

Lambeth Awards 2026 and Europe trip: A photo essay by Bishop Daniel Abot



Bishop Daniel Abot after he received the prestigious Cross of St Augustine for Services to the Anglican Communion from the Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Rev'd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE, at Lambeth Palace on Friday, 11 September 2026, pictured with Agot Deng (Bishop Daniel and Rachel's daughter), Alim Deng (Bishop Daniel and Rachel's daughter), Rachel Jimma (Bishop Daniel's wife), Aliet Agau Alier (Bishop Daniel's niece, who is London based) and Adit Ajok Deng (a family friend based in London) (Image by Lambeth Palace)

Receiving the Cross of St Augustine was very unexpected. When I received the email from Lambeth Palace in June informing me that they wished to award me in this way I thought the email was a scam, so I went to Bishop Cam saying I needed a new email address. After Bishop Cam looked at the email he assured me that it was real. I later found out that [Archbishop Jeremy nominated](#) me for this award. I am very grateful to Archbishop Jeremy for this.

Standing with the Archbishop of Canterbury and my family in Lambeth Palace I thought about God and God's people, who I see as God's family. God calls us to love one another, which means making sacrifices. So, at this award ceremony I thought about [John 13.34-35](#), which says:

"'I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'"



Old friends Bishop Anthony Poggo (Secretary General of the Anglican Communion) and Bishop Daniel Abot at the Lambeth Awards on 11 September 2026 (Image by Lambeth Palace)

It was an honour sitting with Bishop Anthony Poggo, the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, at the Lambeth Awards ceremony. When Bishop Anthony received my family and me at the gates of Lambeth Palace we greeted each other warmly in Arabic and then found a seat next to each other inside.

Bishop Anthony and I served in South Sudan together as honorary Bishops. Bishop Anthony served as the Bishop of the Diocese of Kajo-Keji while I served as Bishop of the Diocese of Duk for eight years. I first met Bishop Anthony when I was Bishop-elect of the Diocese of Duk and I was confirmed in his Diocese, along with three other Bishops. Like me, [Bishop Anthony](#) is a former child refugee.

What I admire most about Bishop Anthony is that he is a man of peace and very humble. While serving as the honorary Bishop of Kajo-Keji he also volunteered with the United Nations to help bring peace to South Sudan. In 2017 I heard him speak powerfully at the House of Bishops in Juba (South Sudan's capital) where he launched his book *Come Let Us Rebuild: Lessons on Nehemiah*. At this gathering Bishop Anthony called all Bishops from the different tribes to work together for peace.



Bishop Anthony Poggo (Secretary General of the Anglican Communion), The Most Rev'd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE (the Archbishop of Canterbury), Bishop Daniel Abot and Rachel Jimma at Lambeth Palace on Friday, 11 September 2026 after Bishop Daniel received The Cross of Saint Augustine (Image by Lambeth Palace)



First awarded in February 1965, The Cross of St Augustine is a circular medallion bearing a replica of the ninth-century Cross of Canterbury, infilled with blue enamel (Image by Lambeth Palace)

[The Cross of St Augustine](#) medallion is heavier than it looks. This award was founded by Archbishop Michael Ramsey, the 100th Archbishop of Canterbury. First awarded in February 1965, it is a circular

medallion bearing a replica of the ninth-century Cross of Canterbury, and decorated with blue enamel.



The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Rev'd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE, presented Bishop Daniel Abot with The Cross of St Augustine at Lambeth Palace on Friday, 11 September 2026 (Image by Lambeth Palace)

Because [Archbishop Sarah was installed](#) as Archbishop of Canterbury in March this was the first Lambeth Awards ceremony that she has led. Probably because my surname starts with an "A" I was the first person to receive their Lambeth Award at this year's ceremony. When my name was called and I approached Archbishop Sarah, she asked if she could put the medallion around my neck. I appreciated the way she asked for my consent. I also really appreciated the Archbishop of Canterbury's address at the ceremony because she focussed on hope.

During the ceremony the award citations were put on a table for attendees to read. A number of people whom I'd never met approached me after reading my award citation (which Archbishop Jeremy submitted with his nomination) saying "Thank you for what you have done" or "I am interested in hearing more about your story".



Bishop Daniel Abot and Rachel Jimma outside the Imperial War Museum in London on 12 September 2026 (Image by Alim Deng)

The day after the Lambeth Awards Rachel and I and our daughters, Alim and Agot, visited different historical sites in London, including the Imperial War Museum. As I walked through the museum's

galleries I found myself feeling distressed seeing the tanks and aircraft because they reminded me of growing up amidst war.

On our trip we visited Europe at the insistence of my niece Aliet who said, "Uncle, you can't go back to Australia without visiting France and Italy. I will organise and pay for the trip." I was absolutely touched by her generosity. Aliet's father was killed during the war in 2002. Her mother, who was my sister, died holding my hand in Uganda in 2016 — we were very close. The day before she died my sister said to me, "Keep your faith." Aliet moved to England from Canada in 2019. Aliet is finding success as a London-based model. We are all very proud of her.

Rachel, Alim and Agot and I flew from London to Paris, where we spent two nights. In Paris we enjoyed a night bus tour of the city. The highlight of Paris was seeing all the historical places at night, such as the Palace of Versailles, the Eiffel Tower, the Paris Catacombs, Notre Dame Cathedral and bridges over the Seine. We were so busy in Paris that we only ate breakfast cereal, but we made up for this in Italy.

Rachel and I visited the Vatican City during our trip. St Peter's Basilica, which is named after Peter the Apostle, was the highlight. We joined in a tour led by an English speaker, who showed us the basilica's features, including St Peter's tomb and where the Pope sits. During this tour we needed to wear headphones, so we could hear the guide as she spoke into a microphone because there were so many people. Sadly, there wasn't a Dinka-speaking guide, so we couldn't hear the tour in our mother tongue.

After St Peter's Basilica we visited the Vatican Museums, including the Sistine Chapel. We also saw the Colosseum from the outside and Castel Sant'Angelo and enjoyed food we haven't tasted before, such as calzone, pasta carbonara and pistachio cassata.

After I returned to London from Europe I connected with a South Sudanese family — the Bol family — whom Rachel and I met in the Kakuma Refugee Camp (Kenya) in the 1990s. The Bol family helped The Rev'd Neil, Holy Trinity's vicar, host a special service and invited me to preach.



Bishop Daniel Abot and Rachel Jimma enjoying fellowship and food with South Sudanese community members from across London in the Holy Trinity, West Bromwich church hall after a special service for Bishop Daniel and Rachel in October 2026 (Image supplied)

After the service we gathered for food and fellowship in the church hall. It was very moving seeing the Bol family again. When Rachel and I left the refugee camp for Australia in 2003 we prayed that the Bol family would find a permanent and safe home. While he was in the refugee camp, Daniel Bol reached out to me in 2018 requesting a support letter for a university scholarship application. When his scholarship was offered, Daniel moved from the camp to London later in 2018 to study business. It was very moving seeing Daniel and his wife, Nyajima, and their five children.



Bishop Daniel Abot and Rachel Jimma were surprised to see a large metal bull move and wink at the Bullring and Grand Central shopping centre in Birmingham in October 2026 (Image supplied)

We stayed in Birmingham City after we returned from Europe. One of the most amusing moments of our trip was when Rachel walked past a large metal bull outside the Bullring and Grand Central

shopping centre in Birmingham and got a shock when the bull winked, moved and made a loud, low “moo-ing” sound. Every day we were in Birmingham shopping and eating, Rachel returned to the bull.

Author’s note: I would like to take this opportunity to thank Archbishop Jeremy Greaves and Western Region Anglicans who have supported me, especially Bishop Cam Venables, The Rev’d Adam Lowe and the St Bart’s, Toowoomba community and friends, who cared for Rachel financially and pastorally while I served unpaid in South Sudan for eight years.

You can [see and download](#) other 2026 Lambeth Awards photos online.

Dates & Seasons • Wednesday 28 October 2026 • By Archbishop Jeremy Greaves KCSJ

Remembrance Day 2026: Reflection and resources



"I take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all Australian Defence Force personnel, including our chaplains and the soldiers, aviators and sailors they faithfully serve," says Archbishop Jeremy ahead of Remembrance Day (Image by anglican focus, National Defence Chaplains' Memorial Grove in Toowong, 2026)

As Remembrance Day approaches this year on Wednesday, 11 November we once again prepare to commemorate those who have died or suffered in wars and peacekeeping deployments.

To acknowledge and appreciate the service of Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel since being installed as Archbishop I have worked annually alongside current or former ADF service personnel to develop themed Remembrance Day video messages.

In 2024 Saibai Crocodile Chieftain Clan elder Uncle Milton Walit — who served in the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment — and I [shared a message](#) recorded at Anzac Square’s memorial to Queensland’s First Nations service men and women, which Uncle Milton helped design. In our message we remembered the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander personnel who were killed while deployed, as well as those who returned home with physical and spiritual wounds, only to suffer discrimination and segregation.

Last year (then) Army chaplain Brigadier The Reverend Rob Sutherland CSC (Retd) and I [shared a message](#) recorded at Churchie's memorial to "those who paid the supreme sacrifice for their country", which was dedicated in 1998. We spoke about what our Diocese's gratitude to veterans and their families might look like, so they feel cared for and supported.

This year, Army Chaplain James Hall and I are [sharing a Remembrance Day message](#) recorded at the National Defence Chaplains' Memorial Grove in Toowong. In our message, Chaplain James affirms that:

"As Christians we believe that Jesus sacrificed his life for all humankind. When I remember those we commemorate today, I am reminded of Jesus' own sacrifice. As a chaplain I know that serving members follow in Jesus' footsteps — those of faith in particular understand his sacrifice."

Chaplain James goes on to explain that:

"Archbishop Jeremy has formed a Veterans and Families Advisory Working Group to ensure veterans and their loved ones are supported, including by resourcing parishes so they are equipped to care for veterans suffering moral injury or spiritual wounds and to care for their family members."

In response, I share the following commitment to veterans and their loved ones:

"My heart goes out to all veterans suffering in this way, and my prayer for you is that you know and receive God's healing. As a working group member my commitment is to continue to lead our Diocese, so our whole Church becomes a place of welcome and nourishment for all current and former ADF personnel and their loved ones."

The annual Remembrance Day video messages are hosted on my [YouTube channel](#) and published on [anglican focus](#) via a "linked" series, so a link to each video message can be easily seen and accessed.



To ensure veterans and their loved ones are supported Archbishop Jeremy has formed a Veterans and Families Advisory Working Group, including The Rev'd Helen Paget, Army chaplain The Rev'd James Hall, retired Air Force chaplain The Rev'd Robert Paget, The Rev'd Jim Raistrick, The Rev'd Dr Ruth Mathieson, Archbishop Jeremy Greaves, Air Force chaplain The Rev'd Cameron Freese, Navy chaplain The Rev'd Stephen Briggs, The Rev'd Mel Conway and former Army chaplain Brigadier The Rev'd Rob Sutherland CSC (Retd) (Image by *anglican focus*, 2026, ACSQ Synod, Churchie)

With the assistance of the Veterans and Families Advisory Working Group *anglican focus* has also started publishing [a series](#) of reflections about the various ways ADF chaplains support veterans and their loved ones. The first item in this series, written by the *anglican focus* Editor, is about the important role an ADF chaplain played in her family's sacramental life. This reflection includes an appeal from The Reverend Rob for ACSQ clergy to assist ADF chaplains with sacramental hospitality and services, including baptisms, weddings, funerals and anointing of the sick.

So, this Remembrance Day, Chaplain James and I encourage you to:

- Pause for a minute's silence at 11am on Wednesday, 11 November.
- Share our [two-minute video message](#), such as on social media, in newsletters and during services or Morning Prayer gatherings.
- Use the Remembrance Day resources on the [Department of Veterans' Affairs Anzac Portal](#).
- Use the Remembrance Day and Defence Sunday resources on the [Defence Anglicans website](#).
- Consider making a donation to help support the ministry of Anglican ADF chaplains via the [Defence Anglicans website](#).

We also encourage ACSQ clergypersons to:

- Consider expressing interest in assisting ADF chaplains with sacramental hospitality and services, by [emailing](#) Defence Anglicans.
- Reach out to The Rev'd Mel Conway, the Chair of the Veterans and Families Advisory Working Group, for resources beyond Remembrance Day.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all Australian Defence Force personnel, including our chaplains and the soldiers, aviators and sailors they faithfully serve.

Editor's note: In an emergency, call 000. 24-hour support is available for veterans and their families from Open Arms on 1800 011 046. People who are distressed may also phone Lifeline on 13 11 14; MensLine on 1300 789 978; Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800; and, beyondblue on 1300 22 4636.

GFS — An Anglican Ministry: Grants and bursaries for 2027



"I look forward to sharing with anglican focus readers about the fruit that 2027 grants and bursaries bear," says Margaret Humphries from GFS — An Anglican Ministry (Image supplied, 2026)

I have served in the role of Office Administrator for GFS — An Anglican Ministry (formally Girls Friendly Society) for over 15 years.

The purpose of GFS — An Anglican Ministry:

"Is to bring others to Christ through our activities and as a serving organization through our motto — 'Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ' (Galatians 6.2)."

One of the best parts of my job is seeing the fruit that comes from the initiatives that GFS — An Anglican Ministry financially supports.

Soon after I commenced in my role, GFS — An Anglican Ministry started providing grants to resource parish youth and children's ministry. This year we are also offering two bursaries for Anglican Church Southern Queensland community members interested in children's and youth ministry who wish to deepen theological training and ministry skills at St Francis College.

What GFS — An Anglican Ministry grants are available to parishes?

GFS — An Anglican Ministry (Brisbane) welcomes applications from parishes for two financial grants for 2027 children's and youth ministry. Both grants must be used for activities for children and youth under 18 years.

An (up to) \$500 grant is available to support the operating costs associated with children's and youth ministry in parishes (applications are due by 11.59pm Monday, 30 November 2026).

Some examples of how parishes have used the (up to) \$500 resource grant over the last year include:

- A bay-side parish used the grant to purchase gifts, candles and materials for a Kris Kringle gathering.
- A hinterland parish used the grant for a special afternoon tea and games event.
- An inner-city Brisbane parish used the grant to purchase Bibles, music, books, stationery and craft supplies for ongoing ministry use.

An (up to) \$1,500 grant is also available to support larger, one-off children's, youth and family ministry initiatives (applications need to be submitted three months prior to the proposed event). Larger initiatives could include a camp, programme, festival or concert.

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

- A Brisbane parish has used the grant for a Messy Advent programme.
- A regional parish used the grant for an annual camp.
- Another regional parish put the grant towards their annual "Christmas Carols on the Lawn" community event.

Nearly all of the grant applications — for both grants — are still submitted by Southern and Northern Region people within our Diocese. So, I again encourage people in our Western Region to apply for these grants.

More information, including terms and conditions, about these grants and the application forms can be found on the [GFS Brisbane Resources and Grants website](#).

What GFS — An Anglican Ministry bursaries are available?

GFS — An Anglican Ministry is now also offering two \$5,000 "Children's and Youth Ministry Training Bursaries" for members of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland wanting to deepen their theological understanding and ministry skills at St Francis College.

The bursaries will help cover the fees for completing two units per person of relevant study at St Francis College in 2027.

More information about the bursary, including how to apply online (and terms and conditions), can be found on the [St Francis College website](#). Online applications are due by 11.59pm on Monday, 30 November 2026.

I look forward to sharing with *anglican focus* readers about the fruit that 2027 grants and bursaries bear.

What is a vocation to ordained ministry and how is it discerned in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland?



"An important part of belonging to a Church community is discerning how you are called to serve within that community or — in some cases — how you are called to be 'sent out' from that community to serve in wider society," says The Rev'd Michael Stalley from the ACSQ's Clergy Development, Training and Wellbeing team

I first sensed God's call to ordained ministry as a teenager while conversing with my father. My dad grew up the son of an Anglican priest, The Rev'd Canon Edward Stalley. In those days a clergy person's family often came a distant second to the ministry. In my conversation with Dad he said something like, "Never become a priest!" It sticks in my memory because I remember my internal response being, "We'll see". Some 10 years later I had received enough nudges that I entered a process to see if the Church would confirm my own sense of God's call.

In my current roles as Director of Clergy Development, Training and Wellbeing and the Director of Discernment I have the privilege to hear many stories that show both these threads — a sense that God is calling and the vulnerability to allow the Church into a conversation that we call "discernment".

In each case God finds a way to "unsettle" or "move" the person through prayer, trusted friends or just a strong feeling of being drawn by God. It is very common for me to hear someone say that this sense of "call" became hard to ignore. There is, although, a need for courage and vulnerability to ask if the Church agrees, which is undertaken through a formalised process.

What is a vocational "call"?

One essential element of discipleship is to seek to become whom God already knows you to be. A vocation in the first place is who we are or, maybe for many of us, what God is calling us to be. It is

best understood in terms of what is the particular and unique contribution God is calling you to make as part of God's community. I think many people would resonate with the idea that it is hard to feel like you belong unless you can contribute your skills and gifts, and in a way that they are valued.

Some individuals may feel that their "career" is strongly vocational, such as teachers, journalists, doctors, paramedics and aged-care workers. For Christians undertaking such vocational roles joining in a Sunday service is often preparation for being "sent out" to fulfill their vocation in the week ahead.

For some individuals being a spouse, parent or carer is experienced as a vocation.

Some may feel called to a "vocation within a vocation". This could be to a particular form of communal living, such as through family life or by joining an intentional community or by taking vows in a religious order.

There are also different types of church ministry vocations. Some people are called to lay ministry, such as serving as a parish youth group leader or as a lay school chaplain. And, some are called to ordained ministry — that is, to the diaconate, priesthood or episcopate.

An important part of belonging to a Church community is discerning how you are called to serve within that community or — in some cases — how you are called to be "sent out" from that community to serve in wider society.

Interestingly, the same pattern — a strong, persistent sense of call and the affirmation of those who know you well — is present in all these vocations.

How is a call to ordained ministry discerned in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland?

Importantly, a ministry vocation call is contextual. Discernment about this kind of call is about the needs of a given community and whether a person is the right "fit" for meeting these needs. In the Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ) ordination to the diaconate or priesthood is a contextual call that is understood in terms of meeting the mission and ministry needs of our Diocese. And, discerning this call is a formalised process.

Because discernment is a question of an individual sense of call and the community's affirmation, the best place to start is with trusted people in your local faith community.

Our conversation will not be centred on the question of "How can you become qualified?", as might be usual for many jobs, but "Are you called?" The purpose of this process remains focused on the question of who God is calling you to be.

In a discussion like this I often encourage the person to contact St Francis College to enrol in a couple of subjects to test their capacity and desire for academic theological study. This is because the capacity to complete academic theological study is one part of discernment and an essential requirement for ordination in the ACSQ. There are, though, numerous other important things that are part of this discernment process.

Other significant parts include character, spiritual practices, commitment to the Anglican Church and passion for the Gospel and the emotional resilience and sound judgement that are necessary for pastoral work, among others.

As the Director of Discernment I oversee the discernment process that advises the Archbishop about someone's suitability and readiness to be a deacon or a priest. It is, though, always the Archbishop who decides who will be ordained and when they will be ordained.

What is the Clergy Development, Training and Wellbeing team?

I am also the team leader for the Clergy Development, Training and Wellbeing (CDTW) team. The CDTW team sits within the new Ministry Development Commission (MDC). We work in collaboration with other Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ) leaders and teams, including the St Francis College academics and staff.

Given recent changes to the ACSQ's commission structures, the name of the team I lead and that I wear a few "hats" I am sometimes asked what my roles involve and where my roles "sit", as well as what the CDTW is responsible for.

Because the CDTW team sits within the new Ministry Development Commission my role as Director of Clergy Development, Training and Wellbeing sits within the MDC, with the reporting line for this role to be determined once the MDC's staffing structure is finalised.

As the Director of Discernment I report to the Archbishop — because ultimately it is the Archbishop's decision who will be ordained (as well as who may be licensed as a priest or deacon in our Diocese). So this role sits within the Episcopal Office. I really appreciate working with Archbishop Jeremy because of the opportunity it provides in this time of change. As a result there is space for frank conversations and the "naming" of problems, which requires vulnerability from all.

So I effectively have two roles with two reporting lines that I undertake from one physical desk, which is based at the St Francis College site in Milton.

How does the Clergy Development, Training and Wellbeing team support people exploring a call to ordained ministry and clergy?

The Clergy Development, Training and Wellbeing team members support clergy across the lifecycle of their ministry, including through the:

- **Enquire program** — which is for people in the early stages of thinking and asking about how God is calling them in ministry.
- **Examine process** — which is the formal discernment process for those asking the Church to discern whether they are suitable for ordained ministry within our Diocese.
- **Grow program** — which involves formation for ordination (formation now sits within the CDTW team).
- **Emerge program** — which involves formation for newly ordained clergy.
- **Flourish program** — which is about supporting clergy ministry and wellbeing (including professional supervision, ministry reviews, wellbeing and ongoing professional development).

Christians take their calls to ministry and mission seriously. Ordained ministry is one expression of Christian vocation — and it's for particular people in particular roles in particular contexts.

What are the first steps for exploring a call to ordained ministry before a formal discernment process commences?

1. Be a regular and active participant in your Anglican faith community over a period time because the call is both *personal* and *communal*.
2. If you think you *sense* a call or are just *curious* about exploring a call to ordained ministry, first bring this sense to your parish priest or chaplain (occasionally it is unclear who the right local priest or chaplain is — in these circumstances you can contact me for advice).
3. If it is appropriate and the timing is right the priest or chaplain will then connect you with the CDTW team.
4. There would then be an initial conversation with a member of the CDTW team to determine where in the process you may be and how best to proceed.
5. The likely first step is to participate in the Enquire program, which brings together the four elements of personal spiritual development, ministry experience, discernment companioning and participation with other Enquirers.

If you would like to find out more about the Clergy Development, Training and Wellbeing team or vocation discernment, please [email](#) the CDTW team.

Films & TV • Tuesday 27 October 2026 • By Jonathan Sargeant

Palestine 36



"Palestine 36 is top-calibre emotional storytelling, eye-opening and moving, that enables the viewer to both feel and understand the Indigenous experience of one of humanity's ongoing catastrophic injustices," says Jonathan Sargeant from St Francis College (Image from <https://palestine36film.com/>)

During a recent holiday overseas I started to ponder the question, "What does my home mean to me?" The responses that occurred to me are core to who I am and are contextualised by my relationships, including with my family. I then found myself pondering what I would do to protect or defend my

home and family. What does your home mean to you? What would you do to protect or defend your home and family?

By 1936 the British Empire's conflicting promises led to unrest and violence in Palestine. Britain, the colonial power, remained committed to supporting its 1917 Balfour Declaration, including "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people". However, when the Balfour Declaration was signed, the British authorities had already promised the Indigenous Arab population an independent state, which Arab leaders understood to include Palestine (an understanding that was [later confirmed](#)). Reneging on its promise to the Palestinian people, Britain's policies brought about "resettlement" on land already inhabited by communities established there for millennia. Palestinian homes, farms and villages were under threat or already being uprooted. Against this backdrop of mounting tension, *Palestine 36* begins.

Yusuf (Karim Daoud Anaya) is a driver for a rich family in Jerusalem, although his loyalty remains with his home village. His commute to work involves numerous checkpoints and identity checks. The family he works for includes educated nationalist reporter Khoulood (Yasmine Al Massri) and husband Amir (Dhafer L'Abidine), whose commercial interests eventually lead to collaboration with British and Zionist businesses. Billy Howle plays Thomas Hopkins, secretary to the High Commissioner Arthur Wauchope, a cameo for Jeremy Irons, who brings his best weary, bland complacency to the role.

In effect we follow the twin paths of Yusuf and Thomas through the events of the massive anti-colonial uprising and strike of 1936 — a movement against British rule and military occupation exemplified by Robert Aramayo's Captain Orde Wingate, a Christian Zionist whose military tactics contributed to him becoming known as "the father of the IDF" (Israel Defense Forces).

As you can tell, director and writer Annemarie Jacir attempts an epic of broad scale, with a plethora of characters and nuanced events. For the most part she is impressively successful. Yusuf's character arc from innocent non-involvement to something altogether else is subtly formed, yet still devastating and impactful. His clear eyes carry the pain and grief of the treatment of his homeland and family. Best of all, his transformation avoids the convenient cliché of "religious radicalisation". Instead, the mounting aggressions of colonial powers and invading "settlers" create an inevitable desire to defend his community. That both Christian and Muslim Palestinians are united in their resistance to the settler-colonial oppressors might be new to some viewers, but is one of many historical plot points.

For some viewers, Thomas' sympathetic civil servant will strike a chord. He begins the film as a well-meaning bureaucrat whose ineffectual nature only becomes apparent as he recognises the spurious disingenuousness of the orders he must carry out. By the film's final moments, his personal response to the cascade of heartbreaking tragedy is both dreadful and understandable, leaving viewers with little doubt as to the seeds of the plight of 21st century Palestinians.

Director Jacir successfully traverses a difficult narrow path with this film. The momentous historical nature of the events it portrays means a panoply of characters, multiple storylines and complex motivations, outcomes and clear foreshadowing. These form the film's strength. You might remember the 1960 movie based on Leon Uris' *Exodus*, a far longer production (three and half hours!) yet lacking even a fraction of the nuance in Jacir's work. She masterfully weaves references to other historical events into a coherent narrative. These include the Peel Commission of the same year, which first proposed partition, and the 1935 "Cement Incident", when Zionists smuggled hundreds of weapons and hundreds of thousands of ammunition rounds in cement drums without punishment. Each

moment inspires further research. Contextualising events is the occasional intercutting of colourised real-life footage from 1930's Palestine, further humanising her script.

There are occasional missteps. The broad nature of the story means some characters flit in and out of the film a little too casually. Amongst many brilliant portrayals, Aramayo's Orde Wingate veers a little close to "moustache-twirling" in his turn as one of the film's antagonists. And, his longish unkempt hair, whilst possibly signalling a loose cannon tendency, seems beyond the realms of possibility for a 1930's British military captain.

These shortcomings are relatively minor compared to the sweep of this story and the impact it carries. As prescient as it is refreshingly nuanced, *Palestine 36* is an ideal film to watch if you desire to understand some of the events that led to the 1948 "Nakba" (Arabic for "catastrophe"), when the modern state of Israel was created, and Israel's ongoing [genocide](#) and [ethnic cleansing](#) in the 6,000-square-kilometre area of 21st century Palestine, which was around 27,000 square kilometres prior to 1948.

In *Palestine 36* Annemarie Jacir, who was born in a Christian family in Bethlehem, has given voice to her peoples' history beautifully. The 20-minute standing ovation this film received at the Toronto International Film Festival was well deserved.

Palestine 36 is top-calibre emotional storytelling, eye-opening and moving, that enables the viewer to both feel and understand the Indigenous experience of one of humanity's ongoing catastrophic injustices.

***Palestine 36*, directed by Annemarie Jacir and rated M, can be streamed [online](#), with screenings still occasionally hosted 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 in 2027. Please contact Jonathan Sargeant for more information via jonathan.sargeant@anglicanchurchsq.org.au.

“World Teachers' Day gives us a dedicated time to stop and recognise the extraordinary work teachers do every day”



"Teachers are partners with families in one of the most important vocations there is — raising and growing a child," says Angela White, from the Anglican Schools Commission, ahead of World Teachers' Day 2026 (Image supplied)

During my final year of primary school in Aotearoa-New Zealand I was a capable student who coasted through learning, just doing what was needed to pass my subjects. I was highly involved in sports and extracurricular activities, but when it came to academics I only put in the minimum amount. My Year 8 teacher, Mr Graham, was an experienced teacher. While I thought I had successfully flown under his radar doing the bare minimum, for some reason towards the end of that year, he asked me to bring my mum into the school for a meeting. When I brought Mum in, he explained to us that he'd written a letter to Christchurch Girls' High School, recommending I be accepted. I was blown away and so was my mum because this is a big school in Christchurch's CBD and was well beyond our means for us to ever consider an application. Somehow he saw something in me that he thought was worthy of extension and to this day I'm very grateful because I did attend that school, which was the beginning of a new trajectory for me towards further study.

My granddad inspired me to become a teacher. He was a huge influence on me because he lived with my family when I was growing up and was respected by the whole community. He was the principal and sole teacher at the Chatham Islands school in the small coastal township of Little Akaloa. In addition to academic subjects he taught gardening, music and swimming, led weekend camps and bushwalked with administrative staff and students. He was beloved in the local education community, which I was always involved in because I grew up with him. So schools became very familiar places to me.

Some of my favourite memories as a teacher were Year 9 camps at Boyle River on the South Island of Aotearoa-New Zealand. The camps were co-led by the school chaplain. We had many amazing pastoral opportunities with our students. School camps are where I had the most impact as a teacher, working and learning together with students in an informal, natural setting while building relationships that lasted long after we returned to the classroom. The chaplain and I also enjoyed many long nights philosophising after the students had gone to sleep. On one of these camps the chaplain and I shared our stories and my spiritual journey deepened through her mentorship and guidance.

There have been many memorable moments in my new Anglican Schools Commission role. For example, during Dr Beth-Sarah Wright's recent residency I had the privilege of co-leading Year 10 student forums at St Andrew's Anglican College in Peregian and West Moreton Anglican College in Ipswich. At both these events we engaged Year 10 cohorts in meaningful reflection with mixed school groups. During the day students investigated virtues, such as compassion, courage, humility, integrity, justice and respect; explored practical wisdom; considered why "good" people do "bad" things, including the "bystander effect"; recognised the impact of one's actions and speech on others; appreciated the equal value of all people, mirroring Jesus' example; and, reflected on their own character journeys. It was a powerful day and the student voices that emerged were insightful and humbling.

Teachers are important because they provide a safe space and can advocate for students on many levels. For many children, a teacher is one of the first adults outside their family who truly sees them. Teachers notice when a child is struggling, celebrate when they succeed and believe in them before they believe in themselves. A great teacher goes beyond reading, maths and science instruction. They help children discover what they're good at and how to keep going when things get hard, while showing them that their ideas and feelings matter. The confidence and sense of belonging a child gains from a caring teacher stays with them for life, shaping how they learn, how they treat others and who they become.

Teachers are partners with families in one of the most important vocations there is — raising and growing a child. Parents and carers trust teachers with their children for a large part of every week, and that trust is built through care, communication and consistency. Teachers often notice things families may miss at home, such as a hidden talent, a friendship worry or a learning need, and they work alongside families to support the whole child. For many families, a teacher becomes a source of reassurance, advice and encouragement, and the relationships formed can make a real difference to the family's wellbeing, as well as the child's.

Every doctor, builder, nurse, engineer, scientist, artist, journalist, priest and leader was taught by teachers. Teachers shape the knowledge, skills and values a compassionate, egalitarian and peace-making nation depends on — from literacy and problem-solving to fairness, respect and active citizenship. Schools are also often the heart of a community, places where families from different backgrounds come together and children learn to live and work alongside one another. By helping every child reach their potential, teachers strengthen both individual futures and the social, political and economic future of the whole country.

As [World Teachers' Day](#) approaches on Friday, 30 October, I am thinking about how important it is to show teachers appreciation — for they also need encouragement. The time I most felt appreciated was when I bumped into some past students several years after I'd finished teaching at their school. The students, who stopped to say "hi", were adults and now in the workforce. It was incredible to me

that they both remembered me as their primary teacher and that our class had bonded like a little family. They even recalled lessons I'd forgotten in this impromptu conversation — lessons that they said had shaped them — which really made feel appreciated as a teacher.

World Teachers' Day gives us a dedicated time to stop and recognise the extraordinary work teachers do every day, much of which happens quietly and goes unseen. Teaching is often demanding and challenging, and a simple "thank-you" card or comment from a student, family or community can remind teachers why their work matters. Celebrating the work of teachers annually also keeps the profession visible, encourages respect for teachers, supports healthy working conditions and inspires the next generation to consider teaching as a career.

Most of all World Teachers' Day is a chance for all of us to remember current and past teachers who've made a difference in our own lives and in the lives of our children and grandchildren.

Editor's note: Honour your teacher on World Teachers' Day, which will be celebrated in Queensland on Friday, 30 October 2026. Check out the Queensland Government's [World Teachers' Day webpage](#) for resources and events. And, remember to hashtag your social media posts with #WTDQLD.

Local • Friday 23 October 2026 • By Michelle McDonald

Service-Learning through inter-generational connection: St John's Anglican College students welcome Anglicare clients



Year 10 students Katrina, Zara, Ishreet, Natalie and Chloe with an Inala community member during a student-led afternoon tea gathering on 15 September 2026 at St John's Anglican College

St John's Anglican College Year 10 Service-Learning students are connecting with local community members, moving beyond the classroom to learn about the positive impacts of belonging and inclusion, in collaboration with Anglicare Southern Queensland.

Through a recent afternoon tea initiative the students, who co-organised the gathering, learnt more about the effects of social isolation on older people while reflecting on the importance of simple gestures of connection, conversation and inclusion.

St John's Anglican College student Ishreet said that fellow Year 10 students enjoyed welcoming Anglicare Southern Queensland Support at Home clients to the college's campus for the afternoon tea.

"One moment that really stood out to me was hearing a woman speak so passionately about her pets — sharing stories about her eight cats, her dog and the special memories she had made with them," Ishreet said.

"Everyone was so kind, encouraging and passionate about the things they spoke about, and playing conversation bingo together created such a warm and positive atmosphere.

"Their stories and the way they connected with us reminded me of my grandparents and made the afternoon feel really special."

Rather than merely hosting an "event", the Year 10 students took an active role in planning a student-led gathering, so they could spend time with their guests, share stories and learn from one another.

Students took responsibility for organising the afternoon tea, including planning the menu, preparing food, organising decorations and setting up the venue.

The Year 10s presented handmade gifts and thank-you cards to the elders during the afternoon tea, sharing words of appreciation and recognition, as well as serving beverages and sweet treats and facilitating games.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Relationships Manager — Corporate and Community Zareena Rajan said that the gathering built on Anglicare's longstanding partnership with [St John's Anglican College](#), which is focussed on a shared commitment to service, compassion and community.

"St John's and Anglicare have shared a wonderful partnership over many years, and it is exciting to see that relationship continuing to strengthen," Zareena said.

"Service-Learning provides a meaningful way to build on that partnership by connecting what students are learning about with real issues affecting people in their own communities."

The gathering provided students with an opportunity to experience first-hand that responding to social isolation does not always require a large or complicated solution — sometimes it can begin with conversation, curiosity and simply making time for another person.

St John's Anglican College Global and Service-Learning Coordinator Alysia Thomas worked closely with the students and Anglicare to ensure the gathering was special for guests, while connecting it with the students' learning.

“As part of their learning, students explored the impact of social isolation and loneliness and reflected on how simply listening to others and giving them your time can make a real difference,” Alysia said.

“In preparation for the afternoon tea, they thought carefully about how to engage with our guests and create a warm, welcoming environment.

“They approached the experience with the hope of building genuine relationships, while deepening their own understanding of the importance of community and human connection.”



Year 10 students Chloe, Sania, Katrina, Ishreet, Zara and Natalie with an Inala community member and Anglicare’s Zareena Rajan during a student-led afternoon tea gathering on 15 September 2026 at St John’s Anglican College

As an Anglican Kindergarten to Year 12 school [St John’s Anglican College](#) “inspires lifelong learning by living faith with the courage to lead self and serve others.”

Following the afternoon tea, students led a Chapel service to celebrate their relationships and share insights learned through their involvement in the Service-Learning experience.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Lifestyle Coordinator Adriana McIntosh, who worked alongside Alysia to coordinate the participation of Anglicare clients, said the afternoon tea buoyed clients beyond their college visit.

“The clients were still talking about the visit the next day, which really showed what a positive experience it had been for them,” Adriana said.

“They felt the students genuinely wanted to spend time with them and really enjoyed hearing about their hobbies, interests and plans for the future.

“In turn, our clients had the opportunity to share advice, reminisce about their own careers and talk about their life experiences.

"It was wonderful to see the connections being made between the students and our clients.

"Several clients said they would love the opportunity to do something like this again, which I think says a lot about how much they enjoyed the experience."

Anglicare's [Support at Home](#) aged care services for older Queenslanders assist clients with daily living tasks and personal care and foster social connections and community engagement.

Zareena said that simple experiences demonstrate what can be achieved when schools and community organisations work together to create opportunities that are meaningful for everyone involved.

"We want to work alongside our Anglican schools in ways that complement what students are already learning and give them a deeper understanding about some of the challenges people are experiencing in our communities," she said.

"As well as fundraise, organise donations and plan large-scale activities, students can facilitate a simple, yet meaningful, gathering where people can connect to show their care for their local communities."

Alysia said that the afternoon tea provided an opportunity to see the students put their learning into practice and experience the value of bringing different generations together.

"What stood out most was the enthusiasm of both the students and our guests to share stories and learn from one another," she said.

"The conversations flowed naturally, there was plenty of laughter and a genuine sense of connection developed throughout the afternoon.

"It was clear that everyone benefited from the opportunity to spend time together.

"Opportunities like this highlight the value of bringing different generations together, and we look forward to continuing to grow our partnership with Anglicare through experiences that strengthen connections within our community."

Editor's note: To find out more about how your Anglican Church Southern Queensland school can connect with Anglicare Southern Queensland, please [email](#) Anglicare Southern Queensland Relationships Manager — Corporate and Community Zareena Rajan.

Q&A with sport fan, keen traveller, Churchie Old Boy and dedicated Senior School teacher and coach, Wei-Wei Tsai



"...my Christian faith inspires me to respond with humility, compassion, perseverance and a commitment to serving others," says Churchie Old Boy and dedicated Senior School teacher and coach, Wei-Wei Tsai (Image supplied)

Where do you currently live?

I currently live on Brisbane's Southside, where I was born and raised, and am very fortunate to have called Brisbane home all my life.

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

I have been involved in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland for most of my life, having grown up within its schools and broader community. As a proud Churchie Old Boy, it is a privilege to now serve as a Mathematics teacher at Churchie and contribute to a community that has played such an important role in my own journey.



Wei-Wei Tsai (second from right) celebrating graduation with friends at Churchie in Brisbane in 2016, marking the conclusion of his school student journey (Image supplied)

What does your Churchie Senior School teacher role involve?

My day is largely spent teaching Mathematics and guiding students through the challenges that come with learning and problem solving. As many teachers would appreciate, the role often extends beyond the classroom, calling on us to be mentors, encouragers, listeners and trusted adults as we help guide students through an important stage of their lives.



Churchie Mathematics teacher Wei-Wei Tsai teaching Senior School students at Churchie in 2026 (Image supplied)

What do you most love about being a Churchie teacher?

One of the things I value most about being a Churchie Mathematics teacher is working alongside colleagues who continue to teach and challenge me, even 10 years after teaching me as a student. Equally rewarding are the relationships built with students over time, particularly when former students stop to say “hello”, share what they have been doing, and provide a glimpse into their growth beyond my classroom.

What is a highlight you have experienced as a Churchie Senior School teacher?

Earlier this year, I told my Year 11 class that I was feeling unwell and might need to take the following day off. When I woke up the next morning, I was greeted by messages from the entire class on our online learning platform wishing me a speedy recovery. It was a simple, but powerful, reminder that education is about more than academic achievement — it is also about helping and seeing young people grow in character, kindness and compassion.

What projects or activities are you currently working on?

One area I am continually working on is becoming the best teacher I can be for my students. Teachers make countless decisions in the classroom each day that may be more or less effective than we realise. To help refine my practice, I regularly listen to educational podcasts that challenge and form my thinking about teaching and learning. Some of my current favourites are those hosted by Ollie Lovell, Craig Barton, and the duo of Caiti Wade and Greg Ashman.



Churchie teacher Wei-Wei Tsai celebrating with a chess student he coached after the Churchie secondary team won the Queensland Inter-School State Chess Championships in Brisbane in 2025 (Image supplied)

Why is it important for all Australians to work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards Reconciliation?

As someone from a culturally diverse background, I believe Reconciliation begins with listening to, learning from and empathising with the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, while simultaneously working together to create opportunities for all Australians to thrive.

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

I believe everyone will face challenges and setbacks throughout life, and my Christian faith inspires me to respond with humility, compassion, perseverance and a commitment to serving others.

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

I believe the Anglican Church's greatest strength is its ability to bring people together in supportive communities. We make the most of this strength when investing in genuine relationships and serving those around us with care and compassion.

What is your favourite Bible scripture and why?

My favourite scripture, Micah 6.8, has stuck with me since high school: "Act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." I strongly appreciate the simplicity of this verse and its reminder to live with integrity, compassion and humility in our everyday interactions with others.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

The Dalai Lama inspires me because of his messages of compassion, understanding and respect. He reminds us that people from different cultural and religious backgrounds can learn from one another and contribute positively to a diverse society.

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

The best advice I have received is "don't be resistant to change". This advice was given to me by one of my mentor teachers, Mr Steven Taylor. The moment we think we have nothing left to learn is often the moment we stop becoming better versions of ourselves — whether in teaching, medicine or any other profession, staying current matters.

What book do you recommend the most and why?

Over the last few years, it would be my former UQ professor Kayoko Hashimoto's *Japanese Language and Soft Power in Asia*, which I read while studying my undergraduate degree. While it is targeted towards a niche audience, I think everyone living in Australia could learn a thing or two from it because Dr Hashimoto highlights how language is much more than just a communication tool. It can build bridges between cultures, foster mutual understanding and shape how nations connect with one another. In a multicultural country like Australia, I believe there is great value in appreciating different languages and perspectives because they help us better understand both our neighbours and ourselves.



Wei-Wei Tsai celebrating graduation day in 2023 with Dr Kayoko Hashimoto, a Senior Lecturer in the School of Languages and Cultures at the University of Queensland (Image supplied)

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

“Struggling is learning”. As a Mathematics teacher, I have seen that it is when students are most challenged that they learn the most. In a world where answers are increasingly only a click away, there is still immense value in sitting with a problem, persevering and discovering the solution for yourself.

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

When I’m having a bad day, I turn to my mentor teachers, Mr Steven Taylor, Ms Asako Ono and Ms Shiyi Xu, at Churchie. They are among the hardest working people I know. They have the biggest hearts of gold, and their kindness, wisdom and unwavering support always help me regain perspective.



Churchie Mathematics teacher Wei-Wei Tsai with fellow Churchie language teachers and mentors Shiyi Xu, Asako Ono and Steven Taylor at Churchie in 2026 (Image supplied)

What is the funniest thing that happened to you recently?

I am sometimes reminded that students think teachers stop developing digital awareness the moment they graduate university. Recently a student attempted to catch me off guard with one of the latest internet “brainrot” jokes, only for me to “beat him to the punchline” and redirect him to his schoolwork. I think the class was more surprised that I understood the reference than by the joke itself.

What makes you nostalgic and why?

Every day at Churchie makes me a little nostalgic. Whether I am teaching in the same classrooms where I once sat as a student, supporting young students through the same challenges I faced, or being involved in the same co-curricular activities that shaped my own school experience, I am constantly reminded of the impact that Churchie had on me. It is a privilege to now contribute to the same community that played such an important role in my growth.



Churchie student Wei-Wei Tsai (centre) celebrates with teammates and Max Condon after winning the GPS Mathematics Competition in Brisbane in 2015 (Image supplied)

What is the kindest gesture you have ever witnessed?

Some of the kindest gestures I have witnessed is when athletes thank match officials and congratulate their opponents immediately after a major defeat because it demonstrates integrity and respect even when no one would blame them for reacting otherwise. My fondest example of this was seeing Churchie Old Boy David Pocock, after losing the 2015 Rugby World Cup final, walk straight over to referee Nigel Owens to shake his hand and thank him “for a great match”.

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

I love spending my free time around sport, whether that’s playing, watching or coaching. If there’s a ball involved, chances are I’ll enjoy it, although cricket has never quite won me over. I recently renewed my Brisbane Broncos season membership and am already looking forward to next season.

Where do you love travelling to and why?

I love travelling to Japan, and with nearly 10 visits under my belt, I am continually inspired by the country's rich culture, the kindness of its people and the deep sense of respect that is woven into everyday life.



Churchie Mathematics teacher Wei-Wei Tsai and fellow Churchie Old Boy Oliver Liu travelling in Kyoto, Japan, in 2024 (Image supplied)

Editor's note: The *anglican focus* team would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Wei-Wei Tsai and all our dedicated teachers as World Teachers' Day approaches on Friday, 30 October 2026. Please visit the [World Teachers' Day webpage](#) for more information and resources.

Corporate volunteers roll up their sleeves for new youth homelessness facility



Rachel Smith and Ridhwan Dawoodjee from ALD Group assembling furniture for Anglicare Southern Queensland Youth Homelessness Accommodation Project, which will be opened on Friday, 30 October 2026 (Image supplied)–

A new youth homelessness facility in Beenleigh is one step closer to welcoming its first residents after 90 corporate volunteers helped transform 30 newly completed apartments into ready-to-live-in homes.

Volunteers from businesses and organisations across South East Queensland came together on Friday to help put the finishing touches on Anglicare Southern Queensland's new Youth Homelessness Accommodation facility, setting up apartments for the young people who will soon call them home.

The volunteers assembled and arranged household items, stocked kitchens, prepared bedrooms and cleaned living spaces as part of a major effort to have the facility ready for its first residents.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Youth Homelessness Accommodation Project Coordinator Bella Dredge said the support of volunteers had helped turn a newly completed building into a welcoming place to live.

"We got the keys to the building a week ago and gave ourselves a week to get 30 apartments completely set up and ready for young people, so having 90 corporate volunteers come in and help us has been incredible," Ms Dredge said.

"Everything is brand new. They'll have a new bed, a new TV, new plates and crockery and a safe, clean space that is theirs. We want the young people who come here to see the type of home they deserve and should expect for their future. When they eventually move on to private rentals or other housing, we hope they carry that same expectation with them."

Ms Dredge said the volunteers – most of whom were corporate supporters or suppliers of Anglicare – had embraced the day, quickly getting stuck into the task of turning empty apartments into welcoming homes.

“It almost feels like helping a friend move, except it’s a friend you haven’t met yet,” she said.

“Some of the young people who come to us have been living in really unsafe environments or may not have had many things of their own.

“They’ll be able to walk in here and have their own safe space and know that everything in it is there for them.”

Among those taking part was MinterEllison partner Julie Whitehead, whose firm has supported Anglicare’s project with pro bono legal expertise in building and construction.

Ms Whitehead said homelessness had long been a focus of MinterEllison’s community investment program.

“Homelessness can affect anyone, at any time and at any age, and that’s why it has been one of the core areas of focus for us,” Ms Whitehead said.

“We were able to bring our legal expertise in building and construction to this project, while Anglicare brings the expertise to deliver the services young people need.

“What makes this project particularly exciting is that we can see something tangible here today. We can see the building and the difference it is going to make for young people and hopefully play a part in helping break the cycle of homelessness.”



MinterEllison volunteers Charlotte Gordon, Julie Whitehead and Siobhan Beckett helped assemble furniture and arranged household items ahead of the official opening of Anglicare Southern Queensland’s Youth Homelessness Accommodation Project on Friday, 30 October 2026 (Image supplied)

The purpose-built facility will provide 30 units of crisis accommodation for young people aged 16 to 25 who are experiencing, or at significant risk of, homelessness.

Residents will have their own accommodation and access to around-the-clock support, helping them build the skills and stability needed to move towards independent living.

Ms Dredge said the support from businesses and the wider community had been overwhelming.

"We've had people giving up their workday to come and help us, businesses donating food and other items, and people giving us their time and expertise," she said.

"We're incredibly lucky to have that support. I can't wait for our first residents to come through the doors and have a safe space of their own."

The Youth Homelessness Accommodation facility will be officially opened on Friday, 30 October.

People & History • Wednesday 28 October 2026 • By Michael Rogers

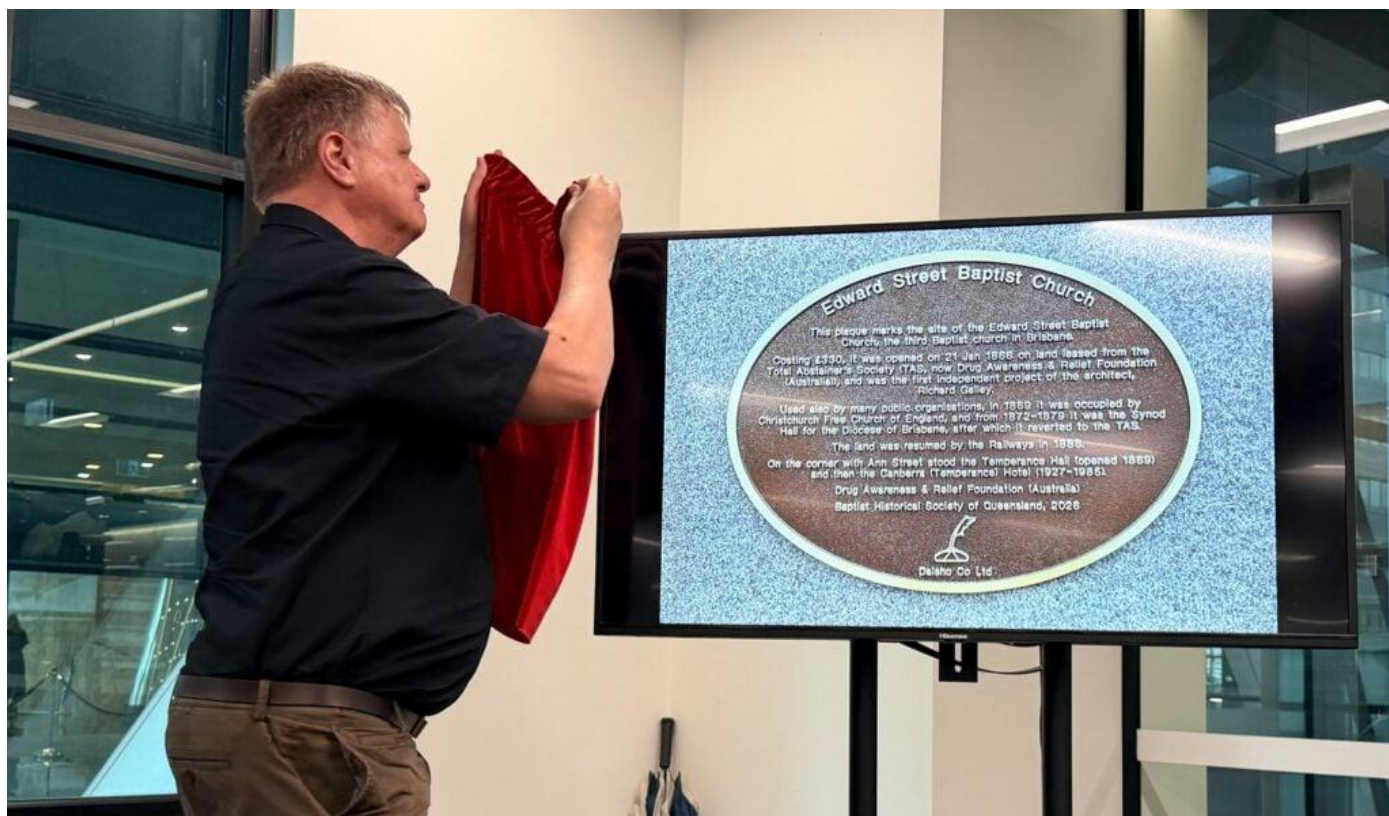
Dedicated researchers unveil historical link between Brisbane Baptist and Anglican Churches



ACSQ archivist Michael Rogers and former Baptist honorary archivist Rev'd Dr David Parker with an image of the plaque commemorating the Edward Street Baptist Church site at the 192 Central building (192 Ann Street, Brisbane) on 22 October 2026, with the plaque showing on a screen because wet weather led to the plaque unveiling ceremony being held indoors (Image from the ACSQ Records and Archives Centre)

Like many things long past, the history of previous landmarks is easily forgotten. It is often only through the work of dedicated individuals or groups that historical buildings, including meeting places and church sites, are remembered.

On Thursday, 22 October I attended the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the site of the Edward Street Baptist Church — Brisbane's third Baptist church — on the corner of Edward and Ann Streets in the Brisbane CBD. Senior Pastor for the City Tabernacle Baptist Church, The Rev'd Glenn Brodie, unveiled the "virtual plaque", which was shown on a screen indoors due to wet weather.



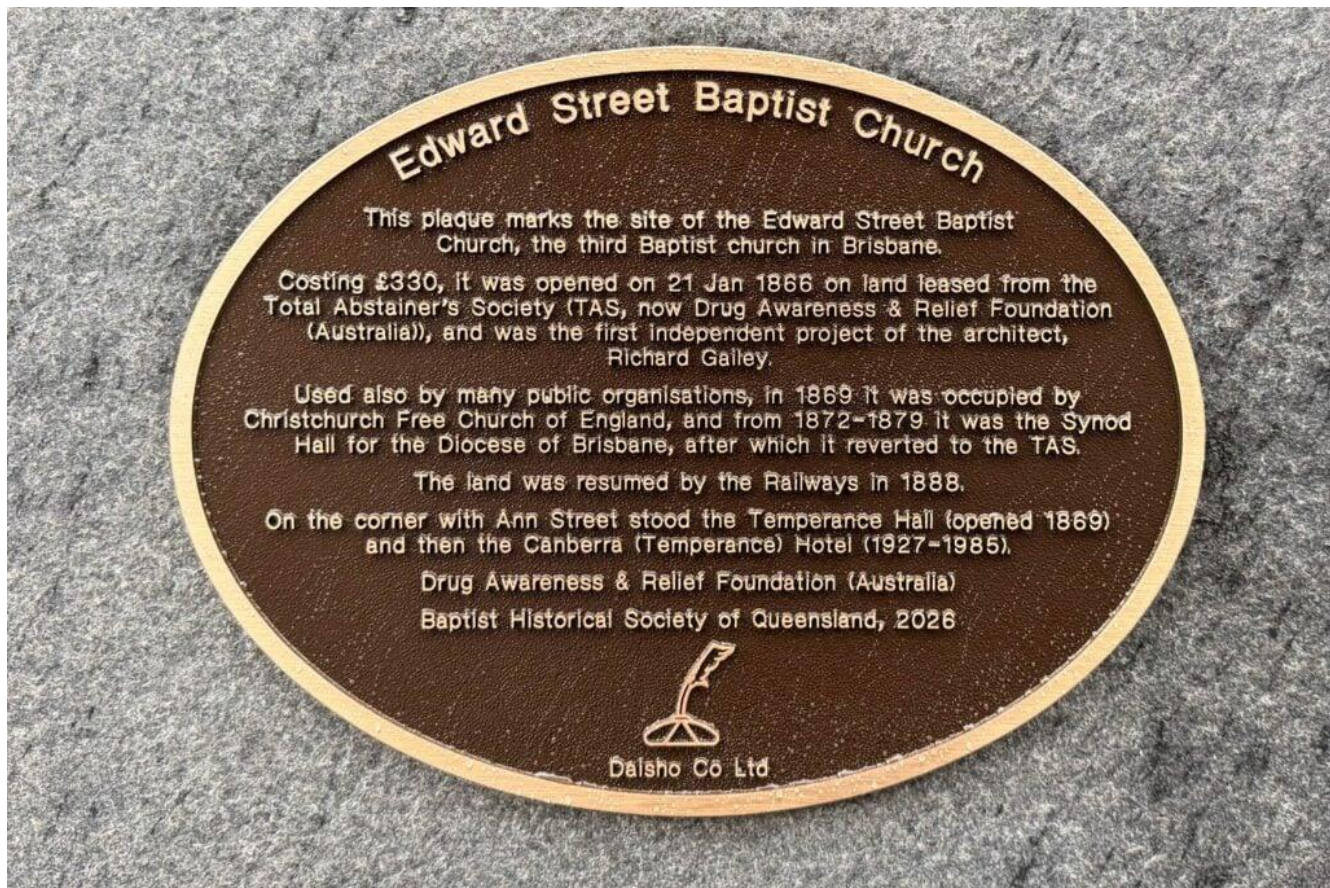
The Rev'd Glenn Brodie from the City Tabernacle Baptist Church unveiling the "virtual plaque" commemorating the Edward Street Baptist Church site at the 192 Central building (192 Ann Street, Brisbane) on 22 October 2026, with the plaque showing on a screen because wet weather led to the plaque unveiling ceremony being held indoors (Image from the ACSQ Records and Archives Centre)

Although our Diocese does not have a current link to the place, the former building that the plaque commemorates hosted some of the first meetings of the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane in 1872 through to 1879.



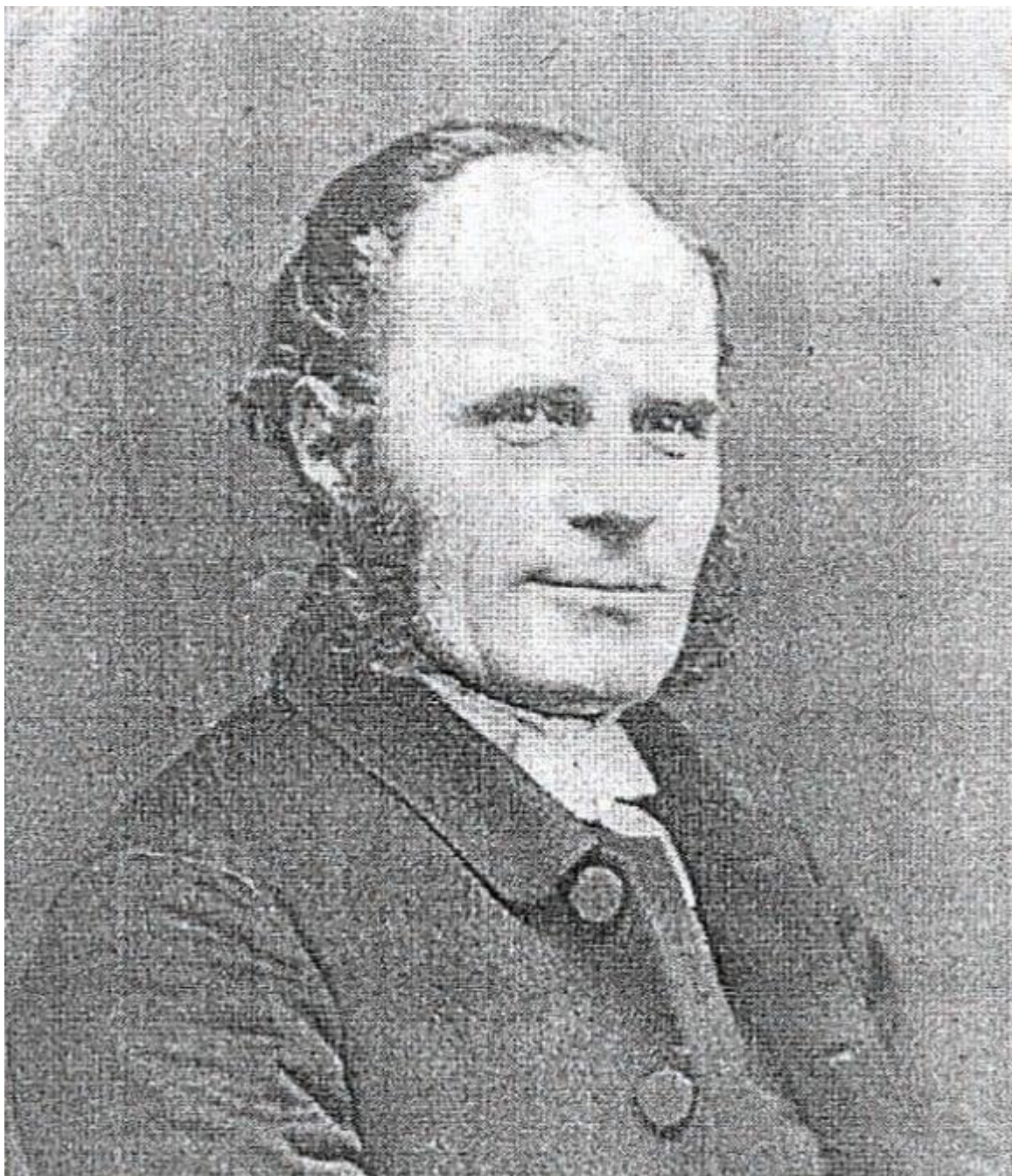
Overview of Brisbane c.1870 showing Synod Hall, Edward Street on the left, with the Temperance Hall behind (Image from State Library of Queensland online catalogue FL94603)

In 1865 a church group, which came to be known as the Edward Street Baptist Church after it [split](#) from the Wharf Street Baptist Church due to an internal “disagreement”, built a dedicated church hall on land leased from the Total Abstinence Society. The architect of the building was [Richard Gailey](#), who arrived in Brisbane from Northern Ireland in 1864. Gailey also designed The Wickham Hotel (1885), Regatta Hotel (1886), Jubilee Hotel (1887), Prince Consort Hotel (1888), Sandgate Baptist Church (1887) and the Courier Building (1885-7) on the corner of Queen and Edward Streets, which was the first high-rise office building in Brisbane. However, Edward Street Baptist Church was the first Brisbane building to be designed by Gailey, “who donated his fee to the church”. Edward Street Baptist Church was officially opened in January 1866.



The plaque commemorating the Edward Street Baptist Church site, which is located on the exterior of the 192 Central building (192 Ann Street, Brisbane), was unveiled during a ceremony on 22 October 2026 (Image from the ACSQ Records and Archives Centre)

The congregation of the Edward Street Baptist Church then moved to another site. From October 1868 the church was hired by The Rev'd Thomas Cooper Searle, who was [ordained in England](#) and sent to Australia in 1842 on the *Haidee* after becoming indebted to his parishioners.



The Rev'd Thomas Cooper Searle (Image sourced from "The Peripatetic Reverend" by Jane Fraser, [The Advocate](#), October/November 2021, Issue 103, p.7, The Diocese of Wangaratta)

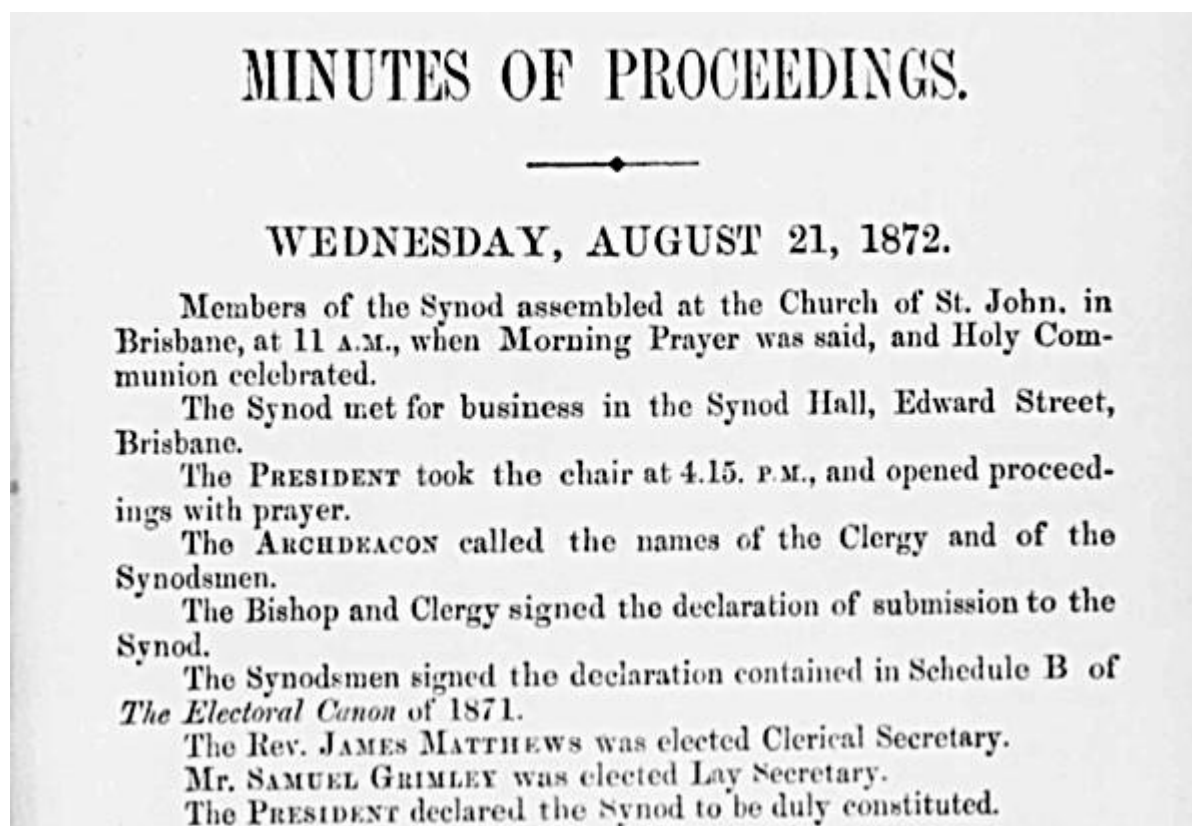
Searle labelled his church the "[Free Church of England](#)", which he established initially in Gympie and then in Brisbane following arguments with Bishop Tufnell. Searle's congregation originally met in the nearby School of Arts before holding church member meetings in the Edward Street Baptist Church.



School of Arts (Brisbane) building in c.1879 (Image from [State Library of Queensland](#) online catalogue)

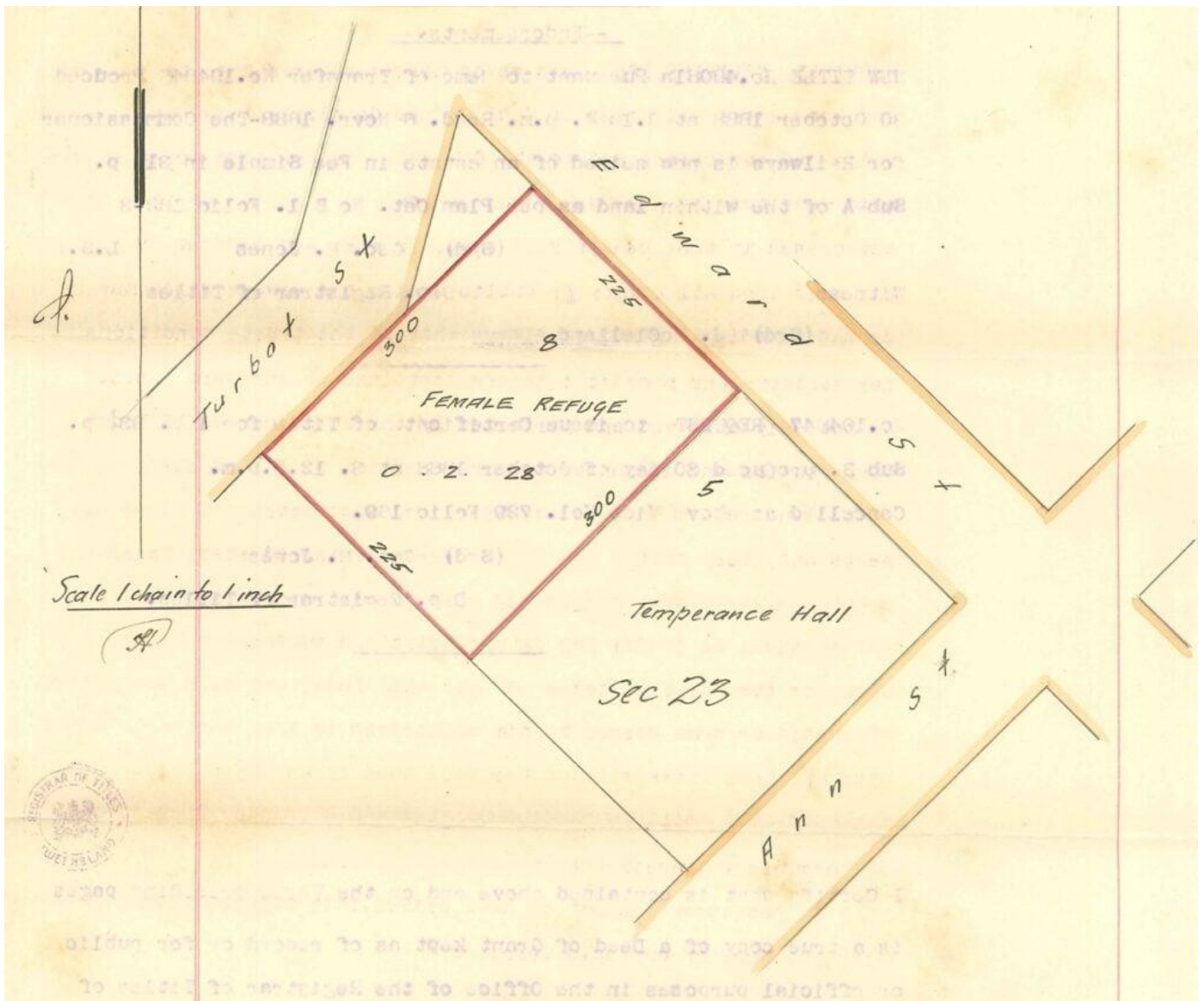
After the Edward Street building was taken over by the "Free Church of England" it was named "Christ Church" under Searle's leadership. Searle was only in Brisbane for a short period before [fleeing to Hawaii in 1870](#) due to unpaid debts, after fleeing from Tasmania, South Australia, New Zealand and North Queensland, as well as England, for the same reason. It was known as "Christ Church" until 1872, when the lease on the building was taken over by the Diocesan Council of the Church of England (Brisbane).

In August 1872 the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane held its meetings in what became known as the "[Synod Hall, Edward Street](#)". The previous year's Synod had been held in the Metropolitan District Court building on Queen Street.



Extract from "Minutes of Proceedings" of the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane on 21 August 1872, noting "Synod Hall, Edward Street" (Image from the ACSQ Records and Archives Centre)

According to the 1872 Synod roll, there were 17 clergy and 35 laity in attendance. There would likely have been people assisting in the running of the meeting, meaning that the building would have been large enough to hold at least 60 people.



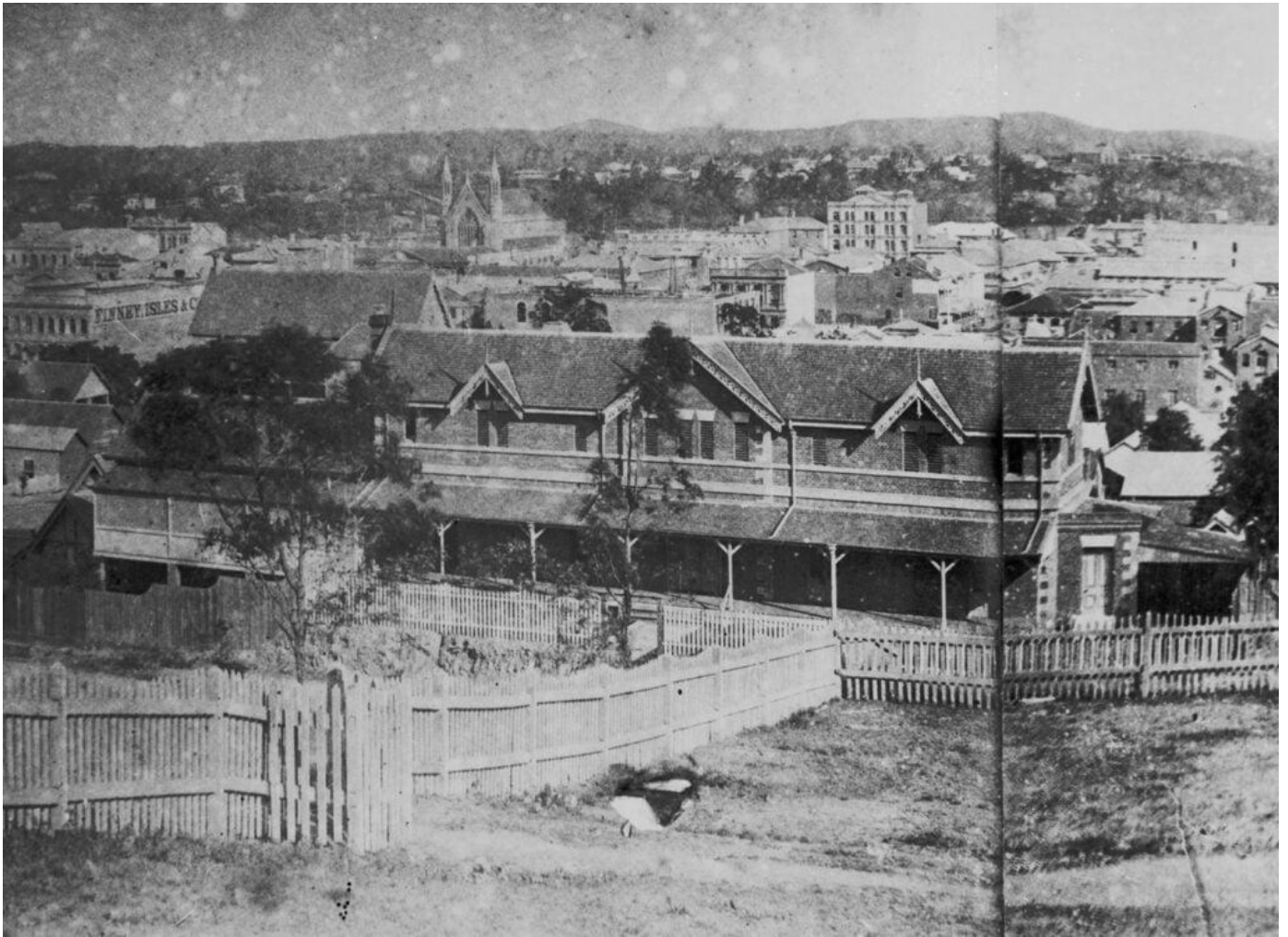
Registrar of Titles site plan of Edward, Ann and Turbot Streets c.1875 showing the land owned by the Total Abstinence Society and the land granted to the Brisbane Female Refuge and Infants' Home (Image from the ACSQ Records and Archives Centre)

The Temperance Hall was on the corner of Edward and Ann Streets, with the Synod Hall located just up Edward Street towards Wickham Terrace. The Female Refuge and Infants' Home, which was founded by Ann Drew and operated by a committee of women from various denominations in the nearby School of Arts, was granted a deed on land just up the hill on Edward Street.



Portrait of Ann Drew, c.1870 (Image from the John Oxley Library)

A new building for the Female Refuge and Infants' Home was completed around 1880.



Brisbane Female Refuge and Infants' Home on Turbot Street, taken c.1885 (Image from [State Library of Queensland](#) online catalogue)

The minutes of the Synod of the Diocese of Brisbane for 1880 note that:

"...the lease on the building in Edward Street expired on the 31st December 1879 and the building was handed over to the Trustees of the Total Abstinence Society".

A new Synod Hall was constructed on land owned by the Diocese of Brisbane on George Street in early 1880 and was officially occupied on 31 May 1880. Meetings of the Synod and Diocesan Council were thereafter held in the new hall.

It is not known exactly when the old building (which became known as "Old Synod Hall") was torn down, but it is generally agreed that it was around 1888 —when the Queensland Colonial Government resumed land and constructed a railway line from Roma Street through to Fortitude Valley and Bowen Hills.

The recent plaque unveiling ceremony commemorating the site of the Edward Street Baptist Church was hosted by Eric Kopittke, the President of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland. Representatives of Daisho Co Ltd, the current owner of the 192 Central building located on 192 Ann

Street, assisted with the plaque's placement on the building's exterior and with the event and joined in the ceremony.

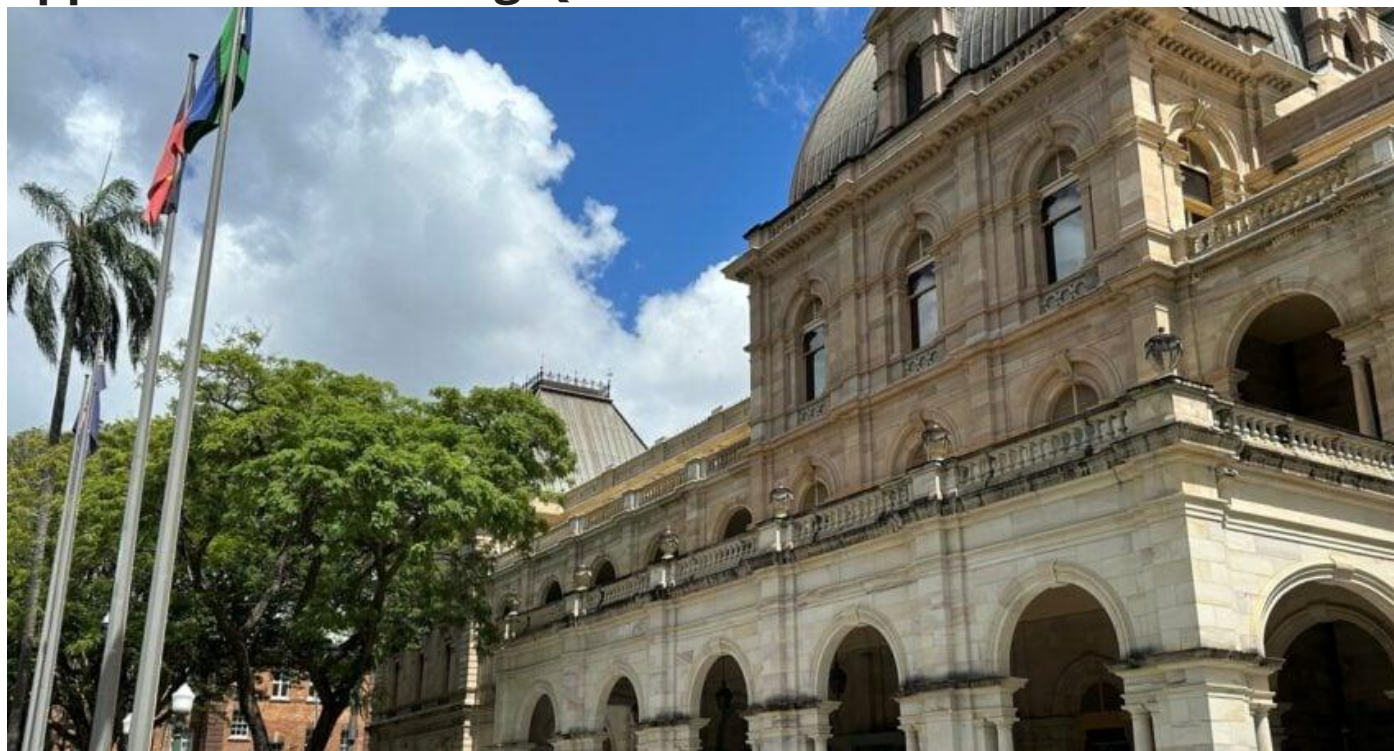
Former Queensland Baptists honorary archivist, The Rev'd Dr David Parker, who co-ordinated much of the research and planning for the event, and other members of the Baptist Historical Society of Queensland also gathered for the ceremony. David recently [handed over management](#) of the Queensland Baptists Archives to Sue and Ian McQuay, who mentioned that David established the archives in 1982 and managed it for over 40 years in an honorary capacity.

Anyone walking through this area will note that the site is largely dominated by Central Station — the Palace Backpackers Brisbane is just across the road from the plaque's location. Anyone exiting Central Station from the Edward Street side may spot the plaque through the traffic. It will hopefully act as a reminder of this part of Brisbane's history — and that our historical places of worship and church meetings can still be celebrated, even if the "bricks and mortar" of the church places no longer exist.

Author's note: Details about the early Brisbane Baptist churches and the Synod Hall were sourced from records held in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland archives and from "The Edward Street Baptist Church Revisited" by Bill Hughes [Qld Baptist Forum](#) (April 2010, No 75, p.3). Information about The Rev'd Thomas Cooper Searle was sourced from "The Peripatetic Reverend" by Jane Fraser ([The Advocate](#), October/November 2021, Issue 103, p.7).

Local • Wednesday 21 October 2026 • By Matthew Nicholls

Anglicare Southern Queensland warns "tough on crime" approach risks failing Queensland's children



Anglicare Southern Queensland's submission to the Queensland Parliament's Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee about the Breach Bail, Go to Jail and Other Legislation Amendment Bill highlighted findings that restorative justice conferencing reduced the frequency and seriousness of reoffending compared with court processes, while also producing positive outcomes for victims (Image by anglican focus)

Anglicare Southern Queensland has strongly criticised a recommendation to pass Queensland's Breach Bail, Go to Jail and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026, warning that mandatory youth detention and weakened diversion safeguards risk drawing more young people into the justice system without addressing the causes of offending.

Tahnee Ledgerwood, Group Manager, Youth Justice at Anglicare Southern Queensland, said it was deeply concerning that the Queensland Parliament's Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee recommended passing legislation it found incompatible with Queensland's *Human Rights Act 2019*.

"Keeping communities safe is non-negotiable, but mandatory detention and weakened safeguards are not a substitute for effective intervention. We need responses that reduce future offending, not simply tougher penalties," Ms Ledgerwood said.

The Bill proposes a mandatory minimum 12-month detention sentence for children who commit prescribed offences in specified circumstances while on bail. It also changes the requirement to consider diversion from "must" to "may".

Ms Ledgerwood said these changes risked prioritising punishment over rehabilitation.

"Many young people in the justice system have complex and intersecting needs, including disability, trauma, and mental health challenges," she said.

"Without proper assessment and support, we risk treating these needs as defiance and responding with detention rather than addressing the causes of offending.

"Diversion is not letting young people off the hook. It is about meaningful accountability and choosing a response that can prevent further harm. Restorative justice can help young people take responsibility, repair harm and give victims a voice."

Anglicare's submission highlighted Queensland evaluation findings that restorative justice conferencing reduced the frequency and seriousness of reoffending compared with court processes, while also producing positive outcomes for victims.

Ms Ledgerwood said the Queensland Government should focus on strengthening interventions that hold young people accountable while helping them change their behaviour.

"Intensive community-based bail support can provide structure, supervision and connections to education, health, cultural and community services," she said.

"These supports can help address the factors contributing to offending while keeping young people connected to their families and communities."

Anglicare is also concerned about extending human rights override provisions without strong safeguards, independent review and regular public reporting.

"Human rights protections must not become optional. If the Government is going to continue to limit those protections, it must demonstrate why that is necessary and proportionate, and be held accountable for the impact," Ms Ledgerwood said.

“This is not a process that should become normalised. We cannot lose sight of the rights and individual circumstances of children, even when they have caused harm. Strong safeguards and accountability are essential when decisions can take away a child’s human rights.”

Anglicare is calling on the Queensland Government to remove mandatory youth detention, retain the requirement to consider diversion, strengthen intensive community-based bail support, and ensure children’s individual circumstances and support needs inform bail and detention decisions.

Ms Ledgerwood said a more effective youth justice response must balance accountability with prevention and rehabilitation.

“Community safety should be measured by whether we prevent future offending and protect people from harm, not by how punitive our laws appear,” she said.

“Queensland needs a youth justice system that gives young people the best chance of changing course while holding them accountable for their actions.

“This is what creates meaningful change in the lives of young people, respects the voices of victims and makes communities safer over the long term.”

International • Wednesday 28 October 2026 • By World Council of Churches

Pacific churches reject US call to end UN decolonisation mandate



The Rev'd James Shri Bhagwan, Pacific Council of Churches general secretary (right), and Dr Sivendra Michael, Fiji's permanent secretary for Environment and Climate Change. (Photo by Marcelo Schneider / WCC)

The Pacific Conference of Churches, in a message on 19 October, rejected a US call to end the mandate of the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization.

“Decolonisation is complete when the peoples still on the list have freely determined their future,” the message reads.

“The Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism ends in 2030; this is a time to accelerate the work, not abolish it.”

The right of peoples to self-determination is not a matter of opinion, emphasized the message.

“The International Court of Justice, most recently in its 2019 Chagos advisory opinion, has treated Resolution 1514 as declaratory of the customary right to self-determination,” the text reads.

“To call the foundation of the UN decolonisation process ‘non-binding’ is to tell colonised peoples that their rights are optional.”

The message, signed by PCC general secretary Rev. James Shri Bhagwan, stresses that international oversight remains necessary.

“Pacific churches have stood for a nuclear-free and independent Pacific for more than five decades,” reads the text.

“Our region still carries the fallout of nuclear testing in Mā’ohi Nui and the Marshall Islands.”

The peoples of the territories deserve better than to be used in other governments’ political campaigns, the message notes. “That applies to every government, administering powers included,” the text reads.

“The peoples of our region are not asking for favours. They are asking for a promise made in 1960 to be kept.”

[Read the full message](#)

First published on the [World Council of Churches website](#) on 20 October 2026.

Anglicare Australia calls for Youth Allowance to be abolished as report reveals shocking shortfalls



"Young people pay the same prices at the supermarket, the same prices for transport, and the same rents as everybody else. But our income support system expects them to survive on less," says Anglicare (Image by Melissa Walker Horn on Unsplash)

Anglicare Australia is calling on the Federal Government to abolish Youth Allowance as a lower-rate payment and bring young people on to the same working-age payments as other adults.

A new report, [*Falling Short*](#), released as part of [Anti-Poverty Week](#), finds that:

- A young person living at home with their parents has just \$34 left each week after paying for food and transport, assuming they pay no rent and have their food costs halved.
- A young person in shared accommodation falls behind by \$52 a week after paying for rent, food and transport, with rent set at just \$178 a week.
- A young person living alone would fall behind by a staggering \$382 a week.

"These figures show that Youth Allowance is setting young people up to fail," said Anglicare Victoria CEO and report spokesperson Paul McDonald.

"Young people pay the same prices at the supermarket, the same prices for transport, and the same rents as everybody else. But our income support system expects them to survive on less.

"Even in our most generous scenario, where a young person lives rent-free with their parents, they have just \$34 left after food and transport. That's barely enough to cover a phone bill, let alone healthcare, clothing, study costs or saving to move out. For young people who can't live at home, the situation is dire. Even with a cheap room in a share house, Youth Allowance falls short of the basics.

“Of course, young people aren’t literally spending money they don’t have each week. Instead, they are likely to be skipping meals, delaying medical care, or taking on debt. Others are forced to rely on family to cover the difference – and that’s not always possible for those who grow up in foster care and have to fend for themselves.

“We are calling for Youth Allowance to be abolished as a separate, lower payment. Young people over eighteen living independently should be on the same working-age payment as everyone else.

“But we can’t stop there. JobSeeker and other working-age payments are themselves well below the poverty line. Moving young people from one poverty payment to another isn’t enough. We need to raise the rate for everyone.

“Our social security system should help young people study, find work and build an independent life. Instead, it is holding them back before they’ve even had a chance to get started.

“Young people don’t have lower living costs just because they’re young. It’s time to end the lower payment rates that are keeping them in poverty.”

[Falling Short](#) has been released during Anti-Poverty Week (11-17 October 2026), which aims to help Australians understand poverty and take action collectively to end it.

Local • Tuesday 27 October 2026 • By Matthew Nicholls

Anglicare launches Centre to turn research and frontline experience into social change



A panel discussion at the launch of Anglicare’s Centre for Research and Social Change at QUT on Monday, 26 October 2026, featuring Associate Professor Nadine Ostern, School of Management and Centre for Future Enterprise, QUT; Leanne Wood, Manager, Anglicare Southern Queensland’s Centre for Research and Social Change; Sarah Marris, Strategic Advocacy Lead, Anglicare Southern Queensland; and, Dr Rose-Marie Stambe, ARC Early Career Industry Fellow at Griffith University and Anglicare Southern Queensland’s Centre for Research and Social Change (Image supplied)

Anglicare Southern Queensland has launched its Centre for Research and Social Change, bringing together research, frontline expertise and lived experience to help tackle some of the most complex social challenges facing Queenslanders.

The Centre for Research and Social Change (CRSC) was formally launched at QUT Gardens Point on Monday, marking Anglicare's significant commitment to research, evaluation and advocacy, and its ambition to build knowledge that leads to lasting change.

The CRSC will strengthen Anglicare's capacity to generate evidence, share knowledge and translate research into practical action, while building deeper partnerships with universities, government, other human services organisations, peak bodies and communities.

CRSC Manager Leanne Wood said the Centre had emerged from many discussions considering how research could have a greater impact within a large human services organisation.

"Every day, our staff see the effects of housing insecurity, family violence, workforce shortages, social isolation, and the pressures associated with ageing well and supporting young people to thrive," Ms Wood said.

"These challenges do not exist in isolation. They intersect and compound one another, and they require responses informed by rigorous evidence, lived experience and expertise, and collaboration.

"The Centre gives us a stronger foundation for bringing those elements together and ensuring what we learn through research and evaluation is translated into practical action.

"Our aspiration is simple but ambitious: to build knowledge that leads to lasting change."

QUT Centre for Future Enterprise leadership team member Nadine Ostern said increasingly complex challenges in the human services, including the impacts of technology, required organisations to draw on different perspectives, disciplines and forms of expertise.

"The Centre for Research and Social Change creates a valuable platform for bringing these perspectives together and to develop responses grounded in the realities of people's lives," Associate Professor Ostern said.

Ms Wood said that partnerships within and across the academic and community sectors were key to addressing the social challenges facing society now and in the future.

"As a major not-for-profit human services organisation, Anglicare has a unique opportunity to connect what we learn through service delivery with research and evaluation, and use that evidence to help improve the systems and structures that shape people's lives.

"Meaningful change happens when academic knowledge, practice wisdom, and lived experience and expertise come together around a shared purpose."

University of Queensland's Director of the Centre for Policy Futures Greg Marston said the Centre could help strengthen the connection between research and public policy.

"Some of the most valuable research starts with focusing on the day-to-day challenges being experienced by people and communities," Professor Marston said.

“Anglicare’s Centre for Research and Social Change is uniquely placed to connect frontline workforce insights with rigorous research, helping to build a stronger, more sustainable sector and inform the policy decisions that shape people’s lives.”

University of Southern Queensland Senior Lecturer Emerson Zerafa-Payne said Anglicare’s extensive work with individuals, families and communities provided an important foundation for research.

“The Centre provides an important mechanism for bringing that experience into research and ensuring the questions we investigate are grounded in the realities people are facing,” Dr Zerafa-Payne said.

“There is real value in researchers working alongside major not-for-profit organisations that have deep connections across the communities they serve.

“These partnerships can produce research that is relevant, accessible and capable of making a meaningful difference to people’s lives.”

Anglicare has established research relationships with universities across Queensland and beyond, spanning collaborative research, student placements, evaluations, advocacy projects and other partnerships.

Ms Wood said the official launch was not the end of that journey, but the beginning of a new chapter for research at Anglicare.

“We want to grow our capacity to produce evidence for positive change, share knowledge, strengthen partnerships and ensure the voices of the people and communities we work alongside remain at the centre of our efforts,” she said.

“We are incredibly grateful to our university and research partners who have helped us reach this point, and we look forward to what we can achieve together.”

WCC general secretary reflects on “Decolonizing mission: from mission to mutuality”



World Council of Churches general secretary The Rev'd Prof Dr Jerry Pillay (Photo by Corinna Waltz /E MW)

World Council of Churches general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay delivered an address on 15 October during a gathering of the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany. He focused on “Decolonizing mission: from mission to mutuality.”

Pillay began by asking what it means to decolonize mission.

“It is about freeing mission from those patterns of power, domination, and cultural superiority that have sometimes accompanied Christian witness,” he said.

“It is about recovering mission as participation in the mission of God.”

Pillay emphasized that the starting point must be theological.

“Mission is not ours,” he said.

“Mission is God’s.”

Decolonising mission requires honesty, Pillay added.

“Christian mission has a complex history,” he said.

“Christianity was sometimes presented as though European culture and Christianity were inseparable.”

We must acknowledge this history, not to condemn previous generations, but to ensure that we do not reproduce their assumptions, Pillay urged.

"The question today is: Can we proclaim Christ without reproducing cultural domination?" he asked.

"I believe we can. Indeed, we must."

Pillay also reflected on how the demographic centre of Christianity has shifted.

"The churches of the Global South are not junior partners in Christianity," he said.

"They are not simply recipients of theology developed elsewhere. They are theologians, missionaries, teachers, evangelists and agents of God's mission."

The issue is ultimately about power, Pillay noted.

"And Christian power must always be understood through Christ. Jesus does not exercise power by domination. He kneels and washes feet," said Pillay.

"Therefore, Christian mission must be characterised by servant leadership."

[Read the full presentation "Decolonizing Mission: From Mission to Mutuality"](#)

First published on the [World Council of Churches website](#) on 15 October 2026.