

Be encouraged

It is heartbreaking to see the effects of the growing number of COVID cases in Victoria on people. These range from the way that losing work can amplify poverty, to the difficulty that comes in accessing medical and health services, to frustration and jealousy as others seem to get a free ride while some are restricted, to a deep sadness because people are held at arm's length from one another.

Whether the effects that you feel are one of these, or something quite different, the longer the pandemic continues the more likely it is that we will become weighed down. The effects have a cumulative weight. The consequences of each new day take on more importance than expected because they act like barnacles on the hull of a ship. One is unnoticeable, two probably do not matter, but eighteen months' worth? Well, each new effect just makes us heavier and slower.

One reason why I hang on to my faith in Jesus is because of the way that in his life, death and resurrection he shows me how to see past the immediate circumstances of each day. Rather than being overwhelmed by the accumulated weight of what seems to be the only thing in my life, faith in Jesus opens access to a world that is far bigger and more hopeful. In Jesus I see beyond what seems to be all there is, to what is actually true. He helps to cut through the weight of this long pandemic.

Each week for the next few weeks I'll be relating one reason why faith in Jesus helps us to navigate the weight of our situation. What benefit there is in the Christian faith. I hope it is an encouragement.

This week is simple. It comes from Hebrews chapter 12 where Jesus is called the 'pioneer and perfecter' of our faith. Jesus is ahead of us, drawing us on to the fullness of God's promised world. He is also the one who has walked the rocky and twisted paths we must walk to get there. Indeed, he was the one who sought them out and wore the track we can follow. This includes through these long COVID days.

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Click to watch on YouTube

Worship during lockdown

see the instructions attached
or visit www.bendigoanglican.org.au



Diocesan
Morning Prayer
live on Zoom



Diocesan
Morning Prayer
watch on YouTube



Join a conference call
or phone a friend for
prayer



Read the service of
Morning Prayer from
the Diocese



Opportunities to learn & grow

While this time spent at home can be inconvenient, it is an opportunity to do some learning and development. Both Trinity & Ridley offer online webinars and education events you may like to join.

Trinity College

[Continuing Education | Theological School | Trinity College \(unimelb.edu.au\)](#)

Ridley College

[Events Archive \(ridley.edu.au\)](#)

Opportunities to be generous & care

1. Supporting the church in Karen State:

[Myanmar: Karen Church Community Outreach](#)
• [Anglican Relief and Development Fund Australia \(ardfa.org.au\)](#)

2. Giving to an Afghanistan Humanitarian Appeal:

[GivingHope](#)

3. Partnering with Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands:

[Vanuatu · Projects · Anglican Board of Mission \(abmission.org\)](#) [Solomon Islands · Projects · Anglican Board of Mission \(abmission.org\)](#)

4. Advocating for refugees from Afghanistan to the Australian Government:

<https://www.unitedforafghanistan.com/>

Worship at Home

The diocesan website has been updated with a range of resources to help parishes continue to worship while in lockdown.

These can be found under

[Your Church > Worship at Home](#)

Psalms Devotional – Seasons of the Soul

This little devotional booklet looks at four representative Psalms, songs of Joy, of Yearning, of Lament and Hope. It is our prayer that no matter what season you find yourself, something in these reflections, and more significantly in the Psalms themselves will resonate with you and help resource your worship.

Prayer Diary

Remember the latest updated [Diocesan Prayer diary](#) is available online. Use this to fuel your prayers for parishes and ministries in the diocese while in lockdown.

The Spirit

A new issue of *The Spirit* is almost finished and will be circulated electronically to parishes and clergy shortly.

A small print run will be done for those parishes needing hard copies to distribute. When you receive the electronic version please advise how many hard copies you would like so they can be mailed to you.

Bishop Matt's calendar

Week	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
30 August	Internal meetings	Work from home	DAY OFF	Internal meetings	Work from home		Eaglehawk/ Maiden Gully
6 September	Diocesan Executive	Lambeth Bishop's Conversations	In Office	SLT	DAY OFF		Mildura
13 September	Internal meetings	In Office	DAY OFF	Internal meetings	Provincial Council		South East Bendigo
20 September	Internal meetings	Provincial Bishops	DAY OFF	Internal meetings	PUBLIC HOLIDAY		TBC