

Four Rivers



From the Bishop



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It has been some time since the last edition of Four Rivers. So, what has happened since then?

Diocesan Synod

This year at Synod we celebrated the 140th anniversary of the establishment of the Diocese of Riverina. As part of that celebration, we had the Right Reverend +Charlie Murry, Bishop for the Coastal Episcopate in the Diocese of Newcastle, as guest preacher at the Synod Eucharist. This was followed by a celebration dinner at the Ex-Services Club in Griffith. It was a very happy celebration.

150th of Hokkaido Diocese

Fr Paul Kumasaka and I had the extraordinary privilege of representing Riverina for the sesqui-centenary celebrations in Christ Church Cathedral Sapporo on Monday 15 July. We travelled to Sapporo for the weekend arriving Friday 13 July and I began my return to Australia on Tuesday 16 July. We enjoyed generous hospitality of the Hokkaido people over that time.

Bishop +Maria Grace welcomed us at the Registry on Friday, and we spent the afternoon talking about our respective Dioceses and renewing the companion relationship between them. We gave the Bishop a book of Australian landscape photographs which the Rev'd Mike Perrott has published. It contains scriptural reflections along with the pictures. Many of these pictures were taken in Riverina Diocese. She was delighted to receive this gift.

The Bishop insisted that we robe and join the clergy procession on Sunday 14 July. At the end of the Liturgy, I was invited to speak to the congregation and took the opportunity to thank Bp +Maria Grace for her invitation to the celebrations that would take place the next day. I also spoke about the relationship between the two Dioceses looking forward to it continuing.

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For the 150th celebration Eucharist on Monday 15 July most of the bishops of the Anglican Church in Japan (Nippon Sei Ko Kai) were present. There were about 300 people in the congregation. They had two choirs, one on either side of the Cathedral, an adult choir and a children's choir. Both sang beautifully. During the administration of Communion, I was asked to bless the members of the children's choir which was a great privilege.

A special hymn was written for the occasion by a local musician using words submitted from various parishes in the Diocese. This had been learnt beforehand and was sung at the Eucharist with great enthusiasm. At the reception that followed, after the speeches, they all joined in singing it again. All in all there was great joy shared by everyone on the day.

Science and Faith Workshop

In the last week of July, I attended this Workshop in Melbourne as part of the ongoing outworking of the Lambeth Conference. The "Science Call" from the Conference prompted this event. It was one of three held worldwide and was for the Oceania region. So, we had bishops from Australia, New Zealand, Melanesia and Polynesia gathered together to share and reflect upon issues that related to science and faith.

It was a great experience and one we all hope will help foster greater thought and interaction between the two disciplines.

Christ Church St Laurence

The Diocese continues to have a good relationship with this Parish in the heart of the city of Sydney. I was invited to preach there on Sunday 11 August for the Feast of St Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr.

As part of their celebrations, they held a fundraising lunch and I shared a Q & A session with Fr Daniel Dries, the Rector, about the Diocese of Riverina.

Through this lunch they have raised and gifted to the Diocese of Riverina over \$7,000 to help continue the Church's work here.

Fr Daniel and his people were very hospitable and extraordinarily generous and on behalf of the Diocese I express our deep gratitude for their prayerful and financial support, and our ongoing relationship.

Consecrations of Bishops

There have been three Assistant Bishops consecrated recently:

1. The Rt Rev'd +Sarah Plowman for the Diocese of Brisbane on the eve of St Alban's Day, 21st June,
2. The Rt Rev'd +Sophie Relf-Christopher for the Diocese of Adelaide on the Feast of Mary, Mother of the Lord, 15th August, and The Rt Rev'd +Vanessa Bennett for the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn on St Bartholomew's Day 24th August.



It is traditional for a bishop to be consecrated on a saint's day. In each case as many bishops as possible from across the Australia Church attend and participate in the Laying-on-of-Hands in consecration. That is because bishops are consecrated for the whole Church, not just one place.

I'm sure you noticed that all three names are women. +Sophie and +Vanessa were both replacing women who had retired from their roles as Assistant Bishops whereas +Sarah was replacing the new Archbishop of Brisbane in his former role as an Assistant Bishop in that Diocese. This means that, of the 40 active bishops of the Church 8 are women. In time, I am sure, this will increase as we properly recognise that vocation to ministry is a calling on men and women alike.

Prayer for Ministry

As we look to the future, I ask you to pray for the ministry in the Diocese. We have a few Parishes in need to priests so please pray for:

- Barham – seeking a full-time priest to care for them and the, by mutual agreement, the neighbouring Parish of Kerang Vic.
- Balranald and the Cobb Highway – that a suitable arrangement can be reached for future ministry.
- Narrandera and Coolamon/Ganmain – seeking to provide priestly ministry for these Parishes.

And please continue to pray for the Diocese as we seek to strengthen the financial foundation that allows us to continue ministering to far western NSW.

Grace and peace,
+Donald



"She is clothed with strength and dignity, and laughs at the days to come;

She opens her mouth in wisdom; kindly instruction is on her tongue;

Acclaim her for the work of her hands and let her deeds praise her at the city gates"

Proverbs 31



close contact

A WORD OR TWO FROM THE CATHEDRAL



Saint Alban
THE MARTYR ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL

The Very Rev'd Thomas Leslie Dean of St Alban's and Rector of Griffith

On Sunday August 18th, we celebrated the Installation of our newest Cathedral Canon, The Reverend Canon Jane Trigg, and the formal Commissioning of our newest Area Dean, Fr Tim Fogo, at a service of Evensong marking the Feast of Mary, Mother of Our Lord. Both Canon Jane and Fr Tim have already made significant impacts in the life of our Diocese since their arrivals in 2023, and we look forward to their ongoing energetic contributions as they formally take up these new roles following elections at Synod in July.

Frances Tsoukalidis, Leeton Parish Organist, was the Guest Organist for the occasion, bringing her usual flair to the liturgy, and the musical offerings included a new gift: the St Alban's Solomon Islander Choir singing the Canticles (the Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis) a cappella, using the Melanesian Prayer Book Settings. Rev'd Canon Sue-Ellen Chilvers preached, reflecting upon the various ways we name or visualise the role of Mary and her significance as the one whose 'Yes' opens forth a new revelation of God's Love upon Earth.

The service concluded with a procession and prayers that we might be inspired by the life and witness of Mary, Mother of Our Lord, to be, like her, bearers of the Christ into our world. Mulled wine and light pre-dinner refreshments were served afterwards in the Hall.



It was especially lovely to welcome at the service a gathering of far-travelled friends, family, and other supporters of Canon Jane's from the Parishes of Wangaratta and Myrtleford and from her present Parish of Corowa, many of whom took the opportunity of the service to spend some time enjoying the attractions of Griffith (three long tables at one of the local Italian restaurants were filled with Anglicans from all sorts of places enjoying dinner and fellowship late into the evening).

The role of the Cathedral Chapter in this Diocese is a tricky balancing act. Lay and Clerical Canons serve to represent the service and work of the Cathedral in the wider life of the Diocese, and the life and work of the wider diocese in the life of the Cathedral. As such, the Chapter acts as one of the governing bodies of the Cathedral, working with the Dean to facilitate major diocesan occasions and services, consulting over important decisions about significant changes to the cathedral buildings, and seeking to offer advice and direction as to ways in which the Cathedral can better engage within the life of the Diocese. But, the work of the Chapter members ideally should also affect the life of the diocese beyond the Cathedral: taking the ministry and prayers of the Cathedral into the lives of the parishes and committees.

One of the ways we shall see this unfold will be through the involvement of various Chapter members in our upcoming training days and Diocesan events. The Chapter continues to debate ways it can better fulfil its dual role, representing the Cathedral to the Diocese and the Diocese to the Cathedral.

From the Registrar

Mandy Walsh

Registry Office

The works on the new Registry Office are moving along.

Our photos in February were of the Bishop turning the first sod (in his vestments) and works began soon after. In these photos, you can see the large footings, the framework, and now a clad building (it will look more stunning once painted and a garden planted in front).

It is hoped that the building will be completed during October. A blessing will be organised, and all who are able, will be welcome to attend.

Executive Support Officer

Welcome to our new Diocesan Executive Support Officer, Laura Cappello, who has begun working this month in a supporting role to Bishop Donald and myself.

Originally from Sydney, Laura completed a B. Commerce at University of Sydney, and worked in the Insolvency and Restructuring Industry, before relocating to Griffith in 2010. Griffith is Laura's husband's hometown, and where he works as an Agronomist.

They have three children, who keep Laura on her toes when she is not at work. While the three children were young, Laura was working in part-time administration and bookkeeping roles in local businesses.

Laura says, "Now that my children are more independent, I see this role as an opportunity to work across the Diocese and support their mission, using my skill set in a much broader way. I feel very welcomed into this community and look forward to special projects such as Hope 25 and meeting new people along the way."



Laura will be working four days each week (Monday to Thursday) and can be contacted at office@anglicanriverina.com



LICENSED LAY MINISTER REFRESHER

SATURDAY
28th SEPTEMBER 2024

10am to 3pm
St Alban's Cathedral,
Griffith

Cost \$10 (payable on the day) which will include cuppas and lunch

Please come to the hall first – cuppas will be available from 9:30am as people arrive

RSVP to Mandy
by 23rd Sept
registrar@anglicanriverina.com

Safe Churches Corner

Hello and Welcome,

It's been a busy time. As forecast, in February, we ran profoundly good online gatherings with parish Wardens to share and discuss the Diocese' fresh approach to Professional Standards activities, focused on Safe Church Culture.

These three sessions were well-attended by nearly all Wardens across the Diocese, and their Clergy. Bishop Donald was with us for nearly all. Thank you, again, to those who came online to share this time. (My special thanks to Professional Standards Committee member, Ms Louise Potter, who assisted me with technical assistance in these sessions.)

In the past, Professional Standards has tended to be a 'last resort' for a complaint that has become a formal Matter with critical and escalated consequences. This function remains in place. Serious abuse issues will still be dealt with according to the Professional Standards Ordinance for the Diocese (2022).

Still in keeping with the Ordinance, however, it's preferable if less complicated concerns can be raised early (e.g. conflict, positional power imbalances), and be approached in a proactive, preventative way.

Early intervention strategies, using healing, restorative methods can be engaged. Concerns are resolved without formalised, adjudicated authorities. In relevant cases, there is good evidence that these approaches bring timely, constructive outcomes which heal hurts early, and cut new pathways for a different future.

Safe Church Culture underpins this approach, with its baseline of safeguarding. Safeguarding means protecting people from abuse and maltreatment - doing everything possible to prevent abuse and maltreatment. This approach isn't hard, but it does take constant awareness. For instance:

- Are we noticing if people are needing attention, or that we have inadvertently ignored someone needing a moment of care?
- When disagreement or outright conflict arises, how are we going about that – do we look towards healing resolution?
- Do we know how to achieve that, if we need help with this, are we using all the resources available to us?
- Is our parish evaluating and monitoring our Safe Church culture?

Some excellent discussion was raised in the Wardens online sessions about how Safe Church Culture can be further supported and gain momentum at the parish level. There will be more news on these great ideas over time but, for example, a couple of quick brilliant tips that came up are worth sharing right now;

- Having Safe Church Culture as a regular Parish Council agenda item so that, at least quarterly, the parish Council is reflecting on, monitoring, and attending to how the culture is tracking in their parish.
- Placing the Safe Church Corner article in Pew News so it's printed out and distributed further throughout the parish.

As I mentioned, there are more brilliant ideas to come over time. And, if you have thoughts, they are very welcome!

I am available by phone or email to hear any concerns you may have, or ... any great ideas you have that could help us improve our Safe Church Culture.

Connie



Connie Comber

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MOAMA
ANGLICAN
GRAMMAR

COMPASSION | RESPECT | INTEGRITY



**SPECIAL
FEATURE**

Building Hope and Community: Moama Anglican Grammar's Habitat for Humanity Service Trip to Cambodia

Armed with chisels, shovels and enthusiasm, eleven Moama Anglican Grammar students and three teachers can claim they built a house in Cambodia during their winter school holidays, leaving their mark halfway across the globe. As part of the International Habitat for Humanity (HFH) program, they immersed themselves in a two-week adventure that combined hands-on building with cultural exploration, impacting both themselves and the communities they served.

Habitat for Humanity is a global non-profit organisation that seeks to eliminate poverty housing by providing safe & affordable shelter to families in need. The student's service journey began at home, with weeks of fundraising for the building's resources. But the experience went beyond just building homes, as the trip was a transformative experience for all who participated. They witnessed firsthand the power of community and the difference that can be made when people come together for a common cause.

Upon arriving in Cambodia, the students were greeted with vibrant local culture and immediate contrasts from their familiar surroundings. They spent their initial days exploring local temples, navigating bustling markets, and learning about traditional Cambodian life. Riding in tuk-tuks offered a glimpse into daily commute, Cambodian style, while visits to sites like the Angkor Wat and Bayon Temple provided historical context.

The real work began as the students engaged with the community in a rural village, where they collaborated with local families to build a home from the ground up. Working hand in hand with locals of Siam Reap and the homeowners, students learnt valuable life skills that cannot always be taught in a classroom, building hope, teamwork, compassion and positive change and commitment to continue to serve others.

"The work was challenging, but immensely rewarding", said student Cara Haley, "We mixed cement, laid bricks, and saw the physical results of our efforts come to life. More importantly, we built relationships with the local community and gained a deeper appreciation for the resilience and warmth of the Cambodian people."

As the construction wrapped up, the students put the finishing touches on the house, including painting and installing doors, preparing it for its new occupants. The final days of the trip were spent exploring more of Cambodia's cultural heritage, meeting the hero rats trained to detect landmines.

These visits provided additional layers of cultural understanding and awe-inspiring glimpses into Cambodia's complex past. The students also contributed to the local community by volunteering in the kitchens on the building site, preparing traditional high-protein meals made from ingredients like frogs and crickets. This part of the trip was an eye-opener, offering a firsthand look at local food practices and the daily realities of the community.

The two-week experience concluded with a house 'hand over' ceremony, smearing baby powder over their faces as part of Khmer traditional celebrations, a gesture of goodwill and friendship as well as showering the partnering family with lotus flower petals. The trip was not just about building homes but also about building connections and hope. The ceremony was filled with laughter and joy, with students' interactions with the community extending beyond construction, including playing a friendly game of tug-a-war, soccer and exchange of traditional dance steps, including the Australian classic the "Nutbush". A salute to the bonds forged between the visitors and their hosts.

Student Alex Hehir reflected on the experience, expressing "how humbling it was to see the gratitude of the community and to connect with local children through games and shared experiences". These cultural exchanges, coupled with the physical work, enriched their experience, creating lasting memories.

Returning to Australia, the students brought back more than just souvenirs. They carried with them a renewed sense of purpose and a deepened commitment to service. The smiles and heartfelt thanks of the partner family made a lasting impact that surpasses just the labour of students work. The experience has inspired them to continue their involvement in service projects, both locally and globally, reinforcing the idea that every act of kindness contributes to a larger movement of positive change.

Moama Anglican Grammar's Habitat for Humanity trip to Cambodia was not merely a school excursion; it was a journey of growth, compassion, and connection. By sharing their experiences, the students hope to inspire others in the Riverina Diocese to engage in similar service initiatives, whether in their own communities or beyond. Together, we can build a better world, one act of kindness and service at a time.

Cara Haley - Year 11

Moama Anglican Grammar's Habitat for Humanity Service Trip to Cambodia in Pictures



Mother Jane Trigg & Father Tim Fogo

At the Synod meeting held in June, the Riverina Diocese agreed to support the Hope25 Initiative. Hope25 is being led by the General Synod Mission and Ministry Commission.

So, what is Hope25 and what does it mean for our Diocese?

Hope25 is an opportunity for us to share the hope that we have in Jesus. It is an intentional season of sharing hope in Jesus for every parish and community in the Anglican Church of Australia. We are asking each parish to commit to doing (at least) one thing to help share the hope that we have in Jesus during this season.

The Hope25 season will run from Easter Day (20th April) to Pentecost Sunday (8th June) 2025.

We encourage parishes in our Diocese to start praying and planning now. We will be in contact with some great ideas and projects in preparation for the season, especially during Lent 2025.

As a starting point, we suggest looking at the Hope25 website www.hope25.com.au. Parishes can order free Hope25 prayer postcards by following the instructions at the following page: <https://www.hope25.com.au/2024/07/16/hope25-prayer-postcards-now-freely-available/>

Hope 25 Prayer

God of Hope

You call on us to be
your witnesses in this
uncertain world;

By your Spirit awaken in
us a true vision of
your kingdom,
a greater certainty of
our salvation, and
a deeper dedication
to your service;
that through our words
and actions the same
Spirit may bring many who
are lost to be found,
and for them to celebrate
the hope that we can only
have in Jesus Christ,
in whose name we pray.

Amen

FRIDAY funnies

