

“Don’t read the comments!”



In the Internet’s vast landscape, the comments sections of articles, blogs and social media posts often become battlegrounds for the unfiltered, the unkind, and sometimes the downright cruel. While online platforms hold the promise of connection and dialogue, it is all too easy to encounter words that tear down rather than build up, that bring further polarisation and that dehumanise and debase — all reflecting some of the very worst impulses in human nature. From the other side of a screen, and sometimes the other side of the world, people seem to feel free to hurl nastiness in a way that they would never do in real life and face to face.

As often as I repeat to myself, “Don’t read the comments!” I usually can’t help myself and I find myself drawn in to a disturbing world where the unfiltered thoughts of so-called “keyboard warriors” become more and more personal and more and more nasty the further I read. I am no longer surprised by how quickly comments go from being about an issue to being incredibly personal and hurtful.

While I can moderate the comments on my own [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) channels, occasionally deleting something and even more occasionally blocking someone, the comments sections of *The Courier Mail*, *The Australian* or the *ABC News* seem largely unregulated and sparsely moderated. For those of us who engage in the online space, this reality poses both a challenge and an opportunity.

Jesus’ call to love our neighbours and to seek peace is as relevant online as it is in the offline world. When we read comments that are harsh, dismissive or even hateful, we are reminded of the brokenness present in all human communities. These spaces can tempt us towards cynicism or

provoke us to respond in kind. Yet, as people seeking to follow the way of Christ, we are invited to bring a different spirit into our online engagement.

Firstly, we must approach the comment sections with discernment and humility. Not every voice needs to be answered, and not every debate requires our participation. Sometimes, choosing not to read or respond is an act of self-care and wisdom, protecting our own hearts from bitterness and despair.

Secondly, if we do feel called to participate, let us do so with grace. We can choose words that heal rather than harm, that invite understanding rather than escalate conflict. Practising patience, humility, and empathy in our online interactions can bear witness to the love of Christ, even in challenging spaces. It is an opportunity to model what it means to listen well, to disagree with respect, and to extend kindness, even when it is not returned.

Finally, let us hold those we encounter online in prayer. Behind every comment, no matter how hurtful or offensive, is a real person, loved by God and in need of compassion. May our engagement — whether silent or vocal — reflect the hope, peace, and reconciliation to which we are called as people of faith.

Archbishop Rowan Williams once reflected on how he managed the most difficult people he encountered — with “truth, love, patience and endless welcome,” he said. I often return to those words. On- and offline, they’re not a bad way to engage in a polarised and difficult world and they give us one more way we can seek to transform the digital commons from places of division and harm into channels of grace and light.

Pew and improved: St Luke's, Ekibin turns 100 and celebrates with revitalised campus



Archbishop Jeremy Greaves and The Rev'd Dr Timothy Nicholson (Rector, St Luke's, Ekibin) cutting the 100th anniversary cake at St Luke's, Ekibin following a service of thanksgiving celebrating the church's centenary and the completion of the parish's redevelopment project on Sunday, 20 July 2025

A century of worship and community outreach was recently celebrated at St Luke's, Ekibin in a thanksgiving service, which also commemorated the completion of the campus' extensive redevelopment, providing a revitalised setting for the parish's mission.

Soon after the [service](#) commenced, community members with long-term parish connections shared St Luke's 100-year-old story in a moving tribute.

Archbishop Jeremy Greaves, who regularly visited the construction site and preached at the thanksgiving service, said that the Old and New Testaments call us to reflect on the past and express gratitude.

"It's terrific to be here this afternoon with no need for a hard hat or fluoro vest — last time I was here the carpark was a mess of mud, there were frames and bare wires and workers everywhere...I look forward to having a good look around after the service," Archbishop Jeremy said.

"Paul writes in his letter to the Philippians, 'I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying joy for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now'.

"And, in Psalm 136 we heard that refrain again and again, 'Give thanks to the Lord'.

“Remembering and giving thanks — they are two things that echo through the scriptures again and again and again — two things that are central to who we are and how we live as the people of God...

“And, of course, at the heart of the Eucharist, central to our worship together week by week, is the call to remember.

“And alongside that call to remember we are invited to give thanks — to remember what God has done and then to give thanks.

“And so that’s what we are doing today, we remember and give thanks — both are so important.”



(L-R) Cenk Yuksel (Strategic Property Development Manager, ACSQ), Bishop John Roundhill (Bishop for the Southern Region), The Rev'd Dr Timothy Nicholson (Rector, St Luke's, Ekibin), Matthew Patterson (Architect, Ceccato + Architects); Catriona Macgregor (Acting Manager, Early Years, Anglican Schools Commission) and Archbishop Jeremy Greaves visiting St Luke's, Ekibin on 18 December 2024 during the St Luke's campus redevelopment

The more than 160 community members who gathered in worship on Sunday, 20 July also commemorated the completion of the campus' extensive redevelopment, which involved six years of planning and 18 months of building works.

Following an extensive consultation process with parishioners and other community stakeholders, the campus redevelopment now boasts a refreshment of the 1950s peace memorial church, including the addition of a large covered deck; a renovation of the original 1925 church (latterly the church hall) for meeting spaces; a new Little Angels Tarragindi early learning centre (administered by the Anglican Schools Commission); and, a new community hall, with a stage, for the talented St Luke's Theatre Society.



Crucifer Sue Johnson leading the procession during the St Luke's, Ekibin centenary service on Sunday, 20 July 2025

Parish rector and service officiant, The Rev'd Dr Timothy Nicholson, said that the beautiful hymns, which included "Let us build a house", "Christ be our light" and "Revival", were the highlight of the service for him as he looks forward to the community outreach that the redevelopment will facilitate.

"For me the highlight of the day was the volume of the voices singing praises to God in the service — to have a church so full that we spread out onto our new deck, with guests from both the wider Church and our local community, was truly inspiring," The Rev'd Dr Timothy said.

"With the opening of Little Angels Tarragindi, I am looking forward to being their chaplain and bringing the light of Christ to the children, families and staff, helping them through times of change and growth, share in their celebrations and walk with them in their troubles.

"As I will now have an office on the campus, I will be able to open the church building more often to enable it to be a place of quiet and contemplation for parishioners, the Little Angels community and our neighbours.

"We also want to reach out to our local neighbourhood, offering spaces for corporate, community or family gatherings, so are planning a concerted effort to promote our hall and meeting room availability."

Key to the success of the building project was the input of experts, including Cenk Yuksel and Hiro Kawamata from the Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ) Property team; Ceccato + Associates architect Matthew Patterson; and, construction company Chapcon Design and Construct.



(L-R) Nicholas Chapman (Managing Director, Chapcon Design and Construct), Hiro Kawamata (Group Manager — Property, ACSQ), Bishop John Roundhill, The Rev'd Dr Timothy Nicholson (Rector, St Luke's, Ekibin), Archbishop Jeremy Greaves, Mel Ware (Centre Director, Litte Angels Tarragindi), Olivia (Mel's daughter), Catriona Macgregor (Manager, Early Years, Anglican Schools Commission), Cenk Yuksel (Strategic Property Development Manager, ACSQ) and Matthew Patterson (Architect, Ceccato + Architects) in the church of St Luke's, Ekibin following a service of thanksgiving celebrating the church's centenary and the completion of the parish's redevelopment project on Sunday, 20 July 2025

Group Manager — Property Hiro Kawamata said that the redevelopment, which was celebrated through architect-led tours after the service, is a collaborative effort that supports the mission of the ACSQ.

"The project has taken a long time to achieve because it was important and necessary to undertake much consultation and collaboration with the parish community and Diocesan stakeholders," Mr Kawamata said.

"The parish council was instrumental in getting the parish community on board through ongoing consultation and information sharing, which was highlighted in a previous [anglican focus story](#).

“Getting the project approved also involved our Episcopate and Diocesan decision-making bodies.

“It was such a highlight to see that those gathered for the service strongly reflected the collaboration and consultation involved in getting the project approved and delivered, as we had the two Archbishops, the Regional Bishop, three previous parish rectors, parish councillors and wardens, and Diocesan staff.

“Two of the ACSQ’s priorities are ‘Engagement with each other and the wider community’ and ‘Stewardship and sustainability of resources’, so campus developments, such as Ekibin’s, make a more effective use of the land resources that we are blessed with to create a setting that facilitates and encourages engagement with each other and the wider community.”

The service’s music was led by a skilled ensemble of musicians, including an organist, electric bass guitarist, cellist, violinist and flautist, and a well-rehearsed choir of parishioners conducted by organist and priest’s warden Brian Wood.

Mr Wood said that he was especially delighted seeing community members engaged in fellowship after the thanksgiving service.

“My highlight of the day was seeing people of our parish and the many visitors enjoying the new deck space for afternoon tea and seeing so many old friends and happy faces sharing stories together,” he said.

Mr Wood, who was instrumental in the campus redevelopment in the capacity of priest’s warden, said that working with the committed team and seeing the new hall for the first time are among his building project highlights.

“I especially appreciate the diligence of the architect, the Diocesan project team and the builders in delivering what we actually needed and wanted in a complex project where it would have been easy to make less suitable compromises,” he said.

“I remember the ‘wow’ I uttered when I walked into the new community hall and theatre space when it was almost completed — to see how this area came together as a large, flexible modern space is really impressive.”



Matthew Patterson (Architect, Ceccato + Architects) giving worshippers (including The Rev'd Lynda and The Rev'd Chris Johnson from The Parish of Noosa) a tour of the new St Luke's, Ekibin church/community hall following a service of thanksgiving celebrating the church's centenary and the completion of the parish's redevelopment project on Sunday, 20 July 2025

Bishop for the Southern Region John Roundhill said that the service's music especially moved him and that he looks forward to seeing the redevelopment contribute to the Church's mission.

"I loved so much of the service, but I was particularly struck by the choir song — with the arrangement by the cellist — "Revival" by Robin Mark and the lines, 'From the preacher preaching when the well is dry / To the lost soul reaching for a higher high / From the young man working through his hopes and fears / To the widow walking through the veil of tears,'" Bishop John said.

"I appreciated the honesty of the song, as well as how well it was offered.

"The new development wraps around the existing church such that the worshipping community is at the heart of the new early learning centre and the returning St Luke's Theatre Society — this models how we really understand mission."

The new early learning centre, Little Angels Tarragindi, which is expected to open later this year, will care for children aged six weeks to five years.

The centre will be a vibrant and nurturing environment, offering families a safe and supported place where their children are encouraged to grow, learn and explore.

Little Angels Tarragindi Centre Director Mel Ware said that she enjoyed learning about the parish's legacy at the thanksgiving service and enthusiastically anticipates being part of the welcoming parish campus community.

"The highlight of the service for me was learning about the history of the parish over the past 100 years and being welcomed with open arms by all the parishioners," Ms Ware said.

"As the Centre Director, I am most looking forward to opening our doors for the first time to our community, hearing all the laughter from busy children playing and sharing our philosophy and core values based on Anglican identity."

Families are welcome to register their interest in enrolling their children into Little Angels Tarragindi via the "enquire today" form on the centre's [website](#).

To book the St Luke's, Ekibin community hall or a meeting room, please contact the parish office on 3848 2123 or via admin@stlukesekibin.org.au.

Editor's note 29/07/2025: Additional images of church service and post-service fellowship added.

Spotlight Q&A • Wednesday 30 July 2025 • By Kay Self

Q&A with retired teacher, Cursillo member and long-term St Mary's, Kangaroo Point parishioner, Kay Self



"I have been a practising Christian for most of my life, but it was the Cursillo movement that helped me take the next step to a more meaningful relationship with God," says Kay Self

Where do you currently live and worship?

St Mary's, Kangaroo Point is my parish and my spiritual home. My family's parish connections go back almost 100 years, over five generations.



The St Mary's 2025 leadership team: The Rev'd Richard James (far right) and Wardens Tony Jones, Glenda Western and Kay Self

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

Other than priest and deacon, I think I've performed most parish roles. I am currently a Liturgical Assistant, Warden and Synod Representative. In the wider Diocese, I'm active in Cursillo and am currently the Secretary of the national executive.

What do your Anglican Church Southern Queensland roles involve?

I am part of an amazing team at St Mary's, who worship, minister and work together to build our church, maintain our heritage listed buildings and reach out to our local community. I also support our priest, The Rev'd Richard James, in the weekly eucharist at St Vincent's Aged Care Services where my Mum served and lived until her recent death at age 94.

What projects or activities are you currently working on in your roles?

We are all blessed with different skills and talents and each of us can use those gifts to grow our parishes, with my “superpower” being organisation and getting things done. Our current project is building a virtual tour of St Mary’s — the church’s interior, its contents and the whole site, through Google Maps. Paid for with a state government grant, this interactive tour will enable visitors from across the world to enjoy this very special place.

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

“Bring them to church,” said Bishop Rob Nolan, when he was the Rector of The Parish of Kangaroo Point, replying to my request for our parish to raise money to support a talented Sudanese refugee who had qualified for the national Track and Field Championships in 1998. Lunga and his family — mum, dad and three younger siblings — became much loved members of our parish from that very next Sunday.

What have been some of the highlights of your time as an Anglican so far?

In 2001 Andrea, Lunga’s dad, sought the parish’s assistance to help a family from his South Sudanese village to come to Australia. They were being given refuge in a Catholic church in Cairo while they tried to get to Australia. They had permission from the Australian Government, but lacked the money to get here. Our parish raised the funds for their airfares, and I liaised with people in Canberra to help bring them here. In December that year, Somuel, Toobia, three-year-old Ninja and three-month-old John arrived in Brisbane with one small leather bag between them. If you attend a Sunday service at St Mary’s, you are likely to see one or all the family, now numbering seven.

Another — more recent — highlight was our parish regaining its benefice status, which is a measure of the love and hard work put into our parish by so many.

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

I have been a practising Christian for most of my life, but it was the [Cursillo](#) movement that helped me take the next step to a more meaningful relationship with God. This year, we celebrate Cursillo’s 40th anniversary in our Diocese, and I continue to try to practise the tripod of piety, study and apostolic action.

What is your favourite Bible scripture and why?

My favourite bible verses have changed as my life experiences have changed. When my husband, Greg, and I were raising our three sons, it was [John 3.16](#). Later on it was [Matthew 11. 28-30](#). Now I would have to say it’s [St Paul’s letter to the Galatians 5.22](#): “By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness”.

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

Simply put...why wouldn’t it be? Bruce Woodley’s iconic Australian song says, “we are one, but we are many”. Whether we were born here and non-Indigenous, are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent with family links going back thousands of years, or we have recently arrived, we all deserve

respect. Working towards Reconciliation shows respect to each other. Of my three daughters-in-law, one is of English descent, one is a Noonuccal woman and one was born in Canada.

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?

In a recent Facebook post, our Archbishop suggested that we build real human connection as a way of not becoming overwhelmed by what is happening in our world right now. That is one of our parish's strengths. We are a diverse and welcoming group of Christians that is growing in numbers and community and every Sunday The Rev'd Richard verbalises this by saying "Everyone is welcome, whether it's your first or your hundredth time here, whether you are young or old, straight or gay, Christian or not, you are welcome in God's house", and our parishioners demonstrate that welcome by including, encouraging and supporting all and recognising that everyone has gifts and talents to contribute to our worship and our community.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

Saul to St Paul — persecutor to apostle. Paul was pivotal in expanding Jesus' message of love and hope. His example inspires me to try to do what I can — to demonstrate that love in our troubled world in 2025.

If you found yourself on a deserted island, what three things would you choose to have with you?

A picture of my family, my glasses and my bible.

What do you like to do in your free time?

We love to travel and experience new places and cultures and have been fortunate to visit many countries across this wide world of ours.

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

"JUST DO IT!" Anyone who knows me, wouldn't be surprised at this — I make lists and check them off!

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

The book that I have gifted most would be Mem Fox's *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes*. In my teaching career, one of my passions was early literacy and, in my opinion, Mem is the queen of Australian children's book writers.

Where do you do your best thinking?

I do my best thinking when I wake up at two o'clock or three o'clock in the morning. I think this habit started when I was at teacher's college or uni. I kept a notebook and pen on my bedside table so I could remember my thoughts in the morning, especially when I had an assignment to write. Now, my early morning thoughts run to prayer, seeking solutions to unsolvable human issues and grant writing.

What's your best childhood memory?

I have been so blessed in the lottery of life. My childhood consisted of a loving extended family, Girl Guides, GFS (Girls' Friendly Society) and weekends and holidays at our Bribie beach house.



"Four generations of my family outside the west door of St Mary's, Kangaroo Point on the occasion of our eldest son's baptism in 1978. I am with my grandma and mum," says Kay Self

What is your earliest memory?

That's where I have my earliest memories — Bribie Island. Those were the days when you needed to get the barge over. When I was five years old, we spent the Christmas holidays with our aunt, uncle and cousin, while Dad and Uncle David laid the foundations of what was to become our beach house in Murray Street, Woorim. I fell backwards into a bull ant nest while playing badminton with my sister at the beach house.

Author's note: Cursillo is celebrating 40 years in our Diocese on Saturday, 8 November 2025, with the theme "Faith Like a Mustard Seed". The celebration begins with a Eucharist and Ultreya at 1pm at St John's Cathedral, followed by a singing procession along Ann Street to St Andrew's Uniting Church Hall for a delicious dinner at 5pm. Visit the [Cursillo website](#) for more information and to register for the dinner (RSVP by 12pm Thursday, 23 October).

Northern Region Hope25: Singing, fundraising, conversing and eating for hope



"The Parish of The Gap opened the doors and raised \$1,300 for Future Ukraine with our Hope25 event, 'Hope Lives Here – An 80s Sing Along'," says The Rev'd Dr Ann Edwards, pictured here with Mark Boltman (vocals and bass) and Matthew Edwards (drums)

The Anglican Church of Australia initiated the "[Hope25](#)" project "to empower Australian Anglican parishes and communities in an intentional season of sharing hope in Jesus from Easter to Pentecost in 2025."

So, last year our Diocesan Synod committed to supporting Hope25 by "sharing the hope we have in Jesus Christ" and "encourages every parish and community to participate."

Check out what some Northern Region parishes initiated for Hope25.



“The Parish of The Gap opened the doors and raised \$1,300 for Future Ukraine with our Hope25 event, ‘Hope Lives Here – An 80s Sing Along,’” says The Rev’d Dr Ann Edwards

The Rev’d Dr Ann Edwards — Rector, The Parish of The Gap

The Parish of The Gap opened the doors and raised \$1,300 for Future Ukraine with our Hope25 event, “Hope Lives Here – An 80s Sing Along”.

The suburb of The Gap has a strong interest in service and volunteering, and the event was well attended, despite being held the day after the federal election and competing with Rugby’s Magic Rounds.

The visitors who attended told us they really enjoyed having fun, while being able to do something practical to help Ukrainians. Singing together, meeting one another to answer puzzling quiz questions, and sharing a simple meal brought out the life of the Church in an understandable and meaningful way to our suburb. The exciting challenge now is to follow up and build these new relationships and connections.



“St Paul’s, Ashgrove members reflecting during Hope25, including The Rev’d Dr Margaret Wesley (organiser), Robyn Carl (St Paul’s Warden), Gill Outen (St Paul’s Synod Rep) and Ann Caston (enthusiastic participant in all five “Hope in Hard Places” conversations)

The Rev’d Dr Margaret Wesley — Priest-in-Charge, St Paul’s, Ashgrove

“Hope in Hard Places” was a series of five facilitated conversations to enlighten our thinking and inform our acting in areas where we need to see more hope. We focused on small, practical actions ordinary people can take to bring hope for haven, with Peter Branjerdporn speaking about people seeking asylum; peace, with The Rev’d Canon Jess Grant; justice, with His Honour Judge Kevin Laphorn; inclusion, with The Rev’d Jamee Lee Callard; and, faith communities, with Archbishop Jeremy Greaves. Recordings and other resources are available on the [parish’s website](#).



Nerida Hey from The Parish of Kawana Waters selling home-baked goods and preserves at the Kawana Anglican Minimart on Saturday, 31 May 2025 as part of the Hope25 initiative

The Rev'd Steve Wockner — Rector, The Parish of Kawana Waters

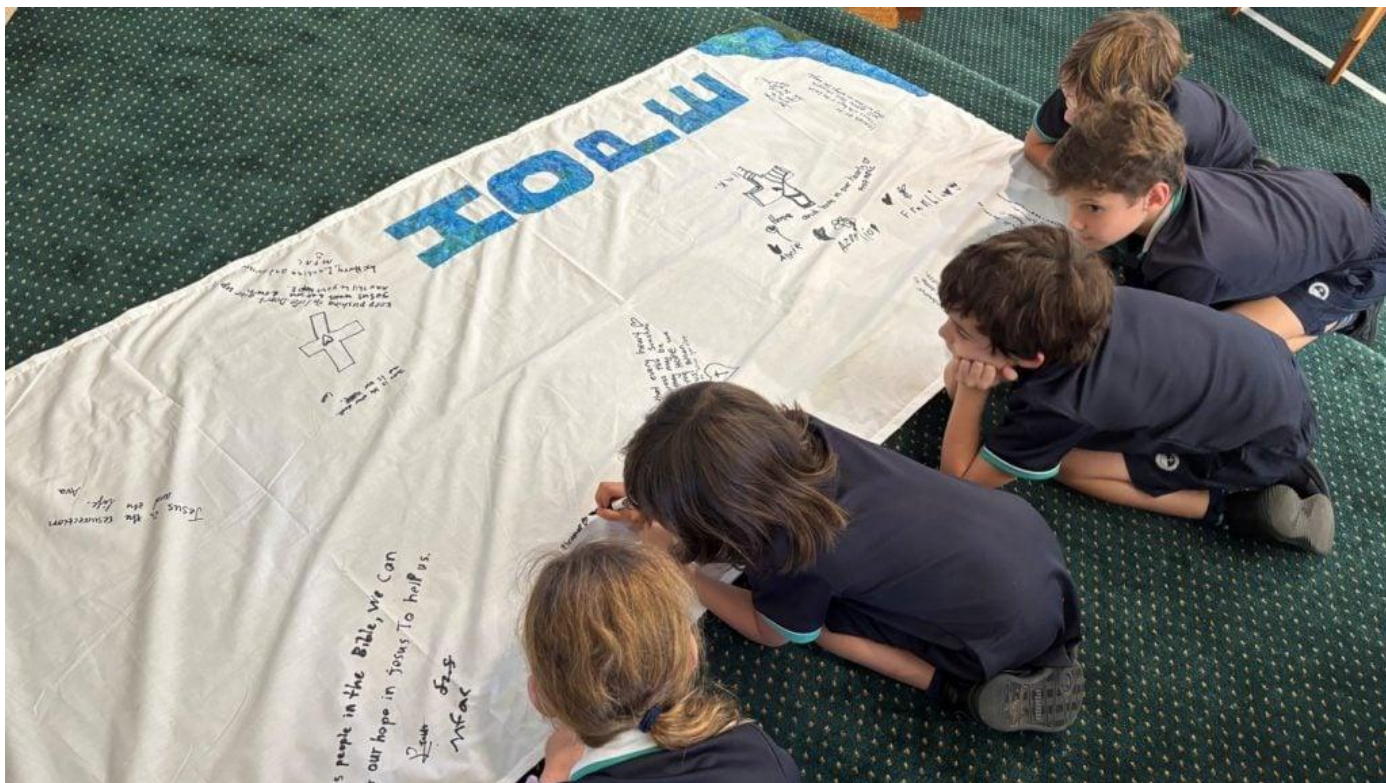
Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Kawana Waters held a Minimart as its Hope25 outreach event. It was organised by the Tuesday night Ladies Bible Study group. It was originally planned for 17 May, but rain postponed it and on the new date, 31 May, 40mm of rain fell. Parishioner community members enjoyed great conversation with wider community members who came to buy and a Hope table enabled some spiritual conversation to take place. Despite the rain, \$1,800 was raised to go towards paying off church roof renovations.



"Maroochydore Anglican hosted a Hope25 afternoon tea party," says The Rev'd Tania Eichler

The Rev'd Tania Eichler — Rector, The Parish of Maroochydore

Sunshine Coast Anglicans started the [Wave of Hope](#), with prayers and writing our hope messages from Easter Day onwards. Also, we read from the same [Litany of Hope](#) at each gathering. A Wave of Hope banner also made its way across the Sunshine Coast, with Matthew Flinders Anglican College students signing it at school and Archbishop Jeremy signing it at a special St Augustine's, Palmwoods centenary and consecration celebration on Sunday, 25 May 2025.



Matthew Flinders Anglican College students signing the Wave of Hope banner for Hope25

Maroochydore Anglicans hosted a Hope25 afternoon tea party, with conversations around the table responding to questions on speech bubbles, including "What is Hope? What gives you Hope? And, How do you share Hope?" It was a delightful afternoon of sharing, hearing and coming together in Hope for our community. In this world that seems in despair it was an uplifting afternoon — thank you to all who shared.



The Parish of Freshwater community members enjoying a Hope25 Hangi feast

The Rev'd Claye Middleton — Priest-in-Charge, The Parish of Freshwater

At Freshwater Parish we offered a taste of community and connection. Our Hope25 initiative brought people together with a delicious Hangi. Baskets were lined with cabbage leaves and the food then arranged with the meat in the middle. The food was put into the ground on top of heated rocks. Wet sheets and hessian sacks were placed on top of the Hangi baskets while the food cooked underground for four hours. We're taking it further with cultural food nights. These events are a chance to share in prayer, welcome and good food with people from all walks of life.

Editor's note: You are invited to a special Hope25 online prayer meeting on Wednesday, 20 August at 7pm AEST to give thanks to God for his blessings. Visit the [Hope25 homepage](#) to find out more.

Reflections • Wednesday 30 July 2025

Helping parishes achieve Mission Action Plan goals and training parish leaders



Queensland Community Alliance organiser Emily Kain chatted to clergy, Synod reps and stall reps, including Jelita Hutchison from The Parish of Aspley-Albany Creek, while assisting on the Justice Unit's stall at 2025's Synod at Churchie

I remember the first time I connected with the Anglican Church Southern Queensland as a Queensland Community Alliance team member. In 2021 I joined in a Sunday morning service at St Mark's, Logan at the invitation of rector The Ven. Geoff Hoyte — I know Geoff because his parish is a member of the Queensland Community Alliance.

While I was baptised as a baby in the Anglican Church, I grew up in a very “secular” working class household in Western Sydney. My parents were always active in our girl guides group and dance club, so caring for and serving community are key values that my parents instilled in my sisters and me.

I was not sure what to expect when I went to church that first Sunday. Truthfully, I was a bit nervous about the whole experience because of what I had read and heard about churches. But hearing Geoff preaching about caring for and serving the community that day (and other times since) was quite surprising. It sparked a deep curiosity in me and was the beginning of a journey to better understand my own spirituality. Hearing Geoff preach that day showed me how the Anglican Church's values are aligned with mine. Since that first Sunday service at St Mark's, I have given "messages" during Sunday services about opportunities that the Queensland Community Alliance offers parishioners, including about free two-day leadership training and initiatives that align with the [Marks of Mission](#).

The Rev'd Michael Stalley — from Queensland Community Alliance member The Parish of Mt Gravatt — first taught me about the Marks of Mission and how they align with Queensland Community Alliance values, especially:

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

I always feel welcomed at The Parish of Logan, where I have an office base at St Mark's, and The Parish of Mt Gravatt, where I have supported the clergy team and parishioners to hold "table talks" — small group conversations that help parishioners connect through stories. One of the key strengths of the Anglican Church is hospitality.



Queensland Community Alliance organiser Emily Kain (far left) with The Ven. Geoff Hoyte (far right), Mayor Darren Power and other community leaders in Logan in August 2020

The Queensland Community Alliance is an alliance of faith organisations, unions and community groups. We exist to strengthen these organisations and local communities by equipping community members with leadership skills and achieving outcomes together around shared priorities.

The reason why I now feel so invested in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland — including with Alliance members the Anglican Parishes of Logan and Mt Gravatt and the Social Responsibilities Committee — is because I deeply feel that a kind, just and connected community needs the Church for formation, cultivating hospitality and generosity, and strong relationships rooted in place.

I write this immediately after meeting with Ministry Development Officer Tim Booth. Tim and I chatted in a café near the cathedral about how the Queensland Community Alliance can assist parishes with meeting their Mission Action Plan goals and by offering free two-day leadership training for clergy and lay parishioners.

Tim and I also chatted about how the Queensland Community Alliance's focus areas and collaborative approach tie in with the Anglican Marks of Mission and the Anglican Church Southern Queensland's priorities, especially:

- Energising, nurturing and mobilising ACSQ's people.
- Engagement with each other and the wider community.
- Stewardship and sustainability of resources.

Some of the wonderful Queensland Community Alliance initiatives local Anglicans and I have worked on together include the Renew Australia for All campaign, which is focussed on sustainability and investing in clean energy. The Parishes of Mt Gravatt and Logan are involved in this campaign.

The Queensland Community Alliance has also worked closely with parishes to achieve outcomes in the Reconciliation space, as well as education and healthcare outcomes for kids aged zero to five. Other local Anglican parishes have been involved in community assemblies and community listening initiatives.

In the coming weeks and months, I am meeting with other Anglican parishes to discuss how contributing to Queensland Community Alliance objectives can assist parishes with meeting their Mission Action Plan goals and about [free two-day leadership training](#). Michelle McDonald, who is the ACSQ's Social Responsibilities Committee representative on the Queensland Community Alliance, will be joining me for many of these meetings.



Queensland Community Alliance organiser Emily Kain and ACSQ Director of Community Engagement Michelle McDonald meeting outside St John's Cathedral on 24 July 2025

I look forward to updating *anglican focus* readers on the outcomes that the Queensland Community Alliance, including Anglican parishes, achieve, such as welcoming people seeking asylum and refugees; sustainability and climate care; addressing cost-of-living and social isolation challenges; and, in the Reconciliation space.

Editor's note: If you are a parish priest or nominated lay parish leader and you would like to meet with Emily Kain to find out how contributing to the Queensland Community Alliance can help your parish implement Mission Action Plan goals, please email Emily via emily@qldcommunityalliance.org. If you would like to attend two-day Queensland Community Alliance leadership training on Saturday 6 and Saturday 13 September in Moorooka, please register via the Queensland Community Alliance [website](#) or email emily@qldcommunityalliance.org for more information.

The Baru Beat • Tuesday 29 July 2025 • By The Rev'd Gerry Bahre, Rose Bahre

God moments in Mitchell



The Rev'd Gerry Bahre and hospital chaplain Rose Bahre visiting a Queensland Government hospital in Mitchell in July 2025

Please be advised that some readers may find this content distressing —this reflection references suicide.

A football referee from Stanthorpe was sitting outside the Mitchell pub one Sunday morning wondering what he was going to do that day. He was in town refereeing the rugby finals. Upon hearing the church bell peal marking the start of the Sunday service, the referee jumped up and “pelted” (his words) down the pub stairs in his thongs towards the church. He opened the church’s door, stuck his head in and asked, “Do you need an organist?” I replied with an enthusiastic, “Great!” as everyone applauded him. We turned off the CD of music and halted the service to help him set up the organ. He played so beautifully — he really made the organ sing. We’ve had a lot of “God moments” like this over the past 15 years in Mitchell.



The Rev'd Gerry Bahre and rugby referee Tom in the Mitchell newsagency on Tom's second trip to Mitchell in April 2025: "Mitchell is a warm and welcoming parish for visitors," says Tom

Another "God moment" happened last year. During the start of a Sunday service a man ran into the entrance saying, "Have you got room for more?" I replied, "Come on in," expecting two to three people to enter. To my delight, two busloads of kids and six staff from Emmanuel College, a multi-denominational school on the Gold Coast, walked in.

Emmanuel College students and staff returned in June this year, along with their principal. During this visit, the students assisted with work around the vacant rectory, including pulling down an old fence, tidying the gardens and cleaning parts of the building.

The students built a lovely path and cross in the rectory garden. One of the college's staff happens to be an Anglican liturgical assistant, so (with permission) he oversaw the liturgy, coordinating the students to read and reenact the calming of the storm for a Sunday service, with me stepping in to consecrate the bread and wine. God's providence is alive.



Emmanuel College's Hannah, James and Thalia created this lovely path and cross in The Parish of Mitchell's rectory garden in June 2025

Some “God moments” are more planned than the initial visits of the referee and Emmanuel College, although no less wonderful.

In November, 15 students and three staff from The Southport School — who regularly come to Mitchell — visited our parish for four days. We were contacted by the Dean of Boarding, Tony Watt, offering assistance with the church grounds. The students spent several days painting our bell tower and the eaves, gutters and fascia board; varnishing the doors of the church; tending to our gardens; and, repairing the sprinkler system. I enjoyed observing their competitive rivalry as they decided which students would come to the tip with me.

My wife, Rose, ensured the boys were well hydrated with water and electrolytes and well fed. On their final night, we enjoyed dinner with the students at a local hotel. The boys were delightfully polite and friendly — upon leaving they shook our hands and thanked us for our hospitality despite the fact they had done so much work for us.

In my busy Priest-in-Charge role, I also administer the Anointing of the Sick and the Last Rites, usually alongside Rose who is a hospital chaplain. One time I was called by the hospital to administer the Last Rites for a very elderly gentleman who was expected to live only a few more hours. However, the next morning when I called the hospital to check in, I was informed that the patient was sitting up eating his breakfast with a cuppa bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. He lived for another 12 months, which was indeed a blessing, albeit a surprise for everyone, especially the hospital staff.

Obviously, not all of the ministry I undertake is joy-filled — I am sometimes called upon in very sad or traumatic circumstances.

In my second year serving in Mitchell, I was asked by the family of a young Aboriginal man, who died by suicide, to preside over his funeral. The family said they wanted me to preside because their son respected me, and they said I would treat the family with “dignity and respect and honour their traditions”. It was my honour to conduct this funeral. After the funeral when I arrived at the wake’s venue, the man’s Aboriginal family and friends came outside to greet and hug me. Since the funeral, when the children of the man’s family and friends see me walking down the street they call out, smile and wave. I have conducted other funerals for this man’s Mob since and it’s always an honour.

These experiences show me that my ministry is a privilege, as I journey with people from all walks of life.

Editor’s notes: The Bush Ministry Fund solely funds rural ministry in our Diocese, and it is the only fund that financially supports rural ministry in our Diocese. The Bush Ministry Fund money boxes are a fun and easy way for individuals, families, parishes and schools to donate to bush ministry in our Diocese. Order your BMF money box today by emailing Helen Briffa in the Western Region office via helen.briffa@anglicanchurchsq.org.au or by calling 07 4639 1875.

Immediate support is available for those who may be distressed by phoning Lifeline 13 11 14; Mensline 1300 789 978; Kids Helpline 1800 551 800; beyondblue 1300 224 636; or 13YARN (13 92 76).

Homilies & Addresses • Friday 18 July 2025 • By The Rev’d Canon Te Ata Roy

“We do not simply exist — we descend”



"Belonging nurtures whanaungatanga — the relationships that sustain communal life — and ensures that each person has a place, a role, and a responsibility within the collective. It reinforces identity, offers security, and affirms you are not alone, you are of us," says The Rev'd Canon Te Ata Roy from Dunedin

Pao (Greeting performed as a song)

*He karanga tēnei nō te pito o te ao,
Ki ngā iwi taketake, he whakaahua o te Atua.
Ko tō whenua, ko tō wairua, ka mau tonu rā,
I ngā rā o mua, o nāianei, ā mō ake tonu atu.
Tēnei te mihi, tēnei te aroha – ka tuku atu.*

Koia!

Mihi (Greeting)*

*Tēnā koutou katoa e ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangatanga maha o tēnei ao hurihuri.
E mihi ana ki a koutou ngā iwi taketake o tēnei whenua Ka mihi hoki au ki ngā tini mokopuna kua noho mai
i runga i te whenua nei. Tēnei te mihi maioha, tēnei te mihi whakamānawa ki a koutou.*

*Ko Rakaumangamanga te maunga
Ko Ipipri te moana
Ko Ngatokimatawhaorua te waka
Ko Ngāpuhi, te iwi
Ko Patukeha te hapū
Ko Te Ata tōku ingoa
He Minita Mihinare, he Poumihana hoki au
Kei Tokomairiro ahau e noho ana, e mahi ana hei Māori Chaplain mō Te Wānanga Whakaihu waka me Te
Kura Matatini o Ōtākou.*

Kei konei au i tēnei rā ki te kōrero mō te kaupapa o te belonging. "Ko wai au"

Translation

This is a call from the ends of the earth,
To the Indigenous peoples, made in the image of God.
Your land, your spirit — they endure,
From the days of old, to the present, and forevermore.
This is my greeting, this is my love — I offer it to you.
Truly!

Greetings to you all, to the many authorities, the many voices, the many lineages of this ever-turning world.

I acknowledge you, the Indigenous peoples of this land.

I also acknowledge the many descendants who now dwell upon this land.

This is my heartfelt greeting, this is my honouring of you.

My name is Te Ata.

I am a *Mihinare* (Anglican) minister and also a *Poumihana* (Missioner).

I live and work in Tokomairiro, serving as the Māori Chaplain for the University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic.

I am here today to speak about the theme of belonging — “*Ko wai au*” (Who am I?).

It is my tradition, before introducing myself, to *mihi* (greeting) to the people of *mana* (authority, dignity) — the Indigenous people of this land — and to acknowledge those who have walked here before us.

I begin my introduction with my *maunga* (mountain), my *moana* (ocean), my *waka* (canoe), and my *iwi* (people), so my audience can locate me — as if by spiritual coordinates — through my *whenua* (land) and *whakapapa* (ancestral ties). This is how I speak of where I stand, and where the ancestral wisdom and knowledge I carry comes from.

Ko wai au — “Who am I?” — speaks to the strong Māori value of belonging. It reflects the deep sense of connection Māori have to people, place, and purpose. It also speaks to our connection to *te Atua* (God).

Belonging is rooted in *whakapapa* — the genealogical links that bind us to our ancestors, to the *whenua* (land), to our *whānau* (family), and to the *wairua* (spiritual realm).

To belong is not just to be accepted — it is to know where you come from, whom you walk with, and what story you are part of.

Belonging nurtures *whanaungatanga* — the relationships that sustain communal life — and ensures that each person has a place, a role, and a responsibility within the collective. It reinforces identity, offers security, and affirms you are not alone, you are of us.

In a Māori worldview, belonging is not a passive state, but an active commitment. It means upholding the *mana* of others, honouring your connections, and contributing to the wellbeing of the whole.

Without belonging, a person is *whakamā* — disconnected, uncertain, diminished. With belonging, a person is *manaaki* — upheld, valued, empowered.

Belonging is not just about where we live or whom we stand beside. For us as Māori, belonging is deep. It is *whakapapa*. It is *wairua* (spirit). It is *whenua*. It is *tupuna* (ancestors). It is God.

We do not simply exist — we descend. From *Atua* (God), from land, from people, from story. I belong because I come from somewhere, and from someone. And I belong because I am held in the love of *te Atua*, of God.

As a Māori Anglican priest and chaplain, I have learned that belonging cannot be rushed, programmed, or assumed. Belonging is slowly carved through presence — through relationship, through *wānanga* — learning together, praying together, struggling together.

Relational belonging is the essence of *whanaungatanga* (building relationships). And for Māori, connection is sacred.

- *Wairua* — Our spirituality is not separate from our daily lives; it is woven through everything.
- *Whakapapa* — Our identity is rooted in our ancestral lines and in our stories. God made me Māori on purpose.
- *Waka* — Our journeys, both physical and spiritual, remind us that we are people of movement and purpose. But we are never alone.

- *Manaakitanga* — We are called to uplift others, make space for the stranger, and carry one another with honour.
- *Wānanga* — The deep sharing of wisdom, not only in speaking, but in listening. This is how we shape understanding and belonging.

Belonging is not always easy. But my belonging is never taken from me.

* *Rakaumangamanga* is the mountain

Ipipiri is the sea

Ngātokimatawhaorua is the canoe

Ngāpuhi is the tribe

Patukeha is the subtribe

Editor's note: This reflection is based on a speech given by The Rev'd Canon Te Ata Roy during the "Oceania Christian Leaders on First Nations spiritualities" Q&A panel event. The panel event formed part of the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communion Oceania Chapter Conference, which was held at St John's College within the University of Queensland between Monday 7 July and Thursday 10 July 2025.

Films & TV • Tuesday 29 July 2025 • By Jonathan Sargeant

Superman



David Corenswet stars as Superman in the latest cinematic iteration of the popular DC comic book character, directed by James Gunn

The Superman tale is a well-worn story. Rocketed from Krypton as a baby; powers beyond mortal people; raised by loving, adoptive parents in Kansas; dedicated to truth and justice... Can director/scriptwriter wunderkind James Gunn bring anything new to this narrative? Do we need another Superman?

The quick answer is yes, we do — especially after previous misfires. But why? Is our world so dark that a being whose only motivations are to protect, serve and save not only relevant, but necessary? Let's get a few obvious things out of the way.

Jewish American actor David Corenswet, as Superman, brings a freshness immediately reminiscent of gold-standard actor Christopher Reeve (*Superman* 1978-1987). Rachel Brosnahan (Lois Lane) and Nicholas Hoult (Lex Luthor) fully inhabit their characters and the chemistry between the three is palpable.

The production design is beautiful — the fine line between comic inspiration and real-world grit is navigated with ease bringing a believability to these fantastic scenarios. The script?

In *Superman* (2025), the iconic hero faces a world more divided than ever, testing his resolve, identity and purpose. As new threats rise and alliances shift, Superman must confront a choice that could redefine his legacy. But just as hope returns, a final moment turns everything on its head — leaving the Earth's fate hanging in the balance.

Okay, I've tried to avoid spoilers in that very generic synopsis, but the actual film is miles from formulaic.

One unexpected story thread should be mentioned. As the film opens, it becomes clear that Superman has become involved in an international conflict. A profitable alliance, between the United States and Lex Luther's LexCorp (a multi-national conglomerate with a weapons manufacturing division), is backing and arming a country that has been attacking and occupying another smaller Middle Eastern nation to the point of genocide. The nations' names, "Boravia" and "Jarhanpur", respectively, are unfamiliar, but as the film rolls on, it becomes clear why critics and viewers internationally have drawn parallels to Israel and Palestine.

As Superman is criticised for intervening in the genocide, he angrily retorts "But people are dying!" It's a profound moment and a salient, sensible artistic statement amidst the silence and willful feebleness in the current global debate.

Appropriately, Superman avoids the "White saviour" inclination as, later, the hope he represents inspires others to action. It's another significant way Christians might detect Gunn's script making Jesus-like parallels in more subtle, nuanced approaches than the blatant, space-Christ approaches of Snyder's *Man of Steel* (2013) and Singer's *Superman Returns* (2006).

The script also comes up with a new angle for superhero films, which is the first time I've seen this idea — that the inhabitants of Metropolis have become so blasé to the threat posed by villains and monsters that they stand idly by or pose for selfies as Superman goes into bat for them. That we would grow to take superheroes for granted is an intriguing idea, an aspect of human nature that Gunn has nailed.

Such new angles (and there are more fresh takes) are welcome, though difficult. Jesus is worshipped as the Messiah by billions of people around the globe. And, Superman is a beloved character! Any film that taps into an existing, popular intellectual property, whether it be Jesus or Superman, will always struggle with a fundamental issue — how do you translate the shared experience of millions or even billions of people into a depiction that is true to the character and also true to their storied past?

For instance, some claim that *Jesus* (1979), produced by the Jesus Film Project, is the most faithful, using only the Gospel of Luke as its script. But creators had to determine a look for its characters, had to make script additions to connect one parable to the next and so on. So, what will scriptwriters do with Superman? His last iteration, the films of Zack Snyder (*Man of Steel* et al), bizarrely saw the character through the lens of Russian-born American philosopher and proponent of *laissez-faire* capitalism Ayn Rand, creating an *Übermensch* hero misunderstood and despised by those he served, taught by his father to hide his abilities lest he be persecuted and resented. This dark, nihilistic version was incredibly popular, according to box office take. But was it successful? No, straying so far from the basic decency and sacrificial kindness of the Kryptonian might produce an interesting take, but not a successful one.

Created by writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Shuster in 1938, I've mentioned that onlookers have often compared the Superman character to Jesus. The parallels are clear. Sent to Earth to rescue its inhabitants, tick! Abilities beyond those of mortal humans, tick! Powered by an innate goodness and the ideal of hope, tick! For Jewish Americans Siegel and Shuster, Moses might have been more the inspiration, but the saviour analogy raises an obvious question for both faithful and newer viewers each time there is another on-screen iteration — how will this depiction balance the human (Clark Kent) and superhuman (Kal-El, Superman's Kryptonian name) natures of the character? Sometimes this is done by emphasising Superman's all-too-human alter ego. Kent, though lovably goofy, is barely onscreen in this film, with Gunn taking a different tack. This Superman integrates his human/hero aspects with a natural humour, warmth and, believe it or not, gentleness, as well as...dog ownership.

Krypto the Superdog is a standout, delivering energy and laughs. Krypto is based on Gunn's home-destroying rescue dog Ozu, whom [Gunn adopted](#) while writing the script, which delivers a caped mutt who is by turns, unruly, disobedient and utterly adorable.

By contrast to iterations of the last decade, James Gunn has successfully distilled the essence of Superman into a two-hour film for both long-term fans and those new to the story. This is a character whose heart beats louder than his fists, whose commitment to kindness and actually, gasp, saving people (and squirrels!) from disaster always comes before punching.

This surprising iteration Superman doesn't just fly, he lands, with a clarity of mission, welcome emotional weight and renewal of a myth needed now more than ever.

***Superman*, rated M and directed by James Gunn, is currently showing in cinemas.**

Editor's note: If you are interested in learning more about film, the arts, and the many intersections with life, faith and social justice, Jonathan Sargeant is teaching DA3013Z God and Contemporary Culture: Theology and the Arts on Monday evenings in 2025. Please contact Jonathan Sargeant for more information via jonathan.sargeant@anglicanchurchsq.org.au.

What courageous person inspires you and why? | Bishop Daniel Abot



"Rachel trusted that God would care for me and for our children. To pay the mortgage while I was serving in South Sudan, Rachel worked as a cleaner, starting at 4 o'clock in the morning and returning home at 8 o'clock to take the kids to school and then starting work again at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and finishing at five o'clock so she could be home to cook dinner and help them with their homework," says Bishop Daniel Abot (pictured here with Rachel at the Brisbane International Airport returning from the Lambeth Conference in August 2023)

In 2014 I was called by the Anglican Church in South Sudan to be the honorary bishop of the Diocese of Duk, which was a new Diocese initiated to help bring peace to the region. The Diocese included 65,000 worshipping Anglicans, some of whom lived in conflict zones. I served in the role for eight years as their unpaid Bishop. When I went to South Sudan to serve as Bishop, my wife, Rachel, and I had seven children aged from seven months to 15 years. Despite the dangers for me and the financial struggle for Rachel as she worked to pay the mortgage for eight years, Rachel courageously encouraged me to serve in South Sudan. So, Rachel is my hero.

Her decision was based on the Biblical principle:

"For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it ([Matthew 16.25](#))."

Rachel trusted that God would care for me and for our children. To pay the mortgage while I was serving in South Sudan, Rachel worked as a cleaner, starting at 4 o'clock in the morning and returning home at 8 o'clock to take the kids to school and then starting work again at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and finishing at five o'clock so she could be home to cook dinner and help them with their homework. She was blessed to have the help and support of the St Bart's, Toowoomba community.

It is important for Christians to have courage because it is the will of God. Our courage comes from our hope and God calls us to have hope and trust in him. It takes a lot of courage to be hopeful and trusting. The apostle Paul reminds us to be courageous when things become hard, and he says:

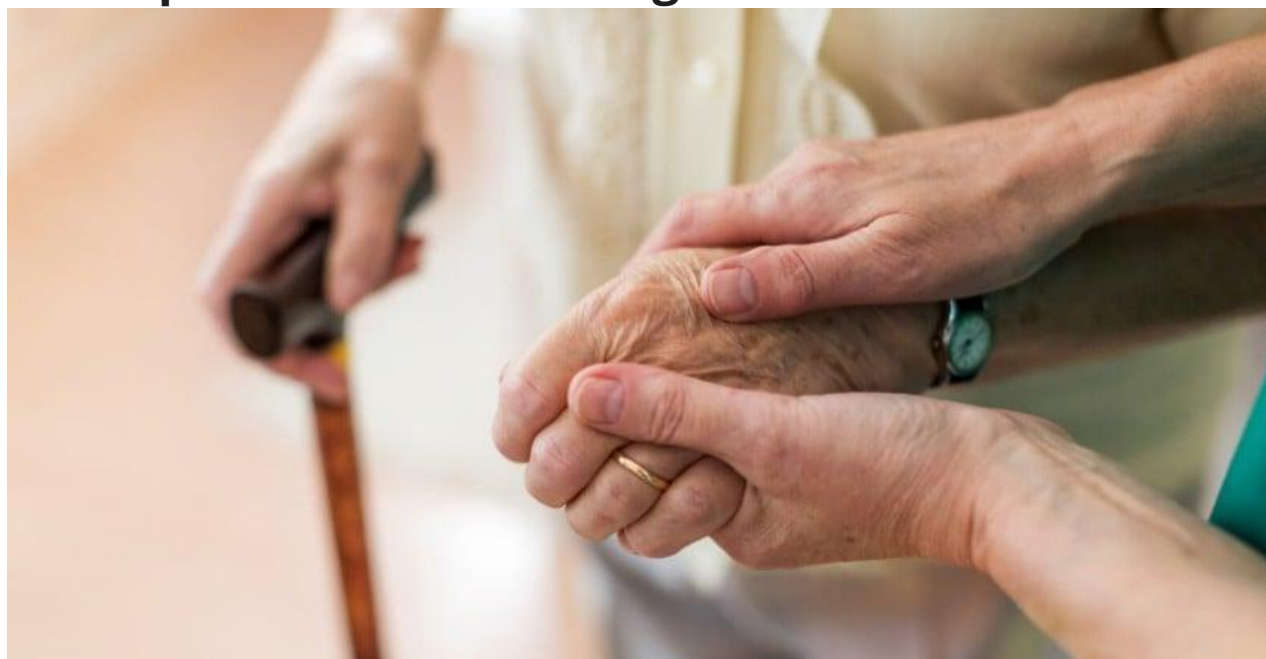
"We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose ([Romans 8.28](#))."

Rachel quoted this scripture to me when I was worried about leaving her with seven children and serving overseas in a dangerous role.

I hope to show more courage this year by continuing to work for those who are disadvantaged, especially people in our community who are facing challenges and uncertainties. Our local Sudanese and South Sudanese communities are grieving at present because of the violence happening in Sudan. I continue to be inspired by how our Sudanese and South Sudanese congregation cope and keep going despite such challenges — their faith in God gives them courage to know that while life can be tough, God is greater than the problems they face.

Resources & Research • Monday 28 July 2025

Managing stress: Anglicare Southern Queensland's self-care tips for dementia caregivers



"Mindfulness involves purposely paying attention to the present moment without making judgement. Evidence suggests mindfulness can help lower your blood pressure, improve sleep, and reduce anxiety and depression," says Anglicare Southern Queensland

Carers are excellent at putting other people first and are often relied on for support, day and night. Caring for someone with dementia can be rewarding, but it can also be tiring and isolating due to the physical, emotional and psychological demands of the role. Over time, these challenges can have a significant impact on the health of carers. While many caregivers are aware of the need to manage their stress and prioritise self-care, it can be challenging given the limited spare time they might have. Anglicare Southern Queensland has put together some useful self-care tips below for carers to help manage their wellbeing.

Incorporate movement into your daily activities

It's no secret that exercise is important in managing stress. The current guidelines suggest adults, aged 18-65 years old, should be aiming for:

- 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity per week – such as a brisk walk, golf, mowing the lawn or swimming
- 1.25 to 2.5 hours of vigorous intensity physical activity per week– such as jogging, aerobics, fast cycling, soccer or netball.

Achieving fitness goals is particularly beneficial if you are supporting someone with dementia, as it can give you a sense of control and accomplishment, while helping you to feel more alert. It can sometimes be difficult for carers to find the time for movement, which is why we recommend trying to fit into your daily activities.

This might look like:

- Hanging out the washing
- Bringing in the groceries, mopping or vacuuming
- Talking to a friend on the phone while walking briskly around the house
- Doing some heel raises while brushing your teeth
- Getting outside and doing some gardening.

Eat nourishing meals

Eating healthy and nourishing meals can help you feel more energised, while positively impacting your physical and mental health. Here are a couple of tips to help you eat healthier as a caregiver:

- Plan your meals in advance. Make bulk meals and freeze for busy days.
- Ensure you have a variety of vegetables in your meals. Frozen vegetables are just as healthy as fresh and can be more affordable.
- Aim to drink 2L or 8 glasses of water each day. Drinking water from a reusable water bottle is one way to help keep track of water consumption.

Practice mindfulness

Mindfulness involves purposely paying attention to the present moment without making judgement. Evidence suggests mindfulness can help lower your blood pressure, improve sleep, and reduce anxiety and depression. You can practice mindfulness by:

- Spending time in nature
- Watching a sunrise or sunset
- Listening to music or learning an instrument
- Journaling at night before bed
- Meditation

If you'd like to have a go at meditation, here is a breath work exercise to get you started:

1. While counting to five, breath in through your nose, and deep down into your belly.
2. Hold your breath for one second.
3. Gently breathe out through your mouth.

Connect with others

Social connection plays an important role in stress management for carers. Whether it's a family member, a friend, or a peer support group, these connections provide an opportunity for carers to connect with others and feel less isolated in their journey.

- Don't be afraid to ask a friend to meet you at your place, so you don't have to spend time travelling
- Schedule in social catch ups in advance and utilise [day respite centres](#)
- Find a local support group for dementia carers
- Volunteer or participate in community events that interest you, outside of your caring role.

If you would like to meet with a group of other carers, we recommend joining our free, six-week program for dementia carers. Learn more or enquire about the program [here](#).

Please remember, it's okay to take care of your own health and happiness. If you're struggling as someone who cares for a person with dementia, contact the free, confidential National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500, any time of the day or night, for information, advice, and support.

First published on the [Anglicare Southern Queensland website](#) on 18 July 2025.

International Court of Justice delivers ruling on States' obligations in relation to climate change



September 2022, Karlsruhe, Germany: Activists demand attention to the climate crisis during a protest at the World Council of Churches' 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany (Photo: Paul Jeffrey/WCC)

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), on 23 July, delivered a ruling on States' obligations in relation to climate change. Following on the heels of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ruling, this opinion clarifies that States have binding legal duties grounded in science, equity, and fundamental human rights.

The ICJ affirmed that States have an obligation under international law to protect the climate from anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions not least for “present and future generations” and to act with a stringent level of due diligence to prevent global warming from exceeding the 1.5C threshold as agreed in the Paris Agreement. Not doing so could pave the way for affected parties to seek reparations.

This legal duty stems not only from the Paris Agreement, but also from human rights law, the law of the sea, and the customary duty to prevent transboundary harm.

The United Nations's highest court asserted that a “clean, healthy, and sustainable environment” is a human right, and that failing to protect the planet from the impacts of climate change may constitute a violation of international law.

Bishop Prof Dr Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, moderator of the World Council of Churches (WCC) central committee, welcomed the decision.

“This is a historic ruling of the ICJ. Even though as an advisory opinion it is not binding for States, it will be a highly relevant legal orientation by the highest judicial body on this globe,” he said.

Bedford-Strohm stressed that for the first time with this clarity in international law, the rights of future generations are seen as the referral point of today’s legal framework.

“No longer is it possible to live a life now, for which people in the future must pay the bill. What has long been seen by churches, religious communities, and nongovernmental organizations as a moral obligation has now been stated as a legal obligation,” he added.

“For the WCC it is a strong encouragement for the recently launched Decade for Climate Justice Action which we just proclaimed at our central committee meeting in Johannesburg. We call on all States to redirect their political priorities and take measures for an ecological transformation, which honors the interests of future generations as much as those of people living now,” he said.

[WCC shares insights during climate protection webinar \(WCC news release, 23 July 2025\)](#)

[From eco-anxiety to hope: Ecumenical International Youth Day 2025 \(WCC news release, 18 July 2025\)](#)

First published on the [World Council of Churches website](#) on 24 July 2025.

Local • Tuesday 29 July 2025 • By Ben Rogers

Fridge over troubled water: Toowoomba Anglican School student flooded with support for campaign appeal



Toowoomba Anglican School student Flynn (Left) and his twin brother Kain (Right) promoting the Fridge for a Friend campaign in April 2025

As the cleanup began in Thargomindah following significant flooding across Western Queensland in March, local grazier Anthony Glasson and his family — including Toowoomba Anglican School student Flynn — created the “Fridge for a Friend” campaign to assist families whose homes were destroyed.

Aiming to donate fridges, washing machines, microwaves and other essential appliances for flood-affected homes, the Toowoomba Anglican School (TAS) family eventually raised over \$70,000 and received truckloads of whitegoods for impacted households.

For Flynn it was a shocking sight to see parts of his hometown in ruins, but it strengthened his resolve that something had to be done.

“The thing that really blew me away was when I went for a flight with my dad — he’s got his pilot’s licence. We flew over Thargomindah and all the houses were knee-deep in water — it was kilometres and kilometres of fast flowing water,” Flynn said.

“It was quite overwhelming to see, I’d never seen anything like that in my whole life.

“Once the water went down, we spent four days driving our jet ski into town helping get fridges, cleaning people’s houses, just helping people get back to their normal lives.”

Thanks to generous donors and a dedicated team of volunteers, the campaign demonstrated the strength of community, compassion and solidarity, and has provided a much-needed boost for the Thargomindah community as rebuilding continues.

Flynn said that digital channels were key to the success of the appeal.

“My dad went on Facebook and did a video talking about it — just asking if people could help and in the next three days it just exploded,” he said.

“We supplied fridges to Thargomindah and Eulo, with over 200 fridges donated to Thargomindah.

“TAS posted about the campaign on their Instagram page showing the whole campaign website my mum made and just publicising it to a whole different community so we could really go that bit further.

“Just a post can do so much — it really helped a lot.”

With Thargomindah State School also impacted by the floods, the school’s library books did not escape flood damage, so Toowoomba Anglican School organised a book run to donate books to Thargomindah just in time for the start of Term 2.

Collected from Toowoomba Anglican School’s Primary Book Swap, the books were warmly received by Thargomindah State School.

While it’s an unfortunate certainty this won’t be the last time natural disasters impact Queenslanders, Flynn encourages other students to do what they can to help those in need when disaster strikes.

“If you have something similar to this happening in your town, whether it’s bushfires or floods, just ask, ‘Do you need a hand with anything?’ — it is rewarding knowing you have helped, that you’ve done something,” he said.

Five fun ways to celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight in your parish, school or ministry in August



"There are some great online shops selling Fairtrade gifts, such as Palestine Fair Trade Australia, which is a volunteer-run non-profit social enterprise and registered charity," says Peter Branjerdporn

I first came across fairtrade goods when my wife, Rachel, brought me to an Oxfam Shop in the city about 20 years ago. I was stunned by the array of beautiful products — kitchenware; clothing; jewellery; coffee, tea, spices and chocolate; handmade stationery; carved boxes; furniture and cushions; and, more.

I became more familiar with the benefits of Fairtrade over the years, including in my current job as Justice Enabler for the Anglican Church Southern Queensland. Supporting Fairtrade in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland is important for a number of reasons, including because Fairtrade combats child labour and trafficking in international supply chains. The Anglican Church Southern Queensland has adopted a [modern slavery statement](#), committing all parts of our Church to identifying and reducing modern slavery risks across our operations and supply chains. Buying Fairtrade coffee and tea, for example, supports this commitment.

Buying Fairtrade products also ensures farmers and producers are paid fairly so they can afford to feed their own families. In addition, buying Fairtrade items supports sustainability and climate care, such as through improving soil and water quality, avoiding harmful chemicals, eliminating deforestation, reducing emissions and protecting biodiversity.

There are an increasing number of certification labels on everyday supermarket products, but only products that are certified Fairtrade with a Fairtrade “mark”, such as with the Fairtrade Australian New Zealand label, are verified by an independent, third-party verification and/or is produced by an organisation that is a member of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) network.



“You can easily find Fairtrade products in Aldi, Woolworths, Coles, many delicatessens and in organic grocery shops — just look for the ‘Fairtrade’ mark,” says Peter Branjerdorn

A key reason “Fairtrade” is the gold-standard “mark” — compared to other types of certifications — is that cocoa, tea and coffee farmers are guaranteed minimum prices. Fairtrade is the only certification scheme that has a mandatory minimum price, which acts as a safety net for farmers when market prices fall, while allowing them to benefit when prices rise. It’s only fair that the farmers who grow and produce much of the world’s food are able to afford to feed their own families.

Fairtrade Fortnight is celebrated annually in August. This year Fairtrade Fortnight is being celebrated between Monday, 4 and Sunday, 17 August and the 2025 theme is “Choose the Mark”.

There are lots of ways that your parish, school or ministry can get involved, such as by:

- hosting a Fairtrade Fortnight morning tea with certified Fairtrade chocolate, tea and coffee offered
- holding a Fairtrade Fortnight chocolate treasure hunt (top tip: affordable Fairtrade chocolate can be found in Aldi)
- inviting a speaker, such as The Rev’d John Martin (who is well known in our community), to give a talk on Fairtrade (please [email](#) me and I can connect you with John).

You might use Fairtrade Fortnight to kickstart the switch to Fairtrade products at home by using this [product finder](#) on the Fairtrade Australian New Zealand website, which provides certified Fairtrade options for coffee, tea, chocolate, spices, oils, textiles (clothing and linen) and skin care. Alternatively,

you can easily find Fairtrade products in Aldi, Woolworths, Coles, many delicatessens and in organic grocery shops — just look for the “Fairtrade” mark.

You can also get a start on your Christmas shopping. There are some great online shops selling Fairtrade gifts, such as [Palestine Fair Trade Australia](#), which is a volunteer-run non-profit social enterprise and registered charity. Palestine Fair Trade Australia sells stunning [jewellery](#); [cookbooks](#) and [children's books](#); traditional [tatreez](#) embroidered items; [bags](#); [baby clothing](#); Christmas [ornaments](#); and, even [organic olive oil](#) grown from thousand-year-old Nabali olive trees. If you are unsure what to buy, Palestine Fair Trade Australia has a [gift card option](#). All proceeds are used to purchase more artisan goods from Palestine, supporting Palestinian families, farmers, communities and artisans to maintain their lands (including olive trees) and culture.



“Palestine Fair Trade Australia sells stunning jewellery; cookbooks and children’s books; traditional tatreez embroidered items; bags; baby clothing; Christmas ornaments; and, even organic olive oil grown from thousand-year-old Nabali olive trees,” says Peter Branjerdporn

There are plenty of ways to get involved in Fairtrade Fortnight this August — hosting a morning tea or chocolate treasure hunt, inviting a speaker, kickstarting the switch to Fairtrade Fortnight products at home and getting a head start on your Christmas shopping are just a few ideas.

Author’s note: You can download a Fairtrade Fortnight toolkit from the Fairtrade Australian New Zealand [website](#) (scroll down to find it), which includes posters, badges and stickers for printing; images of Fairtrade farmers; social media tiles and an email signature banner; and, event hub information. You can also follow Fairtrade Australian New Zealand [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and share Fairtrade Fortnight posts.