the crowd are behind me. I love listening to Elizabeth and to the Lord. I hold my son in my arms, the son we never expected and yet have spent our entire lives preparing for, as the dawn reveals the mist rising from the land. I hold him as the first rays stream through the gums, illuminating negative space, coating the world in gold. I let him hold my finger in his, as God begins again to sing the world into being. Elizabeth sleeps. John sleeps. I whisper my prayer to my son, I whisper it into the morning, knowing that it will be heard. Knowing that it, too, is a gift.

*"Blessed be the Lord God,
for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them.
He has raised up a mighty saviour for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.*

*Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our ancestors,
to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.
By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."*

John wakes, and his eyes reflect the sun. The cockatoo calls.

Prayer

You are the God of all broken land,
God of healing.
You are the God of all broken people,
God of relationship.
You are the God of all broken hearts,
God of love.
You are the God of all broken dreams,
God of refreshment.
You are the God of all broken promises,
God of integrity.
You are the God of all broken sleep,
God of the bright morning.
May we always welcome
prophets and angels and mystics and frightened kids.
Silence us
that we might be forced to listen to you in all things.
Still us
that we might perceive you in all things.
Speak to us through sky and scrub,
bird-song and babies.
May it be as it is in heaven.

Amen

Editor's note: This is a brief excerpt from a longer chapter, titled "Be careful what you wish for", in *Caravan: Incarnational Stories Set in an Australian Landscape*. This eight-chapter devotional is ideal for Advent to Epiphany and makes a great Christmas gift. Order yours [online](#) for \$12 a copy, with \$12 postage, regardless of whether you buy one copy or 100. Professionally recorded audiobook versions of all the stories can be heard online at the [Anglican Board of Mission's YouTube](#) channel.

“Christmas Bowl was always prominent in church throughout Advent when I was growing up”: Archbishop Jeremy Greaves



Jane and her miracle child — after losing her three children in Cyclone Idai in 2019, she gave birth to her son (Image by Tobin Jones / Act for Peace)

Church communities have been uniting through the annual Christmas Bowl appeal for 75 years, giving hope to families who are displaced.

In 1949 Christmas Bowl appeal was born when The Rev'd Frank Byatt laid a bowl of remembrance on the Christmas dinner table asking his family to “share your good dinner with hungry children in other lands”.

The Christmas Bowl legacy runs deep — in families, across generations, cultures, denominations and nations — countless lives have been changed and bridges of solidarity built.

The Most Rev'd Jeremy Greaves recalls first learning about the benefits of the Christmas Bowl as a child.

“I was quite young when I was first aware of Christmas Bowl — probably 10 or 12,” Archbishop Jeremy said.

“Christmas Bowl was always prominent in church throughout Advent when I was growing up, with posters and fliers and also with a large bowl that was very visible in the sanctuary.

“Our family used to gather a small collection for Christmas Bowl as part of our Advent devotions.

“We would always have an Advent wreath on the dining room table and would take turns lighting the candles each week — the Christmas Bowl money was part of this.

“I remember one year when the Christmas Bowl promoted a project that traded weapons for farming implements, which at the time struck me as a really good thing to support.”

Christmas Bowl is the annual Advent appeal of Act for Peace, the international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia, which the Anglican Church is a member of.

Queensland residents, Clive and Gail Ayre, have been supporting the Christmas Bowl for decades.

Clive started as a young Methodist minister in 1961 and began promoting the Christmas Bowl in his local community when he was 21.

Clive and Gail believe the appeal plays an important role in building bridges.

“It means the opportunity to extend not only a helping hand, but a hand of friendship,” Clive said.

“It’s about breaking down walls...and building bridges of understanding between people, between ethnic groups, between faiths.

“I think that the world would be a much better place if we could find areas of agreement or commonality rather than looking for differences.

“[Christmas Bowl] is an important part of this whole effort to care, to reach out, to bring people together and to make sure that people don’t suffer unnecessarily.”

Across oceans, families like Clive and Gail’s have been providing much-needed support for families displaced by conflict and disaster.

Families like Jane’s* in Zimbabwe.

When Cyclone Idai hit in 2019, Jane lost everything.

“The cyclone started around 8pm when I was asleep with the children in the house,” Jane said.

“I woke up to find the house shaking and about to collapse. I was taken up with the water. I fractured my skull and hurt my leg.”

Jane lost her three children in the cyclone.

She then spent two years living in a tent after the disaster and was one of 700 displaced families who required relocation.

After two years sheltering in a tent, Jane now has a house.

After the death of her three children in the cyclone, Jane gave birth to her son.

Thanks to Christmas Bowl supporters, Act for Peace's partner the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) improves services like electricity, water, schools, health clinics and sanitation and hygiene for relocated families.

The Zimbabwe Council of Churches works in Jane's community to improve their wellbeing, safety and dignity, and have been able to install a piped water scheme.

Before the scheme, women like Jane had to walk for kilometres daily, sometimes in the dark, which made it even harder for them to take care of their families.

Jane can now access water near her home and is an active member of her community, helping displaced families to feel safe.

Please join in praying and acting for peace as Act for Peace celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Christmas Bowl.

Editor's note: Priests and parish councils can register their parish's participation in the Christmas Bowl appeal and access resources and order (optional) envelopes by registering on the [Act for Peace website](#). Individual community members may donate to the Christmas Bowl appeal via the [Act for Peace website](#).

Dates & Seasons • Sunday 24 November 2024 • By Rebecca McLean

Top 10 clergy wellbeing tips for the Advent and Christmas seasons



Priest for Holy Hermits Online The Rev'd Jamee Lee preparing for her digital community's Christmastide ministry in 2022

Christmas is fast approaching. It's a wonderful time of year. However, with all the preparation for special services, additional gatherings and wider community commitments, let alone the more

personal pressures of shopping, social functions and getting ready for Christmas with family and friends, the risk for clergy to burnout is higher in December.

In all the busyness, it can be easy for clergy to get out of beneficial habits, including healthy eating, exercising regularly, taking time out for self-care and skipping personal prayer times.

It's important for clergy to remember to take care of themselves, so that they can actually enjoy the festive season.

As a member of the Parishes and other Mission Agencies Commission (PMC) team, I see how dedicated clergy are and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge what you do and how you do it — with such care and compassion.

I know that all PMC team members are particularly thinking of clergy as Advent approaches.

So, here are my top 10 wellbeing tips for clergy in the Advent and Christmas seasons:

1. **Be mindful that you're mortal:** It's okay to say "no" to things or "I'll get back to you about that" (and then give the request some thought before responding) or "Yes, I can help with that — in February." It's also ok to ask for assistance. For the activities that only clergy can do, delegate some tasks within that activity to trusted people.
2. **Collaborate with other clergy:** For example, collaboration can be done by setting up a "Clergy Christmas Collaboration" WhatsApp group. Share resources (e.g. liturgies, social media graphics, YouTube videos, group studies, booklets, etc). Bounce ideas off each other.
3. **Find quiet time daily:** Diarise quiet time — setting aside at least 15 minutes of quiet time daily can make a big difference. Consider turning the phone off so you are not distracted by text messages, emails and calls. Read, listen to music, go for a walk, or just relax in the backyard.
4. **Do things you enjoy:** Make time for a hobby and the things that make you happy.
5. **Find time for exercise:** Regular exercise can be the first healthy habit to go when clergy are under the pump. The Queensland heat and humidity can be an additional contributing factor to this. Find ways to include exercise into your day. If you are in a Zoom call, turn your camera off (or leave it on) and jump on the treadmill or exercise bike. Put in ear buds and go for a walk during a scheduled call.
6. **Eat and drink healthily:** Tis' the season for overeating and drinking. Consciously go for healthier foods (e.g. when you bring a "plate" make it a healthy one — *be* that person that brings carrot and celery sticks with hummus and pesto to the party). Ahead of Advent starting, cook in larger batches and freeze meals so you have healthy lunches/dinners on hand. Drink lots of water.
7. **Get enough sleep:** Tis' also the season for getting less sleep. Quality of sleep is often improved if people are eating well, staying hydrated and exercising. Observe good "sleep hygiene" (e.g. read a hard copy book instead of your iPad or phone in the hour before bedtime). Get at least seven to eight hours sleep per night.
8. **Talk to someone:** If you're feeling stressed, talk to a friend, clergy/ministry peer, family member, or someone else you trust. Remember that you have access to Flourish, which offers clergy (and eligible others) up to six one-hour counselling sessions per year face to face, over the phone or via video (phone 1300 361 008).
9. **It's ok to let some things go:** While some routine tasks are important to maintain, it's healthy to give yourself permission to let go a little. So, if you vacuum fortnightly instead of weekly,

that's ok. It's ok to get (healthy) takeaway for dinner more often than usual to help carve out time (maybe walk to the healthy takeaway place to get in your daily exercise).

10. **Give thanks to God:** [1 Thessalonians 5.16-18](#): "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Local • Friday 8 November 2024 • By Archbishop Jeremy Greaves KCSJ, Aunty Dr Rose Elu, The Rev'd Canon Bruce Boase, Bishop Cam Venables, Bishop John Roundhill, Bishop Sarah Plowman, Bishop Daniel Abot, The Very Rev'd Dr Peter Catt

Statement from Anglican Church Southern Queensland leaders in support of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry and the Path to Treaty Act



"We honour the courage, honesty and openness of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Queenslanders who have contributed to the Inquiry so far" say Archbishop Jeremy, Aunty Dr Rose, The Rev'd Canon Bruce, Bishop Cam, Bishop John, Bishop Sarah, Bishop Daniel and the Cathedral Dean

We first acknowledge the resilience and wisdom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly their willingness to engage so collaboratively and constructively in treaty and truth-telling processes.

We are deeply disappointed that the new Queensland Government has advised of its intentions to cease the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry and repeal the *Path to Treaty Act 2023*.

The [Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry](#) is independent of government and was established "to provide a public platform to listen and record stories, educate and build understanding about First Nations history and culture, and make recommendations for next steps."

We honour the courage, honesty and openness of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Queenslanders who have contributed to the Inquiry so far.

Independent inquiries are important and well-respected democratic processes.

The cessation of such an independent inquiry is unprecedented in Queensland.

The *Path to Treaty Act 2023* is historic, receiving bipartisan support when it was passed in May 2023.

Treaty and truth-telling are essential elements to ensuring healing and reconciliation and to effectively addressing the socio-economic targets in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

We all want to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples enjoying long and healthy lives, with their children born healthy and strong and thriving into adulthood. We simultaneously support homeownership for Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples.

We believe that all Queenslanders are benefitting from the Path to Treaty, including understanding our shared history through the Inquiry's story- and truth-telling processes.

Thus, we call upon Premier David Crisafulli and the new Queensland Government to recommence the Inquiry and continue its bipartisan support of the *Path to Treaty Act*.

The Most Reverend Jeremy Greaves KCSJ
Archbishop of Brisbane

The Right Reverend Cameron Venables
Bishop for the Western Region

The Right Reverend John Roundhill
Bishop for the Southern Region

The Right Reverend Sarah Plowman
Bishop for the Northern Region

The Right Reverend Daniel Deng Abot
Ethnic Congregations Specialist

Aunty Dr Rose Elu
Saibai Elder and 2021 Qld Senior Australian of the Year

The Reverend Canon Bruce Boase
Wakka Wakka man and St John's Anglican Cathedral Canon

The Very Reverend Dr Peter Catt
Anglican Dean of Brisbane

Statement in support of the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry — Queensland Muslims Inc.



"Today, I stand in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry chair, Joshua Creamer, and the Inquiry's members. This is, in part, because I have followed the healing that took place as a result of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which commenced very soon after the apartheid system was dismantled," says President of Queensland Muslims Inc, Habib Jamal

14 November 2024

Statement in support of the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry

I first acknowledge the bravery and frankness of all Queenslanders who have participated in the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry thus far — both First Nations peoples and non-Indigenous peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have suffered much as a result of colonialism, including from the State's racist legislation.

I was raised in South Africa during the apartheid era. So, I have witnessed firsthand the short- and long-term impacts of institutionalised racism, including severe inter-generational trauma.

In the 1980s while I was working as a high school accounting teacher, I was detained for blocking the military and police forces from entering my classroom — they sought to arrest students who had protested the government's racialised human rights abuses.

The students stood in solidarity with those suffering under the apartheid legislation. I, in turn, stood in solidarity with my young students.

Today, I stand in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry chair, Joshua Creamer, and the Inquiry's members.

This is, in part, because I have followed the healing that took place as a result of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which commenced very soon after the apartheid system was dismantled.

I serve on the Queensland Police Service's Police Multicultural Advisory Group. I note that the [Queensland Police Service's commissioner](#) spoke at the Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry in September.

In my Police Multicultural Advisory Group role, I have read in the *Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to family and domestic violence* report that "Queensland pioneered" a "regime of racial control that was then modelled by other Australian colonies" and that "there is also strong anecdotal evidence that it was used as a source of inspiration for South African apartheid legislation" (page 10).

I find this connection deeply disturbing.

South African apartheid ended in 1994. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings commenced soon after in 1996.

Thus, I believe that Queensland's Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry is long overdue, and that Queenslanders are mature enough for the Inquiry to continue.

Just as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission brought healing and reconciliation for South Africans, I have witnessed how our State's Truth-Telling and Healing Inquiry has started a new era of healing and reconciliation for Queenslanders.

It's one thing not to start a healing process — it's another thing altogether, a harmful thing indeed, to start such a process and then halt it.

The [Inquiry's scope](#) is "to provide a public platform to listen and record stories, educate and build understanding about First Nations history and culture, and make recommendations for next steps."

I am especially concerned about the Elders who grew up under Queensland's so-called "protection Acts" — time will soon run out for them to formally document their experiences and stories.

During the Inquiry's September hearings, Aunty Florence Watson OAM [shared](#) that her mother, who was four years old at the time, was shot in the hip during a massacre. Her mother was then forced to walk in chains for days from Maytown to Cooktown before being forced to a mission.

Aunty Florence told the Inquiry that she was also taken from her family as a young teenager.

These stories must be heard and documented before it's too late.

I urge the Queensland Government to reconsider its decision and allow the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry to recommence hearings immediately.

I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication and work of Inquiry chair Joshua Creamer and the Inquiry members, and I call upon Premier David Crisafulli and the Minister for Women and Women's Economic Security, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Multiculturalism, Fiona Simpson, to meet with the Inquiry team as a matter of urgency to discuss a meaningful way forward.

Yours sincerely,
Habib Jamal

President
Queensland Muslim Inc.

News • Thursday 14 November 2024 • By Archbishop Jeremy Greaves KCSJ

Joint Faith Leaders' Statement: Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry



"We believe that Queensland remains ready to hear the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and that in the sharing of their stories that a more compassionate and resilient Queensland will emerge," say 13 senior Queensland faith leaders

We, the undersigned representatives of various Churches and Muslim communities across Queensland, express our profound concern about the Queensland Government's intention to abolish the recently established Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry.

This independent inquiry is a vital public platform for listening to and recording stories; collating evidence to shine a light on our past; educating and fostering understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories; and, making informed recommendations.

Before abolishing this independent Inquiry, we believe the new State Government needs to first clarify to all Queenslanders:

- What it will implement in its place to achieve the above important outcomes within the same timelines, noting the advanced age and physical frailty of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inquiry contributors?
- How all Queenslanders will be able to heal and move forward together — with dignity and respect — and understand our shared history in all its challenges and richness?

As people of a faith that is grounded in a story, we believe that an understanding of Queensland's shared story is essential for us to be a cohesive, respectful, and inclusive State.

Truth-telling and listening are at the heart of a healed, reconciled community.

In the midst of the tragic impacts of displacement, dispossession, the forcible removal of children and policies of assimilation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, there are also stories of appreciation, reconciliation and triumph in adversity. All these stories need to continue to be heard.

We honour both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and non-Indigenous Queenslanders who have bravely and sincerely shared their experiences in the Inquiry so far.

We support *both* the government's announcement that it will address education and home ownership, as well as the work of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry — these can easily happen side by side. Listening to the truth in a trauma-informed and culturally appropriate way as a path to a healthier and more cohesive Queensland *and* delivering practical solutions in other critical areas are not mutually exclusive.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures have endured much, and many faith-based organisations are historically complicit in this suffering, including in the way Churches have collaborated with the State. In signing this statement, we especially advocate for the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queensland elders to be meaningfully heard, and for their stories to be recorded and recognised.

We believe that Queensland remains ready to hear the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and that in the sharing of their stories that a more compassionate and resilient Queensland will emerge.

The path to reconciliation is long, requiring sustained effort and commitment from all sectors of society, including the government.

We stand ready to assist the government in any way we can to keep on the path to reconciliation.

Together, we can work towards a future where the truth is heard and acknowledged, and a path to justice and reconciliation is proudly paved for all Queenslanders.

Anglican Church Southern Queensland

Archbishop Jeremy Greaves

Bishop Cameron Venables

Anglican Diocese of North Queensland

Bishop Keith Joseph

Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane

Archbishop Mark Coleridge,
Bishop Tim Norton

Catholic Diocese of Cairns

Bishop Jo Caddy AM

Catholic Diocese of Townsville

Bishop Tim Harris

Council of Imams Queensland

Imam Akram Baksh

Queensland Muslim Inc

Habib Jamal

Lutheran District of Queensland

Bishop Mark Vainikka

Salvation Army, Queensland Division

Major Mark Everitt

Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod

The Rev'd Bruce Moore, Moderator

Greek Orthodox Diocese of Brisbane

Bishop Bartholomew of Brisbane

Anglicare welcomes new Chief Operating Officer for Aged & Community Services



Kane Singh is the new Chief Operating Officer for Aged & Community Services at Anglicare Southern Queensland

Anglicare Southern Queensland is pleased to announce the appointment of Kane Singh as Chief Operating Officer for Aged & Community Services.

With extensive experience in leadership and operational management, Kane will play a pivotal role in guiding Anglicare through the significant changes brought about by the new *Aged Care Act* and Support at Home reforms, set to take effect on 1 July 2025.

Anglicare Southern Queensland's Chief Executive Officer Sue Cooke said she looks forward to Kane joining the executive leadership team.

"I am very pleased to welcome Kane Singh as our Chief Operating Officer for Aged & Community Services," Ms Cooke said.

"Kane, a registered nurse, brings with him over 15 years' experience within the aged care sector and holds a Postgraduate in Management and a Master's in Business Administration.

"Kane comes to us from Carinity, where he was the Executive Manager of Aged Care and has extensive experience in senior leadership roles managing services across the state.

"He is passionate about quality care and service to elderly Australians and strongly advocates for good governance at every level focusing on the customer voice, people's growth and strategies to achieve better outcomes."

Mr Singh joined Anglicare a couple of months ago and has been impressed by the great work the organisation does in supporting those most vulnerable in Queensland.

“Each year Anglicare Southern Queensland supports more than 35,000 older Queenslanders and we have a strong workforce of more than 2,600 dedicated employees across our ACS portfolio who serve more than 6,000 Queenslanders daily,” Mr Singh said.

“I am responsible for implementing the strategy set by the Anglicare Southern Queensland board, for aligning our organisation with the future of the aged care reforms and how we can continue to improve our service delivery to meet the needs of our current and future clients.

“We are on the cusp of the next chapter with the incoming *Aged Care Act* and the Support at Home and Strengthened Quality Standards. I believe that strong leadership in this environment is pivotal for success.

“Adaptability is key, and technological innovations will play a key role in the sector’s renewal.”

Mr Singh said he is deeply humbled by the work Anglicare does and attributed the success of the organisation to the caring staff who go above and beyond to support those in need.

“At Anglicare, we serve the most vulnerable people in our society, and I believe the organisation’s values are part of our DNA,” he said.

“Every day, I see our staff and leaders fostering a loving environment where people are cared for, respected and valued.”

Flinders Farm wins national sustainability award



Flinders Year 9 Agricultural Science students learning in the award-winning Flinders Farm in 2024

Matthew Flinders Anglican College (MFAC) has been awarded *The Educator Australia's* 5-Star Sustainable Programs Award 2024 for being “a shining example of effective sustainability education in action”.

Flinders is one of just six schools in Queensland, and one of 25 schools across Australia, to receive a [5-Star Sustainable Programs Award 2024](#), and to be recognised among “forward thinking and innovative schools, leading a movement to conserve natural resources and create a greener future.”

“Year 9 Agricultural Science students Neve Fleming and Barkeley Gibbons said that the hands-on farming has taught them much about caring for the soil and sustainability.

“In Agricultural Science, I have learnt about keeping soil healthy through cover cropping, which enables the sequestration of carbon into the soil, improving both the quality of the Earth’s atmosphere and decreasing its carbon dioxide levels,” Neve said.

“It is important to learn about sustainability since our generation is more subject to climate crisis than any other has been before.

“Due to this, it is our responsibility to look after the planet and implement regenerative agriculture practices which will preserve our environment moving forward.”

“I found the Regenerative Agriculture topic in class really interesting because it is the process of crops and farms working with the surrounding environment that gets the best of both worlds, as it keeps the land and crops as healthy as possible at the same time,” Barkeley said.

“It is important for young people to learn about sustainability through a farm like the MFAC one because nothing beats hands-on educational activities made for us to see what we are being taught in class first-hand, and it also gets us outside and connected to our local environment.”

Flinders Principal Michelle Carroll said it was wonderful for the College to be recognised for being at the forefront of sustainability and environmental education programs.

“Flinders is delighted to be awarded *The Educator’s* 5-Star Sustainable Programs Award 2024 and to be recognised as one of the leaders in embedding sustainability into school culture,” Ms Carroll said.

“Our aim is to empower our students to understand their place in the world and build the skills, confidence and capacity to have a positive impact in their communities.

“Through our Flinders Farm and a range of curriculum and co-curricular programs, our students are learning how to act responsibly and respectfully to nurture and protect the planet for future generations.”

Flinders also won the award for its commitment to sustainability education across the campus, including the regeneration of its half-hectare Flinders Farm, which includes a 900m² citrus orchard, 500m² of vegetable beds, 14 beehives, chickens, a compost-making facility and a biofertiliser-making facility.

The College’s new podcast, [At the Bell Tower](#) features a conversation between Ms Carroll and Flinders Farm Manager Jeff MacLennan about the farm.

Under the expert guidance of Farmer Jeff, the Flinders Farm has become a vibrant, hands-on environmental education hub for the College’s more than 1,400 students, from Prep to Year 12, as well as the Flinders Early Learning Centre community.

The College is also committed to sustainability as a key part of campus operations and development, such as through the Flinders Masterplan suite of new facilities and has one of the largest school solar installations across Australia.

At Flinders, students explore environmental sustainability, recycling, biodiversity, food sovereignty, composting and chemical-free agriculture through a range of innovative hands-on curriculum programs and co-curricular activities.

Along with the Flinders Farm and its fortnightly farmer’s market on campus, there are opportunities to learn and get involved through the College’s design thinking curriculum programs, the environment club, community service-learning events, such as local beach clean-ups, and cultural exchanges and conferences through the [Round Square](#) network.

Farm Manager Jeff MacLennan said that Flinders is meeting rigorous criteria and applying holistic principles in its farming endeavours.

“At Flinders we encourage our students to go one step further than sustainability and embrace a mindset of regeneration: the underlying question for students is, ‘What can you do that will improve things for those who come after you?’” Mr MacLennan said.

“Particularly in Agricultural Science, a charter for the Flinders Farm has been developed according to holistic thinking principles.

“In short, each major decision has to meet social, ecological and financial criteria before being implemented.

“Our Year 9 Agricultural Science program is a thrilling opportunity for more than 20 students to be involved in a working farm and explore regenerative agriculture through practical projects and innovative approaches.

“Students thrive in learning how to make compost and compost teas from waste collected on campus, develop biofertilisers using a commercial worm farm, make biochar from green waste and explore the use of animals to enhance soil carbon.

“The wonderful outcome is that our students really take ownership of how the Farm performs, which is key in engaging student interest and empowering future generations.”

Head of Curriculum at Flinders Bill Hooper said the farm’s growing strength and impact have enabled the College to introduce a new agri-business fusion course in 2025.

“Next year, an additional 20 students in Year 9 will have the opportunity to learn how to grow produce and then take it to ‘market’,” Mr Hooper said.

“Students will explore such steps as branding, identifying target audiences, marketing, goal setting and budgeting.

“We also have all 140 Year 7 students learning on the farm during their Biology strand of Science.”

Students enjoy the experience of learning on the farm in an old shed, which was refurbished in 2021.

The farm classroom has roller doors on either side that open to let the students experience the sights and smells of life on the farm.

Ms Carroll said that the College is also committed to sustainability as a key part of campus operations and development through the Flinders Masterplan.

“Our new state-of-the-art Infinity Centre, which opened in January 2024, was built with industry-leading sustainability features,” she said.

“Flinders has one of the largest school solar installations across Australia, with more than 1,784 solar panels installed.”

The Infinity Centre’s sustainability features include solar panels providing more than 146kW of power generation capacity, bringing the total capacity across the College campus to 642kW.

The College’s solar generation per day is the equivalent of powering 95 average family homes per day.