



Anglican Diocese
of Bendigo

The Spirit

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Bendigo representatives: Ian Dallas, Naomi Fountain, Bishop Andrew Curnow, John Roundhill and Greg Harris.

Anglican Church holds triennial General Synod

Sarah Crutch

The 17th General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia was held in Maroochydore, Queensland during the first week of September, with representatives from all 23 Anglican dioceses gathering to consider a range of legislation and resolutions that govern the life of the national church.

Representing the Diocese of Bendigo were Bishop Andrew Curnow, John Roundhill (Vicar General), Greg Harris (Archdeacon), Ian Dallas (Chancellor) and Naomi Fountain (Registrar).

Key legislation passed included national rules on child protection which will be binding on all clergy and church workers. The Safe Ministry to Children canon was passed unanimously, and provides a code of conduct and standards for screening of people and dealing with persons of concern.

The Synod also passed legislation to set up a new independent company to enable the Anglican Church to join the Commonwealth redress scheme.

Bishop Andrew Curnow delivered a frank address on the viability of the Anglican

Church, following two significant reports to General Synod in 2014 and 2017. The recommendations in the report were carried and include dioceses developing Mission Action Plans, increased sharing and collaboration between dioceses and a leadership program for bishops.

Being Bishop Andrew's final General Synod, he was acknowledged for his service to the Diocese of Bendigo, the General Synod and the Anglican Church of Australia, having been to eight General Synods and a member of the Standing Committee of General Synod since 1998.

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The Bishop writes

Dear Friends,

I am writing this on the eve of taking some leave during October and prior to returning for a final three weeks in November and the laying up of the bishop's staff on Saturday 2 December. It has been a remarkable experience to be Bishop of Bendigo and I have enjoyed writing this monthly column for *The Spirit*.

Recently early one Sunday morning I heard on the radio a recording of the Aboriginal poet Oodgeroo (Kath Walker) reading her poem *Civilization*.

It's a poem that I was deeply moved by because it's from someone who is not a white Australian, or a more recent resident of this country, but comes from a Koori woman whose origins in this country go back 60,000 years and who, as the first peoples of this land, still struggle for an identity and recognition.

There has been a huge ruckus in recent weeks about a plebiscite that we have all been asked to express an opinion in, but the first peoples of this land have been waiting for over a century to be recognised in the constitution of this land and still they wait.

For over two hundred years white Australians have largely held the view that Aboriginal and Torres Straits Island people need to be enlightened. The thing I like most about Oodgeroo's poem is that she is looking at us from her eyes and perhaps we have much to learn from them!

The poem has a strong sense of those parables of Jesus that contain the injunction: "So the last will be first, and the first will be last" (Matthew 20:16). Part of the message here

is, are we able to put ourselves in other people's shoes and see something from their perspective? Jesus' parables were often aimed at the religious establishment who were good at insisting what was the religious and often civil law and all had to conform. Today we live in just as judgmental a society and the ability of people to put themselves in another's shoes I feel has diminished.

Sadly, so much treatment of Australia's first peoples has been from the point of view that we are right and you are wrong! Or, we know better than you will ever know yourself.

Oodgeroo's words are as contemporary now as they ever were and are a mirror for us to look in as a nation, as a church and in our individual communities. They are the words of someone who can see both sides, but at the same time have an overtone of humanity and compassion.

I hope the poem speaks to you as it has to me.

Blessings,

Civilisation - Oodgeroo

*We who came late to civilization,
Missing a gap of centuries,
When you came
we marvelled and admired,
But with foreboding.
We had so little but we had
happiness,
Each day a holiday,
For we were people
before we were citizens,
Before we were rate payers,
Tenants, customers,
employees, parishioners.
How could we understand
White mans gradings,
rigid and unquestioned,
You sacred totems
of Lord and Lady,
Highness and Holiness,
Eminence, Majesty.
We could not understand
Your strange cult of uniformity,
This mass obedience
to clocks, timetables.
Puzzled, we wondered why
The importance to you,
urgent and essential,
Of ties and gloves,
Shoe polish, uniforms.
New to us were jails and
orphanages,
Rents and taxes,
Banks and mortgages.
We who had so few things,
the prime things,
We had no policeman,
lawyers, middlemen,
Brokers, financiers, millionaires.
So they bewildered us,
all the new wonders,
Stocks and shares, real estate,
compound interest,
sales and investments.
Oh, we have benefited,
we have been lifted,
with new knowledge,
a new world opened.
Suddenly caught up
in white man ways.
Gladly and gratefully we accepted,
And this is nescesity.
But remember, white man,
if life is for happiness,
You too surely have
much to change.*

The Spirit

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of Bendigo

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Advertising rates are available from the Editor. All advertisements are accepted at the Editor's discretion; acceptance does not imply endorsement of the product or service.

Contributions are welcome, and will be edited. Email contributions are preferred. Anonymous articles will not be considered for publication. **Photographs** should be sent in digital form to the general email address above. Full size, 'raw' files are necessary. Physical photos are normally not returned.

The Anglican Diocese of Bendigo and the Editor are not responsible for opinions expressed by contributors, nor do these necessarily reflect the policy of the diocese.

Contributions for the next issue must be submitted by **Friday 24 November 2017**.

Ticking all the boxes

**Roger Rich,
Chaplain - St John of God, Bendigo**

As chaplain to St John of God hospital, Bendigo, I often meet parishioners from the local and regional areas of the diocese. Sometimes, it doesn't happen! Anglican patients miss out on a visit by me.

I don't like that to happen, especially when people are away from family, church and the local community. It can be a lonely and isolating experience for some. As a chaplain I like to be a connection between the known and familiar to them. How can you ensure a visit from the chaplain while in hospital? Ticking all the boxes is helpful!

Among the several forms for admission is the Patient Registration. The patient is asked to state their religion, or to tick the box if they have no religion. It's then asked, 'Do you consent to a visit from a hospital accredited representative of your faith community while in hospital?' There's a 'Yes' or 'No' box to be ticked. It seems straightforward (and is), but it doesn't always work out that way.

It's important to tick the 'Yes' box if you desire a visit. If both boxes remain un-ticked it falls into the 'Unknown' category. Also, if your religion is stated as 'Christian' it doesn't reach a denominational chaplain list. It's also preferable to list yourself as Anglican and not Church of England.

Recently, I was admitted as a patient to the hospital. While going through the Patient Registration details with the admitting clerk I had to correct dated information from a previous visit. Do a double check to ensure your information is up to date, especially if you would like a visit from me.

Your parish priest appreciates knowing about your needs, particularly when you're in hospital. Sometimes, they're precluded from visiting you. I'm able to fill a gap, and do so happily, during your time in hospital. I will bring you a listening ear, a willingness to pray for your needs, and the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Love, light and blessings to you.



Launch: Deb Allan presents the new op shop manual

Op shop manual relaunch workshop

Deb Allan

More than 40 people from 11 parishes involved in op shop operations throughout the diocese met at Cohuna Anglican Church for a short, interactive workshop on 19 September.

The aim of the workshop was to launch the updated diocesan op shop manual; designed to support those involved in the management of op shops and provide a chance for people to network and share.

Opportunity shops play a significant role as an extension of the mission of the local church and reaching out to the wider community. The updated manual outlines the various types of mission, roles and responsibilities, diocesan policies and suggested operational procedures, as well as providing resources to support continuous improvement.

Workshop participants shared information about their op shop operations which highlighted the diversity of scope, size and purpose of individual operations. Participants also shared their ideas and tips for training and supporting their volunteers, managing surplus stock, attracting more donations etc. With more than 240 volunteers involved with op shops through the diocese, a discussion around how Safe Church



Lunch: The excellent catering

principles in the context of op shops was particularly helpful.

A fabulous lunch and afternoon tea was prepared by the Parish of Cohuna, all served with style and flair. We concluded the day with a quick crossword puzzle to refresh our learning from the day.

The chance to come together with others and share ideas was most valuable, along with considering the broader context and how the Registry team provide support, particularly on safety, legal and insurance matters. Resources provided on USB sticks were also appreciated. Further training on OH&S matters featured in what else would be helpful in future.

Hymn-sing-a-long well attended in Charlton



Sing: John Harley leads the sing-a-long

In September St Martin's Charlton held a hymn sing a long on a Sunday afternoon with around 70 people from Charlton and surrounding towns, even as far as Newbridge, joining in singing some of the well-known hymns. The afternoon was capably led by MC Garry Allen who gave the singers a rest by telling a few stories and jokes in between some hymns.

Accompanied by local Gill Gretgrix on the piano, around 18 hymns were sung over the afternoon. Local resident John Harley was the guest artist with wonderful renditions of 'The Old Rugged Cross' and 'The 23rd Psalm'.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon of singing and the cup of tea and biscuits and fellowship afterwards.

- Beth Crutch

Sunraysia South scores in basketball competition

In early September the Parish of Sunraysia South entered the APOSS Stars in the Sunraysia Basketball for Bibles competition hosted by the Sunraysia Bible Society.

The team was made up of a couple of families from the parish with some help from outside of the parish, and even the Rector, Dale Barclay, participated in the game.

The APOSS Stars played very well and took out the competition in their first year of entering a team. Thanks to those who supported us with over \$1,500 raised, and thanks to the Bible Society for hosting the event.

It was a great night for a great purpose.

- Dale Barclay



Shooting hoops: The APOSS Stars basketball team

International visitors enrich worship in Robinvale



Together: The Vanuatu visitors with Fr Alan Colley and Merv Lawrence

St Peter's Robinvale has been alive with enthusiasm from the energy of a group of workers from Vanuatu. Approximately 30 people came to Robinvale on an exchange program to work and learn new skills in the grape and almond industry. The congregation tripled overnight and new friendships were made.

The St Peter's congregation have greatly enjoyed the company of their visitors. Long standing member Mary Merlin said the group, "sing like angels and have greatly enriched our weekly services with their music."

The parish presented the group with a guitar as a way of saying thank you for their singing and music. We wish them every blessing as they return home.

- Merv Lawrence

Around the Parishes

St Arnaud welcomes new rector

The Revd Jan Harper was inducted into the parish of St Arnaud at an uplifting service in Christ Church Old Cathedral on 21 September 2017.

Jan has held several positions within the diocese, and has made the move to St Arnaud following a period of service in the Parish of Swan Hill for three years.

Jan's induction service was not without tension, with Jan only returning from an overseas trip the morning of the service, arriving in St Arnaud at only 1.30pm that afternoon prior the service commencing at 7.30pm.

The parish are delighted to welcome Jan into this new ministry and look forward to getting to know her throughout her time amongst them.



New ministry: Jan Harper is inducted into the Parish of St Arnaud

Overseas visitor connects with people of Red Cliffs



Visit: Stomee with Talitha Barclay

Sunraysia South is very thankful to God for bringing Stomee to APOSS for a few weeks.

Stomee is from Japan on a working holiday and connected well to our community during her time with us and we enjoyed her company immensely.

It is always a blessing to have international visitors join us from time to time, but there was an emotional good bye.

We thank God and pray she may have other positive experiences meeting God's people.

- Dale Barclay

Bishop's final visit to Gunbower Creek Service

The Gannawarra Cluster, comprising the parishes of Cohuna and Kerang, gathered to make their own farewell to Bishop Andrew and Jan on the last Sunday of August.

Gunbower Creek has been an annual destination for Bishop Andrew, whether by the water or in the sports complex. It has made a great location for worship and feasting together.

Bishop Andrew and Jan were presented with an engraved shovel in cheeky homage to an incident out the back of Manangatang, along with pines from Patho cemetery and an assortment of local plants.

Bishop Andrew was quick to put his new gardening tool to work outside the Registry office (see back page).

- Simon Robinson



Thanks: Simon Robinson, Val Rowlands, Bishop Andrew & Bette MacGillivray



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- a) a diverse range of community care services eg aged, palliative and respite care, outreach programs, chaplaincy etc;
- b) seeking out and serving children, young people and adults who are financially, emotionally or socially disadvantaged or marginalised;
- c) establishing and developing charitable work

If your parish or group has a project that meets the above criteria please contact Jackie Mullan - Manager on 5443 4711 to discuss your proposal and obtain a Bencourt Application form.

Applications are due Monday, 23 October.

Bishop responds to media attention following recent comments

Bishop Andrew Curnow

In the September edition of *The Spirit* I wrote about two highly politicised matters that have been in public debate over the past six weeks. Namely, the debate about marriage equality and assisted dying.

My comments raised some very strong reaction from across the diocese and indeed from across Australia and got into the national media. The comments below are a response and a background to how this evolved.

Due to a recent post on the blog of Sydney priest the Revd David Ould in reaction to my comments in the September edition of *The Spirit*, it seems to have generated media interest and has been followed up by articles independently of me in *The Bendigo Advertiser* and *The Age*.

Given that David Ould has reported that "many members of the diocese are not happy and disappointed" with my comments, I want to briefly give some explanation.

1. The comments I made in *The Spirit* were largely meant for the members of this diocese which is the readership group of *The Spirit*. My comments did not indicate my support for two contestable public issues at this time, but underlined the liberty and responsibility we have as voters in this country. I was critical of much of the information being deluged upon me by the 'no' campaign. I have received no material from the 'yes' campaign.

Certain members of the diocese have been critical of my comments

and I underline that they need to be read carefully.

2. My comments are based upon my view that the current debate is essentially about the status of civil marriage. In Australia the Marriage Act is a fusion historically of a definition of marriage which has been appropriated by the Christian community over many years.

I have long argued that there should be a distinction between the civil understanding of marriage and the Christian view of marriage. In the present debate, the whole discussion is confused.

3. Christianity is quite divided over the issue of what is Christian marriage. The current debate highlights the difficulty we are having in Christianity over the theological issue of Christ and culture.

This in itself requires significant discussion and reflection. Do we hold onto the view that the Christian faith has to be held entirely to its historical interpretation or, are we open to the theological view that Christianity over time can be quite appropriately influenced by culture? This is at the heart of the debate that has been going on in Christian circles, particularly over the last 25 years.

4. I am arguing for understanding, for an openness to listen and the possibility of change.

5. I am not trying to undermine anyone's individual beliefs and what they hold as precious and fundamental to their faith.



Steve Geyer



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June Andrew



Recognition: Bishop Andrew, Craig Tweed, Cr Margaret O'Rourke & John Roundhill

Bishop honoured at civic reception

Sarah Crutch

Bishop Andrew Curnow's contribution to the Bendigo community throughout his 15 years as Bishop of Bendigo was recognised at a civic reception hosted by the City of Greater Bendigo on 2 October.

Guests predominantly from the Bendigo business community, including City of Greater Bendigo Council, local MPs and other related organisations, gathered at the Bendigo Town Hall to acknowledge Bishop Andrew's leadership and particularly his contributions to the welfare sector in the Loddon-Mallee region.

Mayor Margaret O'Rourke spoke of Bishop Andrew's support to disadvantaged communities and people through initiatives such as Saltworks and Our Shed in Eaglehawk, hospital chaplaincy and the merger between St Luke's Anglicare and Anglicare Victoria.

Bishop Andrew's business skills were acknowledged by Craig Tweed, a member of the Diocesan Executive and

well known Bendigo real estate agent, who commented on Bishop Andrew's financial management and exceptional communication skills, along with his role in training new bishops in the church and his commitment to re-opening St Paul's Cathedral.

Dean John Roundhill remarked upon Bishop Andrew's courage throughout his time as bishop.

"Bishop Andrew has done what was needed - tough decisions - closing churches is not easy, managing a diocese that stretches from Woodend to Mildura is not easy. There is a religious word for that - sacrifice. That is something we admire tonight."

Bishop Andrew responded by outlining four key elements to successful leadership, and by acknowledging the significant support of his family throughout his time as a bishop.

He finished by thanking everyone for their attendance.

"Your presence has me lost for words, and that doesn't happen very often."

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The Parish of Eaglehawk to celebrate 155 Years

On Saturday 28 October, St Peter's Eaglehawk will be celebrating 155 years of Christian life and community service. The celebrations will begin at 1.30pm with food, activities, entertainment, and a showcase of historical information about the parish.

Activities will include Devonshire tea, old time games, jumping castle, egg and spoon race, sack race and many more. The Revd Brendan McDonald is especially looking forward to the 'Dunk the Rector' activity! Bendigo's two country diva's, Floreena Forbes and Olive Bice, will be providing the entertainment leading up to a book

launch commemorating the life of St Jude's church in California Gully. "This is timely as the 28th is actually St Jude's feast day!" Brendan said.

"We want this to be a special occasion where all of us can give thanks to God for his ministry in Eaglehawk," Brendan added.

The invitation is open to everyone including past parishioners, past ministers, members of the wider church communion and especially the community to participate in a thanksgiving service to be held at 6.00pm.

If you have an interest or would like to be involved can you please contact Brendan McDonald on 0423 700 770 or email brendan@commongroundlife.com.au.



Clergy Retreat

9 - 12 October, Rutherford Park

Diocesan Executive

Monday 6 November in Inglewood

Ordination

10.30am, 11 November, St Paul's Cathedral

Bishop in Council

Tuesday 14 November

Senior Staff

Tuesday 21 November

Bishop's final day in Registry Office

Thursday 30 November

Laying up of bishop's staff

Saturday 2 December

Got an event coming up?

Send the details to thespirit@bendigoanglican.org.au



Bishop digs new shovel

Bishop Andrew was presented with a new gardening shovel, along with a range of plants and shrubs by the parishes of Kerang and Cohuna on a recent visit for his final Service on the Creek at Gunbower.

The shovel features a plaque on the blade acknowledging the gift, and Bishop Andrew was quick to put his new tool to work in the garden outside the Registry Office back in Bendigo!

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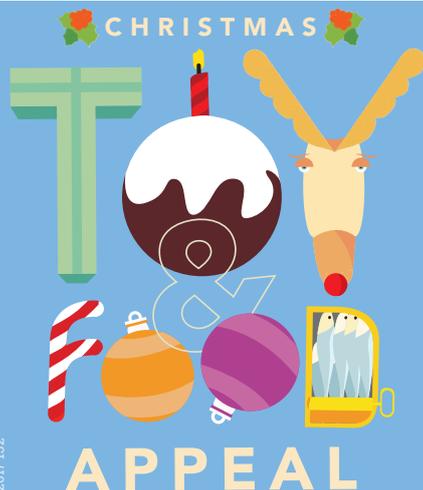
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