

Anglican Diocese of  
**BENDIGO**

# The Spirit

167 MAY 2025





# The Bishop writes...

Dear Friends,

Those who have been thinking, praying and preparing for HOPE25 will know that the season between Easter and Pentecost (which we are in now) is the time when many Anglican churches around Australia will be inviting people in the communities to hear about the hope which Jesus gives them. I know that parishes and congregations throughout the diocese are taking up the opportunity to do something specific, maybe even something new, which is designed to share the gift of hope which Jesus brings.

I find it remarkable that God would choose us, with all our interesting quirks and limitations, to be bearers of such great news. I think this trust which God places in us only underlines our dependence upon God's enabling hand. A few editions of the Spirit ago I wrote in preparation for HOPE25 suggesting we should prepare by thinking about a few specific people we should pray for, especially that God would give opportunity for us to understand what worries them and where they need hope. I also said that it would do us well if we chatted with each other and read about our faith so that we could encourage each other as 'sharers' of hope'. Do not stop doing this (and it is not too late to start) as any efforts we make to share hope in Jesus must be fuelled by God's Spirit.

In the last issue of *The Spirit* I wrote about the way that people need to see the hope-filled message of Jesus being lived out. In other words, people need to say, 'I see what you are saying!' Hope-filled people give credence to the words of hope which are spoken. Our unspoken words (the way we pray, the pattern of our lives, and the way we treat each other) either show trustful dependence in God's work through Jesus or they do not. While hypocrisy is corrosive, even what feels like faltering attempts to trust Jesus – and then find hope – are surprisingly attractive!

*We are putting significant energy into HOPE25, but I yearn for it to be just the beginning of the way we look outwards to transform our communities.*

One of the good things about hope, if it is really hope and not just a nice wish, is that it is durable. Another way of putting it is that a worthwhile hope does not have a use by date, including Pentecost Sunday 2025! We are putting significant energy into HOPE25, but I yearn for it to be just the beginning of the way we look outwards to transform our communities. As we come to the official conclusion of HOPE25 I wonder what your heart is for whatever is next?

Maybe three c's can help.

**Confidence** – Spend time as congregations on those things which help you have confidence in God. Know the promises God has made you and the way that these have been fulfilled in Jesus (this is the point of Bible study). Learn to recognise where God has sustained you in-and-through ordinary life (practise sharing these times with each other). Exercise your discipleship muscles (good worship will help this). Having confidence in the way God sees you will naturally give surprising reserves of grace-full calm.

**Creativity** – Look around to see the people in your orbit. Who are they? What are their names? What do they like doing? What do they find stressful or difficult? Together with your congregation ask who you are? What personalities or



**Bishop  
Matt Brain**

capacities has God placed in your midst? What experiences have you(se) had which you have learned to trust God through? Start to think about ways that you can bring the capacities God has given you(se) close to the people you have thought about in your community.

**Clarity** – Practice articulating what you find attractive – or hopeful – about your faith in Jesus. The first time we do anything is difficult and rarely our best effort. Yet the more we practice the more natural the activity becomes, and wonderfully the more 'part of us' it is. There are many bible verse calendars or apps for the phone which will identify an encouraging verse for the day. One way to be able to practice telling your story of hope clearly is to get hold of one of these prompts and read it out loud... and then think of one way that you have seen God work in the way the verse suggests...and say that out loud too. It may feel a bit strange today, but I suspect that this time next year you will sound like a pro!

Your servant in Christ,

*Matt*



The front room of St Mark's, Golden Square

# Seeing things in a new light

*Darcy Vaughan*

Our churches are incredible things; buildings that are also artworks and artefacts, telling stories, shaping our identities and recording our history. Perhaps even more difficult than keeping our buildings in good condition is ensuring that they continue to evolve and grow with us. Reverend Canon Shannon and the congregation of St Mark's have managed to do this in an inspiring new way.

Shannon got to know Crystal West through the children's playgroup at the Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative. Shannon soon came to appreciate Crystal's gift for bringing culture and spirituality to life on canvas. Shannon approached Crystal to see if she would use her impressive artistic abilities to give a story of creation. That painting now takes pride of place in Bishop Matt's study, where you may have seen it on an easel. The painting is also the front cover of this issue of *The Spirit*.

And that same artwork now filters the light into the front room of St Mark's, Golden Square. The welcoming entry space of the church and its baptismal font are now bathed in light seen through Indigenous understanding and culture. This is most fitting given it is in this space that Shannon hosts an art group and safe place attended by Aboriginal elders. As some of them explore their experience as members of the Stolen Generation they now do so in a church building which acknowledges and reflects their history and culture.



# Holy Week across the diocese



Palm Sunday at All Saints', Newstead

No Palm tree in the Bendigo Diocese was safe in the days preceding Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week! The congregation of All Saints', Newstead met outside under the shade of a eucalypt to hear once again the Palm Sunday reading before processing triumphantly into church with palm crosses held high, dancing to the strains of *When the Saints Go Marching In*.

Christ Church, Swan Hill had the joy of celebrating two baptisms as part of their Palm Sunday service. Brothers Hunter (10 years old) and Achilles (4 months old) Brunhoever-Stehens were baptised together accompanied by Mum (Beate) and Dad (Aron). Reverend Denis Gell and Reverend Julie Worrall worked together to ensure everything went smoothly.



A Palm Sunday baptism at Christ Church, Swan Hill





The Renewal of Commitment to Ministry and Blessing of Oils Service at St Paul's Cathedral, Bendigo

On the Monday of Holy Week a service was held for the Renewal of Commitment to Ministry and the Blessing of Oils. A service to which everyone from across the diocese is invited, and at which clergy have the opportunity to return once again to those vows that are to anchor and guide their ministry through another year.

The custom of renewing ordination vows in Holy Week was introduced relatively recently in the middle of the twentieth century. No doubt it has been incorporated into the calendar of the church as it seems so fitting that in the week before Easter clergy are asked once again, by God's grace, to affirm that they will continue in their calling.

Likewise the blessing of the oils of catechumens, of the sick and of chrism seems fitting at this time as clergy prepare to go forth into the Easter season ministering with those seeking baptism and those who are sick.

The service was presided over by Bishop Matt Brain and held at St Paul's Cathedral, Bendigo. No doubt many wonderful and faithful sermons were delivered by the clergy in the following days! And the sanctified oils taken to serve the ministry of churches across the diocese.



Revd Lauren Lockwood-Porter refreshes the oils supply for the Parish of Kyneton





Setting for Good Friday by Peter and Timothy Stubs at St Peter's, Eaglehawk



Gillian at the Maundy Thursday gathering at St Luke's, North Bendigo



PALM Ministry Stations of the Cross walk





Revd Steve Weickhardt at Walpeup Lake on Easter Day

As churches across the diocese followed the story of Holy Week the congregation of St Luke's, North Bendigo followed in the footsteps of Peter. After a Maundy Thursday service, Peter's denials of Christ were read as a fire was lit. Many then gathered around the fire pit at the front of the church to keep vigil. Slightly different to Peter's experience, those present did enjoy hot chocolates and a good laugh! Nonetheless a wonderful witness was shared with all those passing by.

### Val Barker-Pigott

On Good Friday afternoon, at the request of two Islander men from the PALM Ministry, a different type of service took place. Missing the traditions of their home countries, they asked if we could perform The Stations of the Cross around the caravan park where they and other workers live.

The workers obtained a copy of the readings from their priests in the Solomon Islands, marked the stations around the park, and organized different men from various countries to read.

On arrival, there were about a dozen men. A few phone calls later and we had around thirty men and a couple of women. Some came from another farm. The boss of the company and his wife came and joined in. Those reading read without hesitation and in between the men sang as they walked between the stations. The Holy Spirit flowed. Unbelievably as we moved from station to station, more men came out of their cabins and joined in. We stopped counting at 75! The men found their way to the foot of the cross where their saviour had died for them.

We joined together again on Easter Sunday to share in a service of celebration and praise to Jesus before enjoying a shared meal ... a typical islander feast. Again, as the service progressed, more and more men came.

Perhaps through these two events the men from the PALM Ministry were engaging in their own HOPE25 activity, reaching out to the men in the caravan park they work with, men who have not been active in their faith, men they are concerned for. May the Holy Spirit move in their lives.

### Robert Pole

Easter Sunday at the Walpeup Lake was a glorious day with a slight breeze and a few bush flies. There were eleven locals gathered at the lake and one large dog named Thomas. Until, alas, an orange and white 'hippy van' pulled up. Some of our congregation looked worried until out of the bus came seven young ladies and one large dog called Albi (all my relations in one way or another). It was Revd Steve Weickhardt's last morning with the Central Mallee Cooperative Parish and we shared a lovely Holy Communion for Easter followed by the sharing of Easter eggs and a picnic lunch.



Children of St Paul's Cathedral, Bendigo with their Easter gardens



# PRAYER FOCUS

Strengthen your family relationships and share your faith through prayer.

## STEP 1

Ask the Holy Spirit to empower and guide you.

## STEP 2

Choose a communication style for each child: a casual chat, a text message, a phone call, a card in the post, via social media.

## STEP 3

Tell them that you'll be praying for them regularly and invite them to contribute prayer points.

## STEP 4

Follow up to hear how they're going in relation to the prayer points.

# Mothers Union and HOPE25

Mothers Union met at the end of March at St Paul's Cathedral, Bendigo with approximately fifty people attending from at least seven different parishes. Dean Elizabeth led the workshop on the theme of 'sharing your faith with your family'.

After lunch a service was held for 'Lady Day'. In her sermon Revd Suzannah Walsh continued to consider what a unique Mothers Union response might be to the call of HOPE25. She quoted a poem by Harry Baker called Paper People:

"I like people. People like my grandparents. Who every single day since I was born, have taken time out of their morning, to pray for me. That's 7892 days straight of someone checking i'm OK, and that's amazing."

Suzannah also introduced some resources to support Mothers Union members to engage with this wonderful Australia-wide initiative. You may like to use this prayer focus resource to more intentionally pray for a loved one as part of HOPE25.

## BCA Victoria

Steve Weickhardt

The Bush Church Aid (BCA) Society Victorian AGM and dinner was held at Glen Waverly Anglican Church on Saturday the 3rd of May. After a hearty meal, prayers and procedural matters, Bishop Darrell Parker spoke on ministry and mission in North West Australia. This included ministry among First Nations people and mining communities and the challenge of ministering with small populations across vast distances. A presentation was made to Bob and Veronica Barclay in gratitude for their twenty-plus years of service in the Victorian BCA office and at numerous BCA events. National Director Greg Harris spoke on the bigger picture of BCA Australia. Steve Weickhardt gave a short presentation on his work with Vanessa in the 'Mallee Mission' in partnership with the Central Mallee Cooperative Parish, Sunraysia South and Northern Mallee. Highlights included the grass roots ministry with young people in the Underbool community and outdoor ministry opportunities, and equipping congregational members for discipleship and leadership. The gathering then broke into smaller groups to pray for ministry and mission across Australia, with a focus on the Diocese of North West Australia. Participants left with gratitude for God's work through BCA, and a renewed commitment to continue in prayer and support.



Veronica and Bob Barclay receive their thank you gift



# Historic pipe organs to take centre stage in Keys of Gold festival

This July, the Anglican Diocese of Bendigo will play a central role in the inaugural Keys of Gold Festival, celebrating the region's rich musical and spiritual heritage.

Four historic Anglican churches – St Augustine's Inglewood, St Paul's Cathedral Bendigo, Christ Church Castlemaine, and Holy Trinity Maldon – will open their doors to host concerts that showcase their magnificent pipe organs and invite the community into their sacred spaces.

A momentous event is set to occur at St Augustine's Anglican Church in Inglewood. After more than 140 years; the church's George Fincham pipe organ, commissioned in 1878, will finally be completed.

The inaugural concert, Olde World Favourites, will take place on Saturday the

26th of July at 11am, featuring international concert organist Thomas Heywood and soprano Merlyn Quaife AM. This performance marks the first time the organ will be heard in its full glory, fulfilling a vision that has spanned generations.

St Paul's Cathedral in Bendigo will host two significant events during the festival. On Saturday the 5th of July at 4pm the Cathedral will feature Dances of Light and Shadow, a performance highlighting the interplay of music and architecture. Later in the month, on Saturday the 26th of July at 4pm, the Cathedral will present Masks and Melodies, offering audiences a rich tapestry of sound within its historic walls.

Christ Church, Castlemaine will participate in the 'Castlemaine Double' event on Saturday the 12th of July at 11am, sharing the stage with the Castlemaine Uniting

Church. This collaboration underscores the unity and shared musical heritage within the community.

Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Maldon will host Power and Grace on Saturday the 19th of July at 11am, featuring a program that celebrates the church's historic organ and its role in the town's cultural life.

The Keys of Gold Festival offers an opportunity to experience the profound connection between music, history, and faith. By opening their doors, these Anglican churches invite the wider community to explore the sacred spaces that have been central to spiritual life in the region for over a century.

For more information and to view the full program, please visit [www.bendigofinemusic.com](http://www.bendigofinemusic.com).

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From left: Revd Canon Shannon Smith, Bishop Richard Treloar, Jan Clode, Revd Canon Phyllis

# Blessing of the Altar Table

On Wednesday the 23rd of April Canon Shannon reported having a 'beaut morning in Bairnsdale' before arriving at Raymond Island for the Holy Eucharist and Blessing of the Altar-Table at The Abbey Chapel of St Barnabas. A Welcome to Country was offered by Reverend Canon Phyllis Andy. The service in the packed-out chapel was presided over by Bishop Richard Treloar.

The altar is a new addition to the chapel, created from a fallen tree. The specially made altar was consecrated by Bp Richard in memory of Bishop John McIntyre. "You could tell the love everyone had for Bishop Mac" Shannon said. "It was also wonderful spending time with Reverend Canon Phyllis Andy sharing stories and a good laugh."

# World Day of Prayer

Churches in the greater Bendigo region gathered on Friday the 7th of March for World Day of Prayer services. This year the focus was on the Cook Islands and the theme 'I Made You Wonderful'.

At St Paul's Anglican Cathedral the service was attended by many from the Anglican church as well as some from the Salvation Army and Fr Brian Boyle from Sacred Heart Catholic Cathedral. He shared a short but poignant message incorporating his knowledge of the Islands and their needs.

In Eaglehawk it was the turn of St Liborius Catholic Church to host the service, joined by members of the Anglican, Salvation Army, Uniting and Baptist churches. For Kennington, the Weeroona Uniting Church welcomed over 80 people from St Therese's

Catholic, Holy Trinity Anglican, Bethlehem Lutheran and Strathfieldsaye Community churches. Clergy from each of these churches were also present. Services were also held at St Clement's Anglican Church, North Bendigo and at St Mary's Anglican Church in Kangaroo Flat.

Some had a go at the Cook Island themed trivia, others viewed the Bible Society's video as part of the service. All services took a special offertory to contribute to the Bible Society. Particular note was made of the supportive ecumenical spirit at these services, and of the fun had learning to sing the Cook Island theme song.

Thanks to Jenny Rainsford for compiling the reports of these services.



Wonderfully Made by Tarani Napa and Tevairangi Napa



# Youth and Families Ministry



## Hope25

Through this season, across the Diocese, and indeed all over Australia, Anglican churches and congregations are proclaiming the HOPE that we have in Jesus. We live in a world full of uncertainty, where things are constantly changing and nothing seems settled. In the midst of all the chaos and carnage, Christians can have hope. Here are some ideas for exploring the theme of Hope and joining in with HOPE25 at home.

### ..... Nibbles

There are all sorts of things we might hope for, ice cream for dinner, our team to win the Grand Final, school to be suddenly cancelled for the week, (our children to pick up their socks without being reminded 50 times!). Make a list of all the different things you hope for yourself, for your family, for your church. For each of those discuss how likely they are to come about. (I'm sorry to say that ice cream for dinner and socks being picked up are probably pretty unlikely!) Then think about what a difference it would make if these hopes were realised. How do these things compare to things we hope for in God?

### ..... Bites

The very first Star Wars movie that ever came out was Episode IV: A New Hope. One of the most famous lines in the film comes from Princess Leia, when she says, "Help me Obi Wan Kenobi, you're my only hope." Have a family movie night and watch Star Wars and then have conversation about what she was hoping for? Why did she pin her hopes on Obi Wan and how were those hopes met or dashed? (If you really must, pick some other film or show that explores the theme of hope and discuss it instead). What does this hope look like and how does it compare to the hope we read about in the Bible?

### ..... Chomps

Jesus met lots of people who lived with uncertainty, fear and suffering. To all of these people he brought hope. Can you think of some of these encounters? In your quiet time, or as a family, or Sunday School group, or church, pick one and read through it together. What need did this person have? What did life look like for them before they met Jesus? How did he bring hope to them? What would their lives have looked like after this? How does this story bring us hope today?

To get you started here's just a few examples from Luke's Gospel of those Jesus brought hope to - the ill (Luke 5:17-26), the rejected (Luke 7:36-50), the lost (Luke 15:11-32), the unreligious (Luke 19:9-17), the poor (Luke 18:18-30), the guilty (Luke 23:13-24), the dying (Luke 23:32-43).

When I worked in a bookstore there was a connected series of readers called Aussie Nibbles, Aussie Bites and Aussie Chomps. The fun thing about them was that you could tell which series a particular title belonged to by the size of the bite that had been taken out of the book!

This page of the Spirit will look at a particular theme or part of the bible and give you some suggestions of how you might take a nibble, a bite or a chomp into it with your family. These ideas can be used at home for family time, as something for the kids (or adults!) to do together, for Sunday School, or an activity to do with the grandkids when they come up to visit.

Archdeacon George is the Ministry Development Officer for the Diocese.

**HOPE25**  
HOPE IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD





Denise Fehring and Ros Dwyer with Elsie Walkington

## Editor's Notes

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*Photo of Bishop Matt on page 2 credit of Bendigo Advertiser.*

# Op Shop Celebrates

*Beverley D Brown*

**M**onday the 14th of April marked the end of an era as 94 year old Elsie Walkington called time on more than 20 years as a volunteer in the Cohuna Anglican Op Shop. Family members, volunteers and church members gathered together for an afternoon tea to celebrate her dedication and mark her retirement.

Over the last 20 years Elsie has worked two to three days a week sorting, repairing, washing and pricing donated clothing. And it was not just the Op Shop that benefited. Over the years Elsie has also knitted numerous comfort teddies for the

Cohuna Hospital and more recently more than 200 beanies for The Mission to Seafarers.

Former manager Marilyn Hornsby thanked Elsie for her commitment and service to the shop and church over so many years. "Elsie told me that the Op Shop gave her a reason to live, a purpose to get up in the morning, because it was something she had to do. It became her inner motivation. The church is a building, but the church is really the people. With the money Elsie helped to raise the church has been able to support mission activities and the wider community."

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